
◆ Cameron ◆

Clan Cameron New Zealand; founded 1935, incorporated 2000

Volume 42, Issue 2

April 2008



'The Ben' in Winter

Taken from Dun Deardail, a vitrified
Fort high up Glen Nevis

Inset: Renovations at Achnacarry

Photos by Bill Cameron

The Hawke's Bay Easter Highland Games -



Our newest Branch promotes the Clan

(The new Clan Cameron sign was donated by John Pryce and crafted by his son)



Prominent in both pictures are Hawke's Bay Treasurer Shane East and Secretary Mike Topham - above with Canterbury visitor Nick Cameron

Photos: Duncan / Jean McQueen

Wellington/Wairarapa Branch

Wellington/Wairarapa Branch held a barbecue at the Kaitoke Regional Park on Sunday 9th March. It was attended by the regulars who were entertained by members of the Fern and Thistle Pipe Band from Masterton. This band includes two of our branch members Lorraine and Warren Cameron from Carterton. Plans are underway for our AGM and a Mid Winter Christmas Party.

by Rob Cameron

Congratulations to Rob and Catherine on the birth of a bonny wee (7lb 15 oz) granddaughter on 13 March. Congratulations also to daughter Iona and John.

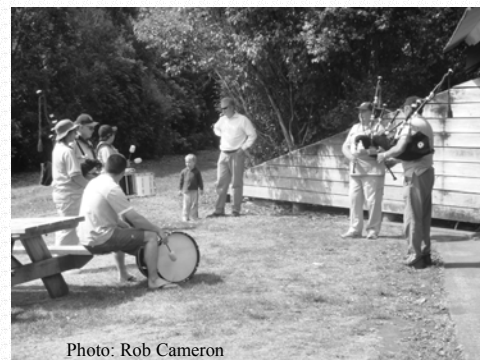


Photo: Rob Cameron

Gisborne Branch

by Mike Topham

The Gisborne Branch held a luncheon gathering and AGM at the Tatapouri Fishing Club on Sunday 24 February.

In opening the meeting, David Cameron paid tribute to the memory of Vivienne McConnell and acknowledged the immense contribution Vivienne and Bob had made to Clan Cameron both locally and nationally.

David introduced his sister Georgina McLeod who not only joins the branch but has agreed to take on the duties of Secretary and Treasurer. We also have another new member, Malcolm Cameron. We welcome these two to clan membership. We were also pleased to have Marion Lewes re-join us. Marion was a foundation member and Secretary of the Gisborne Branch in 1987.

The very first gathering of the Poverty Bay Camerons was held at the residence of Marion and Don Lewes in February 1986 on the occasion of the visit of Lochiel, the 26th Chief of the Clan, and Lady Margaret. That gathering led to the formation of the Gisborne Branch.

David Cameron was re-appointed unopposed as Branch President.

David encouraged all members present to attend the National Gathering and AGM at Opotiki in May.



Ben Orchiston, son of Kay and Don Orchiston of the Gisborne Branch.

He recently had a job in Arnhem land in the north of the Northern Territory of Australia as an assistant manager of a supermarket. Unfortunately it was only for 3 weeks. There is a population of 2,500 most of whom are aboriginal. Alcohol is banned and you can only go there if you get a special permit. Anyway Ben had a ball and also a lot of fun with the people. The children sang all the time.

The Highland Council Archive Service (Lochaber)

The **Lochaber Archive Centre**, part of the Highland Council Archive Service has recently opened in Fort William. The centre is in Lochaber College, next to the registrars Dept.

The centre will enable records of the Highland Council relating to the Lochaber region, and other historically important archives from the region to be stored in secure, environmentally controlled conditions.

The search room, for consulting the archives, provides space for approximately four people at a time and is supervised by trained staff that are always on hand to help. There is an appointment system in operation although it may be possible to accommodate people who drop in.

Photocopying and digital photography of documents, subject to the condition of the documents, can be done by staff.

Collections include:

- Council and local authority records for the Lochaber Region, including school and education records and police records.
- Valuation Rolls.
- Estate and Family Archives of Cameron of Lochiel and Cameron-Head of Lochailort. It is hoped to add Cameron of Lochiel personal papers in the Spring, once the listing has been finished in Inverness.
- Maps and Plans, including Ordnance Survey sheets.

Other Sources:

- Burial Records for Lochaber (available on CD, accessed by staff.)
- Volumes of Statistical Accounts for Scotland.
- Volumes of Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries for Scotland.

Most collections have catalogues and if you need any help or information please just ask us, telephone (01397) 701942 or 700946 or email <Lochaber.archives@highland.gov.uk>

The archives are open Mon, Tues, Thur and Fri, 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm. Parking is available behind the college and snacks and drinks are available in the college café.

For the Future

The Lochaber Archive Centre hopes to work with heritage groups and local museums in the area to preserve the archival heritage of Lochaber. It is hoped that the holdings of archives will be expanded with new collections coming in. The National Archives of Scotland should be transferring some further Cameron of Lochiel papers and Scottish Presbytery records. We also hope to have an education and outreach programme.

Many thanks to Moira Neal, of the Scottish Interest Group, NZSG, for the above information.

Welcome to the following 19 Members who have recently joined us:



Canterbury Branch

Tony Cameron (Geraldine)
 Jenny Leishman (Geraldine)
 Julie Walton (Temuka)
 Dennis & Lisa Cameron (Christchurch)

Hawkes Bay Branch

June Armstrong (Napier)
 Jan and John Willson (Napier)
 David and Ann Chalmers (Taradale)
 Kathy McKee (Napier)
 Vicky Lumsden / Campbell Leckie (Napier)
 Bryan Hutchinson (Havelock North)

Auckland Branch

Robert Cameron (Thames)
 Dorothy Taylor (Whangaparoa)

Gisborne Branch

Georgina McLeod (Gisborne)
 Malcolm Cameron (Gisborne)

Bay of Plenty Branch

Arthur Cameron (Mt Maunganui)
 Bruce Cameron (Ohaupo)
 Dan Cameron (Collingwood)
 Tom & Edna Burns (Tauranga)

Wellington/Wairarapa Branch

John Scott (Stokes Valley)

The Paeroa Games

by Don Cameron

The Paeroa Games maintained the high standard (and hot weather) built up over the last 15 years and added a new touch of clan aristocracy at their February celebrations.

The Chieftain for the day was Ranald Alexander Macdonald of Clanranald. 24th captain and Chief of Clanranald, and one of the five Chiefs of Clan Donald.

In years gone by the King of Scotland feared that the powerful Clan Donald might try and usurp his throne, so on the basis of divide-and-conquer, Clan Donald was divided into five sections, each with a separate Chief. The line of Scottish kings ran out, but Clan Donald has continued to prosper among the leading clans.

Clanranald stopped to chat at the Clan Cameron tent at Paeroa, and spoke warmly of his past contact with the Camerons. This included time with the Queens Own Cameron Highlanders and included among his officers were the present Lochiel's father, Donald, and uncle Charles. The latter represented Lochiel at the international Clan Cameron Gathering in Auckland in 2005.

Clanranald has been involved in a wide range of clan activities, especially as a founding trustee of the Clan Donald trust which on Skye has set up a vast amount of clan history and

genealogy. Paeroa also entertained a special guest, Robyn Thomas, winner of the Queen of the Heather contest, the annual Dunedin event which has a visit to Auckland among the prizes. The 25-year-old Robyn's clan heritage is with the Clan McLay -- her ancestors landed in New Zealand in 1849.



Valmar Cameron talks to Clanranald

photo: Editor

The Gatherings Tour of Scotland

For the past 6 months, John Cameron (of Operatunity Travel Club) has been carefully crafting a tour following a brief given to him by Clan Cameron New Zealand. This fabulous trip is now in place and reflects the interests of Clan Cameron and the wonderful sights and flavours that this special part of the world has to offer. It includes the sought after passports to the International Gathering in Edinburgh and the Clan Cameron Gathering in Fort William, both taking place in July 2009. Planned in conjunction with Neil and Denis Cameron this tour includes visits to many historic sights significant to the Camerons.

Operatunity Travel Club Ltd specialises in boutique special interest tours, tailor made to suit. This tour has been a labour of love for John (who will accompany this tour) and he has gone "above and beyond the call" to ensure a fabulous experience. Hotel rooms are secured as well as the Gathering passports, both being much sought after at this time as well as securing airline bookings, stopover and side trips.

Demand is high, so we recommend that your interest is registered as soon as possible and a deposit paid to secure your place on this wonderful trip – surely a trip of a lifetime and one to remember!

Enclosed with this newsletter is the tour itinerary.



20 years earlier - New Zealand Camerons at the 1989 Gathering

A message from our President



Dear Clan Cameron Members

The South Island High Country is a place where legends are made. For instance, Maui's giant fish was hacked and deformed into a mountain range. New Zealand's first novelist, Samuel Butler, created a mythical country in a mountain valley. Folk hero, sheep thief, and lovable Gaelic rogue James

Mackenzie discovered the massive tussock basin that today bears his name. Rumours persist of lost tribes, vanished gold mines, and missing moa. Even today, the High Country legend is used to sell us everything from beer to cheese to luxury cars. New Zealand wouldn't be New Zealand without it.

The High Country is literally larger than life, with clear waters stocked with salmon and trout, tussock basins with geese and wapiti, and the snowy bluffs with chukor and thar. This country affects people like no other part of New Zealand. Just looking at it from a distance is impressive, but taking it on directly challenges both the body and spirit.

The High Country is a huge and expensive commercial resource and many of the people who invest here have never heard the legends. Land use is changing across New Zealand and even the traditional High Country stations are not immune. Overseas buyers are taking up the land and with it control of access to rivers, mountains and even the view itself.

The High Country runs from the dry hills overlooking Blenheim to the Takitimu Range south of Manapouri. It runs from the glaciers and peaks of the main divide to views of the east coast at Kaikoura and Otago. Land tenure covers the full range from National Park to private freehold, with many variations in between.

Foreign ownership of New Zealand's coast has been made the headlines recently and, while our beaches are nice enough, they are nowhere near as special as the High Country. If you like the mountains, rivers, and wide open spaces and want to invest away from North America in a safe, politically stable English-speaking country, then New Zealand is unique.

The spokesman for The Campaign Against Foreign Control [CAFCA] Murray Horton says the sale of High Country land to overseas buyers is another example of our core industry, agriculture, being taken over by outside interest. CATCA's arguments against overseas ownership control include the inflationary effects of hard currency buyers preventing New Zealanders from investing in their own land. This is borne out by the recent example of Canadian country singer Shania Twain paying \$16 million for Motutapu Station, near Wanaka – paying four times the government valuation.

I think this says it all – and we the New Zealander cannot afford to purchase any of our land because of people like Twain making a mockery of the New Zealand dollar. There is no way that we, the ordinary New Zealand public can afford to purchase properties like this when outsiders run ripshod over us and are allowed to by our Overseas Investment Commission Government officials [OIC] They should be our protectors and in terms of Crown lands, the Crown has an obligation to ensure there are substantial public lands provided through the tenure review, and the most secure form of public ownership is [provided to all the rivers and public

land. There needs to be a clear separation between public and private land and the private sector can do its thing over the fence.

It would be easy to simplify the issue to foreigners locking out Kiwis, but there's more to it than that. Kiwi landholders are also causing problems, as are tourists. Many of the New Zealanders buying High Country land are returning from overseas and bring hard currency with them. In many respects, they are little different to overseas buyers – they contribute to inflation and expect to have privacy. Many have never lived in the High Country and are effectively foreign to the High Country culture.

But when an apartment in Denver, Colorado, sells for more than a High Country Station, we need to ask ourselves, if we value our High Country as much as we should.

The price of a medium-size lease starts at \$4 million or so. That's big money, but you get 20 sq.km or so of mountain country with a house and a working farm. Compare that to the USA. For NZ44 million you'll get a three – bedroom suburban home with a garage in Boulder, Colorado. And for NZ \$7 million you get a two-bedroom penthouse apartment with no land in Denver, Colorado.

At these prices a High Country station is unbelievably good value. It fits into the prices United States buyers are paying and offers a slice of paradise unequalled anywhere else on the planet. Well said and reported by Martin Craig [Fish & Game New Zealand]

*“Leis gach dhurach and Slainte mhath”
[With every good wish and good health]*

Denis Cameron

First Light News

by Mary Barber

Robert Nairn has been selected as this year's First Lighter, and will be arriving in June until July/August. Canterbury branch have been asked to host him and Alex has said that there will be work for him there. A programme for his visit is being arranged.

Robert Nairn is studying Traditional Music at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and will be here during his summer break.

His selection has been endorsed by both Lochiel and Donald the Younger. His special instrument is the accordion, and he also plays the pipes. He has formed his own band and entertains at weddings, ceilidhs etc. He has grown up on a croft and is used to working with animals, and doing farm work. He is used to tractor work and agricultural work also. He will certainly fit into Canterbury. He plans to arrive in June, his summer break, and will spend a couple of months here until July/August.. Hopefully, we will be able to meet him in the North Island during that time..

Bob McConnell is currently recuperating at Te Whare Hauora O Ngati Porou, Te Puia Springs. He is progressing well and is in good spirits. A memorial service for Vivienne will be held in Te Araroa at a future date when Bob has fully recovered.



Aonaibh ri Cheile

Cameron

is the newsletter of the Clan Cameron Association of New Zealand (Inc) and is published on or near the 1st day of every even month of the year

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

Articles about Camerons, Branch activities with photographs, and advice of Coming Events are especially welcome.

Deadline for the June issue:

15 May 2008

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Hereditary Chief and Captain of Clan Cameron

Donald Angus Cameron of Lochiel,
Lord Lieutenant of Inverness,
Achnacarry, Spean Bridge,
Inverness-shire, Scotland. PH34 4ES

Coming events

A Fabulous Scottish Fling at Te Papa

Tuesday 22 April, 10am–4pm. Inspiration Station, Level 4. Free entry, except for the 11am activity. A Fabulous Scottish Fling. Celebrate New Zealand's Scottish heritage with a family day of festivities, 'muckle fun', and a soaring Scottish castle that you can help build from boxes.

10am–11am: Highland curling competition.

11am–12 noon: Fashion a terrific thistle brooch. Cost \$2.

12noon–1.30pm: Introducing 'the Beastie' experience (a traditional haggis ceremony), followed by a lively ceilidh (Scottish social event), with pipe band and Scottish dance competition!

2pm–4pm: Create your own coat-of-arms banner or cross stitch a Scottish sampler 'aw-about-ye' (all about you)!

16/ 17 May

Clan Cameron AGM and Gathering.
Opotiki. See insert to this newsletter.

29 June

Annual Kirkin' o' the Tartan
St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Symonds Street.
Auckland. 10am.

30 August

Auckland Branch Annual Dinner
(Venue and date to be confirmed)

Useful Websites

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

Clan Cameron Online
<http://www.clan-cameron.org/>

Clan Cameron Scotland
<http://www.clanameron.org.uk>

Clan Cameron Australia
<http://www.clan-cameron.org.au>

Scottish Clans Association Auckland District
<http://www.scottishclans.co.nz>

Clan Cameron DNA project
<http://www.clan-cameron.org/dna/>

A Great Site showing Images of Lochaber by J.A.Cameron (includes archive of old postcards)
<Http://mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/FortWilliam>

Clan Cameron NZ Webmaster:
Warren Cameron
camcraft@orcon.net.nz

The Cameron Men

by Ian Abernethy (Lochaber)

At a time when the New Year celebrations are in full swing, it is salutary to note that the date of January 3, 1794, was the one chosen for the founding of Lochaber's own Regiment. It was on that day, 214 years ago, that the first men of the 79th Cameron Highlanders were inspected and approved - some say in Stirling - but locals will maintain that, appropriately, they were sworn in and mustered - in Fort William.

What is without debate is the fact that, in the last two months of 1793, some 750 "aspiring young men" were recruited from Lochaber, Appin and Mull, prior to being "collected at Fort William". Effectively they had been gathered together at the sole expense of Lt Col Alan Cameron of Erracht - later to become Lt Gen Sir Alan Cameron - and his officers.

By the end of January, 1794, the requisite levy of 1,000 men had been completed.

Records indicate that the initial intake were sworn in at The Craigs, mustered and inspected on The Parade - and received their marching orders in Town Square/Church Square, known to generations ever since as - Cameron Square.

Alan Cameron - whose father was in charge of Clan Cameron during the 1745 Rising - was, in his youth, renowned for his strength and athletic prowess. As a young man he fell madly in love with the young widow of Cameron of Strone. Alexander Cameron, the tacksman of Muirshearlich, who was the widow's guardian, objected to the courtship and Alan, incensed by this interference, challenged him to a duel.

A condition of the combat was that the fighting should cease as soon as one or other drew blood.

But contemporary records state : "Forgetful of this pact, or enraged at being first cut, Erracht took undue advantage of the leniency shewn by his adversary and slew him - an act, let it be said, he never ceased to deplore".

Fearful of retribution by the tacksman's family, Alan fled to Morvern. From there he made his way to Greenock where he became a Customs clerk.

Alan endured this work for as long as his restless and adventurous temperament would allow. Then he set sail for the Americas. There he joined the 84th Royal Highland Emigrant Regiment, and served during the War of Independence under one of his own kinsmen, Colonel Alan MacLean of Torloisg.

In 1782 he was captured, and imprisoned for two years in the common jail in Philadelphia.

During an unsuccessful escape attempt he broke both his ankles - injuries from which he never fully recovered. After his release in 1784 he returned on half-pay to his native Erracht and Glenloy.

In the early 1790s, while at home, Alan conceived the idea of forming a Highland Regiment, and expressed the desire to visit the royal court. On August 17, 1793, Letters of Service to raise a corps of Highlanders, were issued to him by George III. Strangely enough, no bounty was dispensed by the Government for recruitment purposes, despite the fact that this inducement was then the norm.

However, in November and December of that year, 750 men had been gathered at the sole expense of Alan Cameron and

his officers - an eloquent testimony to the esteem and respect in which he was held in the Highlands.

Erracht had set his mind on building up a real Highland force and, as far as possible, his men were native Gaelic speakers. This led to the regiment being nicknamed the "Cia Mar Th'a Thus?" - the "How Are You's?".

Alan, himself became known as "Old Cia Mar Th'a", because of his habit of constantly putting this question to his men.



Lieutenant-General Sir Alan Cameron of Erracht

Thus came into being the Cameronian Volunteers, the 79th Regiment of the Line, succeeding to the number of a regiment which had been disbanded ten years before.

And it was to be one of the last which was raised by family influence in the Highlands.

Alan Cameron was appointed Lt Col Commandant, and went to the head of his men

as they marched proudly out of Fort William on that cold January day. But Alan had to use Gaelic terms in order for his volunteers to carry out his instructions.

Hay was tied to the left boots, and straw to the right, and when he wanted them to march he cried "Feur, Strabh; Feur, Strabh!" ("Hay, Straw; Hay, Straw." Thus they came to understand the command "Left, Right". When he wished the men to turn right at the end of Fort William High Street, en route for embarkation at the Town Pier, the sergeant major cried : "Taobh a' phutain!" - the "button side" of their tunics! As previously mentioned, thanks to a large number of supernumeraries and further volunteers, the strength of the regiment was raised to the 1,000 mark by the end of the month. After a few months in England and Ireland, the 79th were posted to Flanders in August, 1794.

During this campaign the regiment suffered severe losses. Indeed, on their return to Scotland the following year, Erracht had to set about the task of replacing the ranks to the required complement of 1,000. It was in the middle of this further recruiting that orders had been given to draft the Camerons into four other regiments.

This, despite the royal proclamation when the Letters of Service were issued, that the Camerons would "not be drafted into any other regiment". Seething with indignation, Alan sought, and secured, an interview with the CIC, the Duke of York. "To draft the 79th is more than your royal father dare do!", Sir Alan insisted.

"Then the king, my father, will certainly send your regiment to the West Indies", the duke replied, threateningly. Erracht's well known fiery temper reached boiling point, and he exploded : "You may tell the king, your father, from me, that he may send us to Hell if he likes, and I'll go at the head of them - BUT HE DAURNA DRAFT US!" Sure enough the 79th were ordered to the West Indies till 1797.

In that year illness and disease overtook the Camerons, and an offer was made to the fit men of the regiment to volunteer into other corps. About 200 of them joined the Black Watch, and others were enlisted into various

regiments.

But, inside a few months, the intrepid Alan Cameron, and his faithful officers - who had remained at his side - had raised a new regiment from the ruins of the old one. Early in 1804 Alan was gazetted a colonel in the Army - and in the 79th.

In that year too, he was allowed to form a 2nd Battalion which was raised within six months and inspected, and passed - at Stirling - on April 3, 1805. However it never saw active service, its function being to supply replacements annually for the casualties in the 1st Bn.

Erracht was promoted to Lt Gen in 1819, having been knighted four years before.

During his service with his Camerons, in all parts of the world, he was twice severely wounded, and had two horses shot from under him. Alan was a great champion of the kilt. He was asked, in 1804, by the War Office for his views on the proposed abolition of the kilt in the Highland regiments. In his letter of reply, Alan, no great respecter of persons, expressed his indignation at the thought of the Camerons being forced to wear "a harlequin tartan pantaloon".

His regiment was designated the Cameronian Volunteers from 1794-1804; from 1805-1806 the Cameronian Highlanders and, in 1807, they first appeared as the Cameron Highlanders.

Sir Alan Cameron of Erracht died in Fulham, on March 9, 1828 and, 45 years later, on July 10, 1873 - an order was issued that his 79th Regiment "be in future styled the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders".

In 1949 the QOCH mustered once more on their initial parade ground - The Parade - in Fort William.

They then received the Freedom of the Burgh and marched proudly along Fort William High Street "with pipes playing, colours flying, and bayonets fixed".

In 1953, the Freedom of Inverness was also conferred on the Regiment. Eight years later, however, the QOCH amalgamated with the Seaforth Highlanders, to form The

Queen's Own Highlanders - the regiment receiving the Freedom of Lochaber in 1993.

Thus was commemorated, in a most apt and welcome way, 200 years of proud association between the Camerons and their local community.



Above: Cameron Highlanders on parade

Below: Memorial to Sir Alan with Erracht House in the background.



Achnacarry Flats Project

The listed, but derelict, stables at Achnacarry Castle are being converted into five modern flats for long term letting. These will go some way in addressing acute housing shortages in the area and it is thought that estate workers and local people will be among those seeking to rent the new homes.

Achnacarry residents will also benefit from a new water



supply being created to service the new flats, which will also be connected to all existing homes. Village houses will be connected to the new pipeline from the River Arkaig shortly after the conversion is completed about now.

Refurbishment of nearby Achnacarry Castle, currently employing around 20 local tradesmen for repairs to the castle roof and interior work, is expected to be completed by late summer.

from The Oban Times



Aonaibh ri Cheile

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In This Issue...

The story of 'The Cameron Men' and 'The Gatherings Tour to Scotland'



Above - 1st & 2nd from left: Paeroa Games

1. Karen Carmichael, Don & Valmar Cameron, Joy & Denis Cameron and Janet & Ray Crafts.

2. Denis, Ray Crafts, Patricia Cameron, Joy, Dennis Cameron, Rex Cameron, Luke, Lisa and Teagan Cameron. (Dennis and Lisa are now Canterbury members)
Photos: Editor

Above - Right: Wellington/Wairarapa BBQ

Hazel and Graeme Cameron *Photo: Rob Cameron*

Left - The future of our Clan

Young Camerons compete in the National Pipe Band Championships. Andrew McQueen (St Kentigern), Callum Cameron (Scots), Matthew McQueen (St Kentigern)
Photo: Duncan McQueen

Below - Camerons spotted at the National Pipe Band Champs.
Clockwise from top left:
Dale Bailey, Mark Orum & Lena Orum. (Auckland)
Michael & Miriel Imber (Well/Wai), Nick Cameron (Cant),
Callum Cameron (Well/Wai), Andrew Lowes (Bay of Plenty),
Cameron Taylor (Drum Major, City of Dunedin Pipe Band),
Kaye & Lewis Turrell, (House of Scotland, Auckland)
Robin Vuleta (Hawke's Bay) *Photos: Editor*

