



Clan Cameron New Zealand; founded 1935, incorporated 2000

◆ Cameron ◆

Volume 42, Issue 6

December 2008



Left:
Fort William in Autumn.
The statue of Donald
Cameron of Lochiel, the
24th Chief, overlooks the
parade ground

photo: Bill Cameron

Below left:
The view from the
Commando Monument -
see page 11

photo: Editor

Below centre:
The present Achnacarry
Castle. The green area in
front is the site of the 2009
Gathering

photo: Bill Cameron

Below right:
Pipe Band tuning up in
front of the Cameron tent,
Auckland Highland
Games

photo: Valmar Cameron



Bay of Plenty News *by Denis Cameron*

The Waikato – Bay of Plenty Combined Clans Day 4th October 2008 at Cambridge

The day turned out to be a nice one with over 140 enthusiasts seated in a roomy Union Church Hall. The number of Clans was beyond belief with 18 being represented. The proceedings commenced with a street march from the Cambridge Town Hall via Victoria Street before doing a circuit and finishing up at the Church Hall where the day's activities were to be held. This was by far the largest gathering to date. Other Clans had travelled from Napier, Taumarunui, the Bay of Plenty and Auckland. It was **Clantastic!**

The skirl of the bagpipes heralded the start of the day with the Clans assembling at 10.30 am with banners flying proudly that naturally created quite a stir in this quiet town in the Waikato. Later in the Church Hall, Clan representatives were asked to come forward and were piped in turn and greeted by the two Clan Fraser representatives from Christchurch. They were Ross Fraser and Stuart Oliver who had travelled from Christchurch to be with us on this fun day. President Fraser Cameron was our representative who spoke about the History of Clan Cameron.

Each year a new Clan is invited to be the host Clan and this time it was the Clan Fraser. By the end of the day they had big smiles as they had signed up enough members to start a Branch here in the Waikato. Once again the organisers were extremely pleased that here again a new Clan had been launched. The last one was Clan Wallace. Naturally this is what we were hoping for.

The Haggis was piped in due ceremony. Next on the programme was the sumptuous luncheon where each person in attendance was asked to bring along a plate of goodies.

After lunch a ceilidh - under the able control of Noel Armstrong as the MC for the day. We had dancer Jessica Wallace performed the dramatic Sword Dance, the Sailor's and Irish Hornpipe. One of our BOP members, Helen Baillie came along with her harp and with her fiddler husband John Baillie from Te Aroha, created quite a stir among the seated public. We had present the pipe bands from Te Kuiti, Cambridge own Pipes and Drums and members of the Hamilton's Caledonian Pipe Band who gave a varied and well rehearsed concert, that included a drum duo. Later we had a sing-a-long, an exhibition of Scottish Country Dancing that the visitors were asked to get up and learn the steps. A Hamilton based Celtic group named the Siamas had the dancers on their feet.

Pipe Major Bryan Mitchell's dramatic Lament to the late Joan Little provided a tangible link to our past gatherings as did a rendition of Old Lang Syne that herald the final act of the day.

We were delighted to see some of our local members from Cambridge who came along to swell the numbers; they were Hazel and Martin Verhoeven, Ted Little from Tokoroa and Bruce and Neolin Cameron from Mystery Creek. We had quite a few members who were unable to attend the day owing to other commitments. Glad to see you all present.

In all there were 15 Bay of Plenty Clan Cameron members in attendance including Mike and Trish Topham from Hastings. I am sure that they all enjoyed the day's festivities.



Mike Topham, Helen Renner, Joy Cameron and Hazel Cameron
at the Cambridge Clans' Day *Photo: Denis Cameron*

Manawatu News *by Mary Barber*

Manawatu Clan Cameron recently hosted an afternoon for Margaret Cameron from Scotland, the former First Light Convenor. It was attended by more than twenty members. Margaret spoke about her work as Coordinator for the University of the Highlands and Islands, and their learning centres. She had spent a week at Massey University studying their extra-mural programmes as part of her thesis for her Masters Degree. UHI covers a great area of Scotland from Perth north, and Margaret spends a great deal of time travelling between centres. In 2007 she drove more than 23,000km around Scotland.

Our AGM is being held on November 23rd at the home of Jessie and John Annabell, beginning with lunch at 12 noon. Joy Cameron has expressed a wish to retire as President of the Manawatu branch this year.

Joy has been a stalwart of our branch for many years and we will miss her knowledge and leadership, but know she will continue to help in many ways. We wish her well and thank her and Colin for their work for the Branch and the Clan Cameron Association.

Square Day in Palmerston Nth on December 13th will see the branch stall as usual, selling sausages and haggis sandwiches. It is our major fundraising event for the year, and all we wish for is a fine day and plenty of helpers.

Postscript:

The Manawatu branch of Clan Cameron held their Annual General Meeting on Sunday 23rd November with a luncheon at the home of Jessie and John Annabell. There was a good attendance of members

John Colin Cameron was elected as President of the branch following the retirement of Joy Cameron

John is a long-time member of the branch and a keen committee member. He is a direct descendant of the early settler, Thomas Ross Cameron.

Joy Cameron has retired as Branch President after many years of service to the Clan Association and branch, having served as Secretary and President. However her experience and knowledge will still be available to the Clan. We thank her for all her time and work and know that she will still be available for guidance. We wish her a happy retirement.

Welcome to the following Members who have recently joined us:



Bay of Plenty Branch

Stuart and Colleen Cameron (Taupo)
Barbara Clarke (Papamoa)

Auckland Branch

John Cameron (Auckland)

Wanganui/Taranaki Branch

Joan and Clive Robinson (Hawera)

Wanganui/Taranaki News

By Alan Drake

Our meeting on the 12th October was a very small gathering, which included the attendance of stalwart John Grant, Martin Brown the Branch President, myself, and three other people. Interestingly I have had at least three families contact me since the meeting offering their support. Pity they were not around on the day!

We are scheduled to have the Branch AGM on the 7th December at 2pm at the Hawera Club High St Hawera. Of course, existing and new members of Clan Cameron are welcome. There will be a light afternoon tea available.

Preliminary arrangements are in hand for next year's AGM and Gathering on 17 – 19 April 2009. Closest accommodation is the Hawera Central Motor Lodge, walking distance to AGM/dinner venue at the Hawera Club High St. Other motels

are not too far away: we're not a huge town! We have been in contact with the pipe band, and have lined up a couple of authentic Scots for the Ode to the Haggis. Other activities of interest around Hawera include the Tawhiti Museum, one of the country's most interesting private museums, a short drive out of town. The Hawera Water tower is across the road, and can be climbed for a view of the countryside; Mount Egmont/Taranaki is about 45 mins drive; west coast black-sand beaches 10mins drive away. We can guarantee an interesting time for all those who make an effort to get here. The Hawera Club venue is on the main Street, and is easy to find. All AGM activities will be held here; a Friday night buffet meal is available at 7.30pm for those in town then, although there are plenty of other eating choices in town. Saturday Meet & Greet, morning tea, AGM, etc and evening dinner will be finalised closer to the time.

We are looking forward to catching up with other Clan Cameron members from around the country.

The article below has been transcribed from a cutting found by Auckland member Ian Cameron in his late fathers collection of oddments. It refers to the coming of age of our present chief in 1967 and appeared probably in the Wanganui Chronicle.

A gun for the young Lochiel

By Michael Moynihan (at Achnacarry Castle)

Rallying to the traditional Cameron cry of "Sons of the hounds, come here and get flesh," several hundred members of the Clan Association tucked into sausage rolls and cream cakes in two marquees under the sombre walls of the castle here this afternoon.

The occasion: the coming of age of Donald Angus, son of Colonel Donald Cameron, 26th Chief, known to clansmen simply as "Lochiel," to whom the 1,200 strong association, with thriving branches in Canada, Australia and New Zealand, has presented a 12-bore model 700 Webley and Scott hammerless ejector gun.

Donald, who is studying history at Christ's Church, Oxford, will use it on grouse, pheasant and ptarmigan – that old feud with the cattle-rustling Macintoshes, is long forgotten.

Because income from the 120,000 acre estate

(chiefly from sheep, forestry and residue from tourists and deer stalkers) is not sufficient to provide him with a living, he aims to become a chartered accountant in Glasgow but will make frequent trips home.

"This is where I belong and I suppose I do feel some sense of affinity with those old Lochiels – even Ewen," says Donald who plays soccer at Oxford and has no trace of a Scottish accent. Ewen was the 17th Cameron chief, particularly noted for an occasion in 1654 when, locked in close combat with a Cromwellian English officer, "he was compelled to kill his opponent by biting out his throat."

It was a somewhat staid collections of Camerons here today, watching nothing more belligerent than six-a-side shinty (a cross between hockey and hurling), a tug-o'-war between clansmen and crofters, and the Molly Cameron dancers.

But to Mr. Douglas Cameron, president of the Wanganui branch of the clan in New Zealand, his wife and daughter, it will all make proud telling back home where "we keep up the Highland games and Hogmanay and such like"

"A worthy chief," said Mr. Walter Cameron, local school master, JP, and secretary of the Crofters' Union. "The fairest, most progressive and liberal minded, landowner in the Highlands today. It's the crofters mark of esteem that we've presented young Donald with a silver salver. It took only three days to collect the £100 that it cost."

Commencing in the February Issue:

Fort William - A Portrait of the Town
Adapted by Ian Abernethy (in four parts)
Also during 2009 -

The Camerons of Otunui
by Margaret Steadman



The Editor and Ruth wish you all

A Happy Christmas and a Joyful New Year



Thank you for sending in the articles and photos - they are really appreciated. Some have not been used due to space limitations but may be used later. Please keep them coming.

Book Review:**BLUESTOCKING IN PATAGONIA**

Written by Anne Whitehead. Paperback published in 2004 by Profile Books Ltd.

Reviewed by Rae Magson, a Clan Cameron member from Ashburton.



I have just finished reading an excellent book and thought members of the Clan Cameron might be interested as it was based on the true story of Mary Gilmore (nee Cameron). What an intelligent, fascinating woman forthright she was.

Mary Jean Cameron was born in 1865 on a property near Goulburn, New South Wales, Australia, the daughter of Donald and Mary Ann Cameron. Only one brother was mentioned in the book, he was Jack Cameron, a war correspondent brother in South Africa.

She was educated at a number of country state schools, and in 1887 passed a teachers' examination. She became interested in Social reform and supported the maritime and shearers' strikes. She became the first woman member of the Australian Workers Union and by 1895 Mary had given up teaching to join William Lane's New Australia Movement. This was supposed to be an inspiration for workers in all lands, for the industrial poor of England, France and Germany, even perhaps for the peasants of Russia. Mary sailed to the settlement in Paraguay. In 1893 over 500 Australians, mostly male bushworkers and trade unionists, followed to Paraguay. To arrive at the colony Mary travelled by mailboat, by paddle steamer, then by steam train and lastly by horseback. Shortly after arrival she married Will Gilmore, after a year their only son William was born. To have this baby she travelled by train 80 kilometres away, on her own, as they could not afford two tickets. In her diary she said she travelled in a filthy third class carriage, with people of whose language she was quite ignorant, they were all smoking, game cocks perched on the backs of the seats and young pigs in bags on the floor. The socialist experiment eventually failed, it became a nightmare of harsh words, occasional punch-ups, litigious threats and two rival

colonies. Eventually they had to leave Paraguay, Will found a job on an estancia in Argentina, Mary and their son remained in Buenos Aires, she could not speak Spanish. It was a very difficult existence for her, as the book so ably tells us. The next shearing contract Will had arranged was in Patagonia, Mary and son eventually followed and Mary worked as a governess to the daughter of the estancia owners. Mary had a secret life of the imagination, the writer in her revelling in the spare, haunting beauty of this strange southern land. She loved to wake while all was still dark and her husband and child lay sleep and tiptoe out the door. She would climb the hill to headland overlooking the river and watch the sun rise.

She had an interest in collecting Spanish oaths, and was told to leave the question of swearing alone, that she was too fond of investigating and studying and looking for experience. William had found a job on another estancia but there was no room for Mary so she was left with her son. She slept with an axe, carving knives and a whistle under her pillow, as well as a dog in the house. She had a hard time fighting the westerlies, illness and depression.

The book does not tell us much of her life after leaving Patagonia, but according to the Internet Mary and son went to live in Sydney, while Will went to Queensland. Beside being a prolific writer, Mary was also a founder-member of the Lyceum Club (Sydney), founder and vice-president of the Fellowship of Australian Writers, member of the NSW Institute of Journalists and life member of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. She was regarded as one of Australia's most popular and widely read poets. She campaigned for better working conditions for working women, for children's welfare and for a better deal for the Indigenous Australians. In spite of her somewhat controversial politics, Mary accepted appointment as a Dame of the Order of the British Empire in 1937 becoming Dame Mary Gilmore DBE. She lived in an apartment in Kings Cross, Sydney for many years with a series of housekeepers, her son having died earlier. Her image appears on the Australian \$10 note, along with some text of one of her poems. She died in 1962 at the age of 97 years and was accorded a state funeral.

A remarkable woman, who believed in living life to the full, one of her poems begins with "Yea! I have lived". This book about her early adult life is well told and recommended.

**Mount Cameron 4****MT. ASPIRING NATIONAL PARK.**

In January 1863, Charles Cameron, a Southland explorer and prospector, discovered for Europeans a route that had been used by Maori for many years to cross from Otago to the west coast. This Pass was later named "Haast" by Julius Haast who crossed the same Col at a later date. { He had information of Charles Cameron's earlier crossing of this Pass}. Though Julius Haast claimed to have discovered this Pass, there is no doubt that Charles Cameron was the first pakeha to use the route.

A peak, in the Mount Aspiring National Park, at 1783 meters above sea level, approximately 10km west of the Haast Pass was named **Mt. Cameron** in recognition of Charles Cameron's exploration of the area.

(See *Camerons Remember* Page 47 for more detail)

This is the fourth in a series by Mike Topham



Charles Cameron's powder flask, found on a cairn on Mt. Cameron

Displayed at DOC Makarora

Photo: Editor

Our First Lighters -- Updates and messages (More next Issue)

Shona 2006

Well, I'm just writing this after watching the Scotland v All Blacks game, bit disappointing from Scotland's point of view but I guess a win was a bit optimistic! Summer has been a busy time and saw me fighting my way down the Royal Mile during the Fringe with 40 Russians in tow! To put this in context I spent most of my holidays working at a summer camp which takes in international students with the view of improving their English through lessons, cultural tours and sports activities. Thoroughly enjoyed

the time at camp although injuring my knee the second week in did hamper things to a certain extent but all is well and I'm in training for a triathlon in March as well as learning to kayak. Aside from the leisure side of things I'm now into my third year of Physiology, Sports Science and Nutrition at Glasgow University. Although I enjoy living in Glasgow, I do often reflect on my time in New Zealand and look forward to coming back over to see you all in a few years time. Hope to see some of you during the gathering next year. *(I've just heard that Shona will be in NZ & Australia during her Christmas holidays - Ed)*



Robert 2008



I am currently in my second year of studying Scottish traditional music at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow. The course is based around your instrument of choice and mine is the button key accordion, but I also do fiddle for a second study. As well as the practical side of playing instruments the course covers the history of music in Scotland, the Gaelic language and various different aspects of the music industry. When I have completed the course I will hopefully achieve a

BA honours in Scottish traditional music.

After the course I think I would like to have a job that had something to do with music, but it would be good to do something flexible so I could carry on with working the croft at home in Kenra. I currently play in a ceilidh band usually once or twice a week which helps to keep the pennies in the pocket while I'm at college. Hopefully I can keep on going with that and play at different events round the country and maybe further afield. Well that's overview of myself and I look forward to seeing you all at Achnacarry in the summer.

Bill 2003

As 2008 draws to an end, I've had a busy year at Lochaber High, teaching all years and all levels. Alongside teaching I am involved in a number extra curricular activities, one of which has seen me don biblical robes and a woolly sheep under my arm whilst playing Jacob in the school production of 'Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.' I have also been doing a fair amount of cycling round about Lochaber. At the moment I am kept busy trying to write a book and draw illustrations to go with it.

2008 has been a good year of travels, having visited France, Italy and of course travelling the length of New Zealand - Cape Reinga to Stewart Island in the summer. Next year I hope to travel to India.

I continue to take an interest in various Cameron matters here in Lochaber, and am currently involved in the organizing committee for the International Gathering in August next year.

I would like to wish all the Camerons in New Zealand a very happy festive season and a prosperous 2009.



Shona 2001



My news is that I've a new job. I'm starting with the Scottish Parliament in couple of weeks which I'm really excited about. It's in the press office again. But it's a senior position – and a newly created one at that – leading a new team to promote the business of the Parliamentary committees and full Parliamentary meetings. So that should be quite a challenge – but one I'm really looking forward to – and am ready for. With a few recent changes here at the Council, it really is a good time to make the move. Though, of course, I'm only moving down the road from my current work premises to the Parliamentary building.

And of course we're on the count down to Edinburgh's summer festivals – which always

means a busy summer with plenty to see and do. The city is already starting to fill up with tourists!! I feel so much the local as I complain about the fact it takes nearly half an hour to battle my way through the crowds lining the High Street as I make my way to and from meetings!

Plans are already underway here for the Gathering 2009 so I'm looking forward to catching up with you while you're here in Edinburgh. And I may even get to tag along when you do the tour of the Parliament. But I'll no doubt be involved in working on some of the planning events.

By Editor. Shona sent this in June but she promises an update soon.

A message from our President



Dear Clan Cameron Members

Around the world people of Scottish decent celebrate their ancestral roots in many different ways; some do so by attending clan gatherings, others take a trip

to their local annual Highland games, whilst many do so by supporting one of the many Scottish based Associations and Societies. More recently the Tartan day celebrations were conceived as a celebration of Scotland and to increase the bonds of friendship between the homeland and those of Scottish descent.

Many people, who claim Scottish descent closely, associate themselves with a particular Scottish clan. No more is this true than outside of Scotland where membership of Clan Associations is taken up enthusiastically by those wishing to associate themselves with their Scottish descendants and who, in some way, want to connect with their ancestral homeland.

The word **clann** means children or family in Gaelic. A clan can be described as a community that lived in a particular geographical location under the protection of a clan chief. Members of this community could be related to the chief by blood or they could be dwelling upon his land. The members of the community, or clansmen, gave their loyalty to the clan chief and in return he gave them protection, justice and leadership.

The Chief was the head of the clan and this role was usually inherited by the eldest son from a legal union although this was not always what happened - infighting and civil strife were at times known to follow the death of a chief.

**Joy and I would like to wish you the
Camerons a very happy Christmas**

A person can be considered a member of a clan if they bear the surname or they offer allegiance to the clan chief who has accepted this allegiance; however in the past anyone living on a given chief's land was considered to be part of the clan.

I have here these words that were written over one hundred and twenty years ago: "Great important changes have lately been wrought in the North of Scotland and much that was not long ago a matter of observation has already passed into the category of the things that were. Old feelings, old habits, old prejudices, old customs, old traditions, and old superstitions are daily dying out and being forgotten. The process of assimilation is advancing with singular rapidity and effect; and there is reason to believe that in a few years more, scarcely a trace will remain of those characteristics by which the Highlanders were so long distinguished. Modern innovations have proved fatal to the poetry of the national character. The voice of tradition is mute; old things have passed away; and all things are becoming new. But in the page of the Chronicler, of the Historian, there will still be found materials sufficient to revive the remembrance of the past and to cherish the proud feelings of Nationality which is

the only solid foundation and the best inheritance of any people". What magic words and how true this is becoming [My thanks to Frank Cameron]

Once again this year is rapidly coming to an end and Christmas is nearly upon us. Joy and I would like to wish you the Camerons a very happy Christmas, with lots of quality time with your family and enjoy your time together and may you all have a wonderful New Year. Do make the most of your family and friends over the festive season – they are so important in our lives.

Wishing you all the timeless treasures of Christmas the warmth of home, the love of family and the company of good friends. Please do take care everybody and drive safely.

"Leis gach dhurach and Slainte mhath"
[With every good wish and good health]

Denis Cameron

The 2009 Cameron Gathering:

The Clan Cameron trip being organised by John Cameron of Operatunity Travel club is selling very well with over 30 people booked and has only 8 spaces left at present. If you are still interested in this trip to the Gathering in Edinburgh as well as attending the Clan Cameron Gathering in Fort William in July 2009 do contact John or Lisa on Toll Free 0580 266 237 or see their website for a full information pack . www.operatunity.co.nz

The 2009 Poetry and Prose Competition

I have left the size and the theme open because many of you will be travelling to the International Gathering in Scotland and hopefully will find much material of interest to inspire you

I will arrange judges and prizes, etc.

Dorothy

Please have your entries in by 1 October 2009 to Dorothy L Cameron-Gavin, Clan Historian. (Address on next page)

Cameron Cards and Cameron Jigsaws

Are still available from the editor for Christmas
And will make great gifts

Jigsaws at special price of \$15 plus postage \$5
Cards 10 for \$10, 5 for \$6 plus postage \$1 for up to 2 packs





Aonaibh ri Cheile

Cameron

is the magazine 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 February issue:

15 January 2009

Please send to:

*Neil Cameron,
Newsletter Editor
28 Oxford Terrace,
Devonport,
North Shore City 0624*

*Phone: 09 446 1177
Email: kncam@pl.net*

Printed by

Hereditary Chief and Captain of Clan Cameron
Donald Angus Cameron of Lochiel,
Lord Lieutenant of Inverness,
Achnacarry, Spean Bridge,
Imverness-shire, Scotland. PH34 4ES

New Zealand President and Commissioner
Denis Cameron
8 Kokomo Key, Papamoa, Tauranga. 3118
Ph. (07) 575 4659 Fax (07) 575 4661
camisky@clear.net.nz

Secretary
Heather Lowes,
45 Newnham Rd, RD2, Te Puna, Tauranga
Ph. (07) 552 4952 hlowes@hotmail.com

Treasurer
Lena Cameron
1/1 Dumfries Drive, Riccarton Park,
Christchurch. 8042
Ph. (03) 342 5467 lena.cameron@xtra.co.nz

Genealogist
Audrey Rosoman
106 Mansels Rd, Greerton Tauranga
Ph. (07) 578 4562. audreyrosoman@xtra.co.nz

Historian
Dorothy Cameron-Gavin
70 Main Highway, Ellerslie 5, Auckland
Ph. (09) 579 7543

First Light Exchange Convenor
Mary Barber
5 King Street, Feilding.
Ph. (06) 323 5906. mbarber@nettel.net.nz

Branch Presidents

Auckland
Donald (DJ) Cameron
34 Aldred Road Remuera
Ph. (09) 520 0716 valdon@xtra.co.nz

Bay of Plenty
Fraser Cameron
P.O Box 180 15 St.John's Rd., Opotiki.
Ph. (07) 315 7105. Fax (07) 3158527

Gisborne
David Cameron,
885 Wharekopae Rd, RD2 Gisborne.
Ph. (06) 862 7803 camerondvd@xtra.co.nz

Hawke's Bay
Helen Shaw
3/33 Avondale Road, Napier.
Ph. (06) 844 8398. locaber@xtra.co.nz

Taranaki/Wanganui
Martin Brown,
453 Whakamara Rd. RD 12, Hawera 4672
Ph. (06) 273 4488. martin.brown@farmside.co.nz

Manawatu
John Cameron,
4 Kingston St. Palmerston North
Ph. (06) 358 0417.

Wellington /Wairarapa
Rob Cameron
26D Willow Park Drive, Masterton
Ph. (06) 377 0377 dungallan@gmail.com

Canterbury
Alex Cameron,
1/1 Dumfries Drive, Riccarton Park, Christchurch
Ph (03) 342 5467 alex.cameron@xtra.co.nz

Coming events

Sunday 7 December 2008

Wanganui/Taranaki Branch AGM

Hawera Club, High Street, Hawera. 2pm.
All existing and new Clan members welcome
Enquiries to Martin Brown 06 273 4488 or Alan
Drake 06 278 6206.

Saturday 13 December 2008

Palmerston North Square Day

Manawatu Clan Cameron will be holding a stall selling sizzled sausages and haggis sandwiches, always very popular.
Enquiries to John Cameron. 06 358 0417

Thursday 1 January 2009

138th Waipu Highland Games.

To be opened by Aucklands Lewis Turrell MBE. This is the 50th anniversary of him becoming the first New Zealander piper to win the Gold Medal at the Northern Meeting in Inverness. A great day for all - come and support the Camerons in the Grand March.
www.highlandgames.co.nz

Saturday 31 January 2009

145th Turakina Highland Games

Cameron Road, Turakina.
NZ's oldest Highland Games. Come and enjoy a day in the country. Starts 8.30am.
www.turakinahighlandgames.co.nz

Saturday 14 February 2009

Paeroa Highland Games

9am till 9pm The Cameron tent will be there.
www.paeroahighlandgames.co.nz

Friday 20 February 2009

Auckland BBQ to meet President of Clan Cameron Scotland

Early evening. Full details in next magazine
Enquiries to Editor or Don 09 520 0716

Saturday 4 July 2009

Tartan Day - Preliminary Notice

Wesley Methodist Hall, 100 13th Avenue, Tauranga.
Hall open 9.30, assemble at 10am for short march.
Lunch, concert pm. Finish 3pm.
Enquiries to: Denis Cameron (07) 575 4659 or
Ray Crafts (07) 577 9562

Useful Websites

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

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

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

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

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

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



Photo: Alex Gillespie

Above: Aerial view of Eilead na Craoibhe and the pulp mill - see Cameron Castles Pt 1

Left: Achnacarry during the Second World War. Note the Nissen Huts to house the Commandos See pages 10/11

The picture above and the Commando pictures on page 11 are from 'Castle Commando' by Donald Gilchrist

President of Clan Cameron Scotland to visit New Zealand

Alan Cameron and his wife Elizabeth will be in New Zealand in February and March 2009.

They will visit Auckland, Bay of Islands, Rotorua, Wellington, Nelson, Greymouth, Franz Josef, Queenstown, Te Anau, Dunedin, Omarama and Christchurch.

It appears that they will have a busy schedule but say they would love to meet Camerons throughout New Zealand. If any members would like to contact Alan and Elizabeth during their travels, please get in touch with Denis or Neil, who will advise their detailed itinerary.



Clan Oak Woodland



The Clan Cameron Association has received approval from Lochiel to plant an oak grove, dedicated to the memory of Cameron Clansfolk from yesteryear and today, on a plot of land by the gate to Achnacarry near where Camerons mustered prior to joining Prince Charles at Glenfinnan in 1745.

Visitors will be able to walk amongst a beautiful memorial grove of oaks, which are the ancient plant badge associated with the Clan Cameron, and take a great measure of pride in this eco-minded initiative.

At the EC meeting in Turangi, President Denis said that Lochiel wanted no gifts at the coming gathering but branches, individuals or families may consider giving an oak tree for the grove. The cost, which includes maintenance, is £100 per tree.

The committee approved the purchase of an oak tree on behalf of Clan Cameron New Zealand.



Florence Cameron, front left, receives flowers from Sheena MacGruer, Montrose Centre manager, to mark her retirement from Highland Council's social work service. Picture: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

Social worker bids farewell after 25 years

COLLEAGUES past and present turned out to the Montrose Centre in Inverlochty last Friday to bid good wishes to Florence Cameron on her retirement after 25 years' service with Highland Council.

Mrs Cameron, from Inverlochty, has spent the majority of that time with the council's social work service, working at the Angus Centre, Invernevis House, Caol Community Centre and latterly at the Montrose Centre.

Flowers, jewellery and a new

fridge freezer were amongst the gifts received by Mrs Cameron at Friday's farewell ceremony.

Mrs Cameron, a former dinner lady at Inverlochty Primary School, said: "I've enjoyed my time with the social work service and have worked with fantastic colleagues over these 25 years.

"I'm looking forward to retirement, although I will miss everyone. I thank everyone for the wonderful gifts, cards and good wishes."

This cutting from *Lochaber News* was sent by Margaret Cameron. Florence, mother of First Lighter David, is well known to us in NZ.

The Cameron Midge

The day of the Clansmen at fair Achnacarry
There attended a Midge at the Cameron Rally,
Caught unawares by this gathering super,
She stared for a while, more or less in a stupor.

All winter she'd dozed in a state comatose,
Proof against frost and the wild winter blows,
She awoke near a stag herd on steep Arkaigside,
So, her breakfast of stag was tough as bullhide.

On Arkaig Isle she spied a MacPhee,
She fancied him not, so lean was he,
MacMillans she sought, Ochone! All in vain,
The'd all sailed away in the good ship *Jane*.

Razzing around, she espied more leather,
There, poaching the Cameron hens in the heather
A Campbell man's neck, all shaggy and rough
No grace said for **that!** Lor' it was tough!

She next at a MacIntosh cheek made a barge,
She might well have bitten his claymore or targe,
He swished out his hand in a mighty big clout,
And lo' When she left him, her milk teeth fell out!

She avoided by inches, a flying cuckoo,
Tho' hairless and toothless, by gosh he could chew.
To this bird from the bushes, she buzzed a "so long,"
And let him go cooing his boring old song.

Near a cave on a hillside she spied a MacPherson,
But recalled that her grandma had met such a person
Which accounted for grandma being blind in one eye,
So the person, MacPherson, she gave the go-by.

A MacDonald she tasted, and too, a MacNeil
But both savoured much of the tattie and meal.
She stuck, near the hillock just over the brae,
In the whiskers that grew on a woolly MacRae!

In a boatp'raps borrowed from Clansman MacBrayne,
She saw, poaching salmon, a kilted MacLean,
At boring his temples she soon called a halt,
As the blood o' such boatmen taste of herring and salt.

She punctured a Stewart.Prince Charlie breed,
But a sip of his blood was "blue" indeed.
She sipped no more for fearing the worst,
She felt that her head was going to burst.

Came the Cameron men, not a moment too soon,
Or our midge would have died of starvation in June.
Lean spiders in cobwebs would shun her as **dud**
Till she sipped a wee drop o' the Cameron blood.

Ye gods! What a sight for a true Highland midge,
Came bussing that day o'er Gairloch bridge,
Showing no stinting or measures by halves,
Here then, were knees and **magnificent** calves.

She eluded the clerk and gatecrashed the wicket,
Without pedigree, pass or platform ticket,
She selected for practice, a chiel lang and lank,
and "Stars and Stripes" on a Cameron Yank.

She sampled one ear, she thought it delicious,
But the next one she tasted, she was not so vicious,
It came from Argyle Street, sooty and gritty,
'Twas a lug on a Cameron head from the city.

She dared e'en to look the great chief in the eye,
As the march of the Clansmen, he viewed passing by,
To the skirling of pipers she whetted her sting,
As she dodged flying toes in a wild Highland Fling

Came her sisters along in numberless tens,
Pinging and winging their way down the glens,
Each to a neck or temple or cheek,
Most flavoured of all? The Cameron beak!

At the end of the feast, she was minus a mother,
Slain by a slap from a Cameron brother,
And, flat as a pancake, her father all out,
Had rashly encountered the chief in a bout.

She blistered the ankles of Marys and Kates,
Went skidding and dancing on bald headed pates,
What use claymores or trusty black knives,
To save from her onslaught, their sweethearts and wives.

Finale

*While rejoicing and praising this goodness provided
Our midge with a song singing mavis* collided.*

One swallow... Alas!

Meant farewell to her glen

As the mavis changed tune...to:

The Cameron Men

* *mavis* - A song thrush.



The above poem is by **Johnnie Wilson**, the Bard of Bogmonie, whose poem *An Gearasdan Dubh* appeared in our August issue. The poem above does show another side to the Achnacarry Gatherings, one which many Camerons may experience next year.

In *An Gearasdan Dubh*, Johnnie wrote about John the blacksmith. The photograph on left was sent to me by First Lighter David Cameron and shows on the right his great grandfather John Cameron, who is the blacksmith in the poem. David says he was also known as Jocky the Blacksmith. His assistant was also named John Cameron so they were known as Big Jocky and Wee Jocky. He had a "smiddy" at Corpach and another in Fort William.

Do you have any midge stories?

Editor

Cameron Castles in Lochabar Part Two - Achnacarry Houses

by Bill Cameron November 2008

Leaving the ruins of Torcastle, we see the Cameron chiefs move northwards along the Great Glen in 1665 to *AchNa CairIdh* – Achnacarry, translated as ‘the field of the weir’. It is widely thought that this, the third of the Cameron chief’s residences in Lochabar, was strategically located further afield in order to create a greater distance between the opposing government troops based at *An Gearasdan*, (*The Garrison*) or Fort William as it is now known.

In his book ‘The Camerons’ John Stewart provides a brief description of the Old House at Achnacarry from a gentleman writing in 1723. “Locheal’s principal residence is in Auchincarry in Lochabar, where he hath a large house, all built of planks, the handsomest of that kind in Britain”. It is widely believed that the wooden planks mentioned in the letter would have come from nearby *An t-seann Fhrith* – The old Forest, a Caledonian pine-wood situated in nearby Glenmallie. The majority of this old forest survived well into the 20th century, but was unfortunately burnt down in 1943 in an accidental fire caused by Commandos when they were based at the present day Achnacarry House. It is worth highlighting that even back in 1723, the Cameron chief’s residence is referred to as a ‘large house’ and not a castle, something you might expect for such a prominent Highland chief of the time.

Considered by some as the last remains of this residence, all that can be seen today is a lonesome stone stack standing outside the fenced grounds of new Achnacarry House. Consisting of a wide fireplace, lintel and chimney flume - its fragile structure is now capped with an interwoven tree on its upper reaches.

In a conversation with the writer Donald MacCulloch, Donald Walter Cameron, the present Lochiel’s grandfather, raised doubts as to whether this was in fact the Old Achnacarry House, believing instead that the Old House was situated on a different site and that the stone remains could in fact pre-date the first Cameron House at Achnacarry. This question was recently rekindled when I spoke with a local gentleman from Achnacarry, who also believed that the stone stack was not the remains of the Cameron chiefs home, believing instead that the original Achnacarry House was situated to the rear of the present day house. Who knows, maybe in years to come an archaeological survey may unearth its true location.

What we do know for certain is that Duke of Cumberland’s forces burnt down Old Achnacarry House in revenge for the Cameron chiefs allegiance to Prince Charles Edward on May 28th 1746 - destroying the large timber house and most of the valuable collection of Cameron papers and artifacts within, that could have informed us even further about our collective past.

This point in Cameron history, and indeed Highland history in general would see the fires of the old Clan system

extinguished forever. For many generations the chief had been the father like figure, guiding important decisions of the day which in turn, affected many peoples daily existence. Such long-standing bonds between clans folk and their chief had been severed and would never quite be the same again.

With the Prince and the Gentle Lochiel both on the run from Government troops, we are presented with a poignant picture of Achnacarry in 1746 in John Gibson’s book ‘The Gentle Lochiel’, in which he portrays the aftermath of the fire at Achnacarry House. “The following day must have been an ordeal for Lochiel as they rested at ruined Achnacarry with fire-blackened buildings all around. Dearth was general; there was no meal to be had anywhere in the Lochabar glens”.

Following the burning of old Achnacarry House, The Gentle Lochiel fled to France where he lived until his death in 1748. The Cameron estates were forfeited to the crown and a new law was introduced forbidding the carrying of arms, the wearing of Highland dress (tartan), amongst other draconian measures - the like of which we would probably refer to today as ethnic cleansing.

Much has already been written about this dark episode in history, romanticised and sympathetic in equal measure. However, I think it is important to make mention of it none the less as it illustrates a pivotal point in the demise of the old clan system, as well seeing the disappearance of a principal residence of the Cameron chiefs in Lochabar for some fifty six years until work began on the present Achnacarry House in 1802.

Donald Cameron of Lochiel, the 22nd Chief of Clan Cameron, having no residence in Lochabar since the demise of Old Achnacarry, instigated the building of the present day Achnacarry House under the architectural direction of James Gillespie Graham (1776 –1855). However, it seems that building projects were equally slow to progress even back in the 1800’s, as the new building was not completed for well over forty years. Reading an account of a Mr. J. Mitchell who visited the house in 1837, thirty five years after its beginning, we are presented with a scene of the time, “the plaster ornaments of the ceiling lay all that time on the floor ready to be fixed, and the doors of the rooms, of beautiful Highland pine grown brown with age, leaned against walls ready to be screwed on.”

Sadly, due to financial constraints along with the fact that the chiefs wife, Lady Anne Cameron never really settled in to the Highland way of life the couple parted company and the chief resided in London. The house remained incomplete until his son, Donald, the 23rd Chief succeeded him.

The architect of Achnacarry, Gillespie Graham, was responsible for many notable works throughout Scotland, including other country houses. It is however as a Church architect I believe that his work stands out - most notably in



works such as St Mary's Cathedral in Edinburgh and Snizort Parish Church on the Isle of Skye.

Most of his works can be interpreted as being Gothic revival in style. One architectural historian has defined the style of Achnacarry House as "a castellated Gothic mansion". The incorporation of turrets, crenellated battlements and small lancet windows can all be seen on the front facade of Achnacarry House. The incorporation of such elements is better known as Scottish Baronial, where architectural features are taken from older castles and tower houses, and reinvented, not for military reasons, but in paying homage to a bygone era. Other well-known examples of Scottish Baronial architecture include Balmoral Castle on Royal Deeside and Andrew Carnegie's Skibo Castle in Sutherland.

Back in 2005 I had the pleasure of speaking to a remarkable lady (then 94) who was brought up at the head of Loch Arkaig, but who had also spent time living and working in the old Post Office at Achnacarry – now the Clan Museum. During this conversation Bella recalled her memories of the 'big house' as she called it when all the estate employees would gather at Achnacarry for a large annual party in the house. Back then she recalled there were quite a number of staff employed in the running of the house, she herself helped out in the kitchen on a number of occasions.

During Achnacarry House's two hundred and six year history, it has probably seen more military action than most large houses in Scotland have and has survived pretty well considering. Like nearby Inverailort House, then owned by the Cameron-Head family, Achnacarry was requisitioned by the Government as a training centre. From February 1942 onwards, the ancestral home of the Camerons would now become the training home for the Commandos. During this period the Lochiel family moved to nearby Clunes Lodge.

Given the estimated 25,000 men who passed through the gates at Achnacarry, many tales of the house's history during this period have fortunately been recorded, giving us an insight into demanding basic training regime that went on within the house and the surrounding estate.

Those interested in military history may like to know that a new book has recently been published called 'Commando Country', by Stuart Allen. Another well-known title that has also recently been republished is 'Castle Commando', in which Donald Gilchrist (himself a former Commando) records his experiences of life at Achnacarry House during this time.

With Armistice Sunday just past, many serving and ex-service men and women gathered once again around the

Commando Memorial at Spean Bridge on a cold and wet afternoon as they have done since the monument was unveiled by the Queen mother in 1952. At the base of the monument reads the Commando motto 'United we Conquer'. One can't but draw a comparison with the Cameron motto – Unite. Anyone who has visited this location will possibly remember the incredible panoramic views it offers across to the Grey Corries and Nevis Range – even in the rain! More importantly, the memorial of three Commandos standing together with their packs overlooking the land in which they trained is a constant reminder of the service these brave men who were taught at Achnacarry performed on behalf of the nation.

In 2008 we see Achnacarry House evolving yet again, as it currently undergoes extensive renovations to keep it wind and watertight for the next generation. Like many other large houses across Scotland, the battle to keep everything in order is not an easy or inexpensive task. Throughout its rich and varied two hundred and six years history, Achnacarry House has been threatened by serious fires on two separate occasions, withstood the demands of operating as a military base, survived the notoriously inclement Lochaber weather and functioned as the family home to the Camerons of Lochiel.

From the first recorded Cameron settlement on the island of the trees in 1335, the Cameron Clan have continued to maintain successive strongholds in Lochaber six hundred and seventy three years later. This is an amazing feat in itself when you look at the many stone ruins of clan seats scattered throughout Scotland.

At the outset of this article, I set out to establish whether there ever was such a thing as a Cameron Castle in Lochaber, however, it now seems besides the point whether we refer to the various Clan chiefs' residences as Castles or Houses – they were and in the case of new Achnacarry House, still is the home of the Clan chief and continue to be worthy focal points for fellow Camerons coming from far afield to visit.

On a final note, it may be worth reflecting on the lands that surround the various sites of the Cameron Castles throughout the ages. These lands were no doubt lived on and worked by our ancestors. I expect they too would have witnessed the ebb and flow of the tides, dammed and praised the many millions of rain drops that continue to fall upon on the land (*especially in Lochaber*) and stored the same magnificent sunsets in their minds eye at the end of a wonderful summers day. It is to them we should think and thank – if it were not for them you would not be reading this today.



The Officer's Mess, Achnacarry Castle, in Commando days



The Commando Fleet at Bunarkaig



Aonaibh ri Cheile

'Cameron' December 2008

The Back Page



Photos of Camerons
near and far



Smile! Don Cameron, Alex Cameron, Mike Topham, Helen Shaw and Fraser Cameron at the EC Meeting. *Photo: Editor*



Photo: Colin Cameron

John Cameron, new President of the Manawatu Branch



Andrew, Fraser, Colin and Harold at Turangi *Photo: Editor*



Bill at Cameron Brae on the road to Oban.



Where are all the Camerons?
A lonely marcher at the Auckland Highland Games *Photo: Val Cameron*



Photo: Mike Topham

Bruce and Neolin Cameron at the Cambridge Gathering



Farewelling Margaret Cameron and Dan Morgan from Lochaber College at Auckland Airport are Valmar, Ruth and Don *Photo: Editor*



Photo: Editor

At Turangi EC Meeting - the real workers : Ruth, Joy, Elaine, Lena, Joy, Heather and Mary



Hazel Cameron, Helen Renner, Joy and Denis Cameron at the Cambridge Gathering

photo from Denis



Back: Mary Barber, Alistair Cameron, Maisie and Dick Earle, Colin Cameron.
Front: Neal Gilchrist, John Cameron, Margaret Cameron, Joy Cameron, Mrs Gilchrist.
A Manawatu function to meet Margaret. *Photo from Margaret Cameron*