



Clan Gunn Society of
New Zealand Inc

Newsletter

August 2010



Contents

President's Patter

Dunedin Clan Report

Mid Winter Celtic Lunch / Auckland Contact / Advertising

Christchurch Clan Report

Unveiling of the Plaque – Canterbury Scottish Pioneer Tribute

New Members / Annual 10 Pin Bowling Christchurch Clash

A Time to Remember – A Time to Honour

Tribute – Doris Margaret Thomson (nee Gunn)

Photo Shots

Thomas (Tom) Hawker

Coming Events – Christchurch

Some Thoughts from the Past

Celebration News

Jess' Story

Council Members – 2009-2010

Editor's Note: *The 22nd Annual General Meeting is scheduled for 29 – 31 October 2010. The Agenda and Registration form and "Stop Press" Notice were mailed/emailed separately (due to the 04/09/10 'quake this Newsletter was held back). If you are attending and have not to date registered, please do so and return the Registration form to Todd Wall by 21 October 2010 so that catering/accommodation numbers can be finalised.*

We are also endeavouring to set up an Album or Photo Gallery on the Clan Gunn Website to enable members to see the variety of Photos we have.

If you are aware of anyone that did not receive the Newsletter, please let me know either via email clangunn@snap.net.nz or 03 323 9011 (please leave a message if I am not in). Thanks.

President's Patter

Clan is family and although I am not aware of any Clan member passing, I would like to extend my sincere condolences to any members that have lost loved ones over the past six months.

The Website has now passed into the hands of a website manager to relieve David Gunn of that particular burden as he had so much work of his own to contend with. Many thanks to David for a job well done and for the time he gave to the Clan. I'm sure you would all join me in congratulating Sue Gunn on a superb job with the February Newsletter as well, which was her first one. Well done Sue.

If every member gets behind both the Website and the Newsletter then we will have a first class communication system going, not only for Clan members but for people seeking information to join the Clan so please let us have your articles and ideas because without them the Clan dies. Three or four of us can't do it alone. Articles don't have to be about Clan stuff. They can be about your pets' or your children's or grandchildren's antics, your holidays or anything else that you think people will enjoy reading. Chris Gunn and I have asked members to contribute this sort of thing before but with little response. It is your Clan so please help. If you can find other people to join the Clan then that also would be a big help. If you would like information packages to give to people then please contact **Marie Gunn (03) 323 6608** or **Todd Wall (03) 481 1105** and we will send them out to you.

Our AGM is coming up on the last weekend of October this year and it would be lovely to see many more members attending. It will be held at Lindisfarne, near Cave in Canterbury. There is no election of Officers this year so you don't have to fear being put on any committee. We just need you there to give your opinions and ideas and enjoy the weekend catching up with fellow Clan members and information. It's a beautiful setting with very good facilities.

During nearly the whole of March 2011 we have the honour of having the North American President, Rich Gunn and his wife Linda visiting us. Sheila, Joyce Shield and I will be hosting them and they are keen to meet as many Gunn's as possible during the time they are here. They will be mainly situated in Dunedin with a visit to Christchurch so we will try and have the dates arranged for next February's Newsletter.

Yours Aye

Todd Wall

President, Clan Gunn Society of New Zealand (Inc)

Dunedin- Clan Gunn Report March 2010 – August 2010

3 March 2010: Todd, Sheila and Joyce were invited by the Green Island Ladies Probus Club to give a talk on their trip to Scotland for the Edinburgh Homecoming and the Clan Gunn Gathering. We dressed for the part and gave what we were told was a very interesting talk with a slide show to enhance it which lasted about half an hour. Lots of questions were fired at us all of which we managed to answer. Not only was the talk about the Homecoming but about our trip from Edinburgh to Thurso and the adventures which befell us on the way. The ladies were interested in hearing more but time was against us and we had to conclude because of it. I think we would have been there all day if they had had their way.

7 March 2010: 14 Dunedin Clan members attended our first meeting of the year at Bonny Flynn's house where we enjoyed convivial company, good food in the form of quiche, new potatoes and cauliflower with Dijon mustard sauce, followed by a yummy trifle, teas and coffees (cost \$6.00 per head). This covers the price of the ingredients with the remainder of the proceeds together with the proceeds from our Autumn raffle going towards the mini bus trip, which Ray Ferguson has kindly volunteered to drive to Lindisfarne (AGM) in October. The proceeds also cover the end of year Christmas function which was a sumptuous free meal with all the Christmas goodies last year and hopefully will be again this year.

11 April 2010: I flew from Invercargill to Christchurch to attend a meeting of Clan Committee and Council members (Todd Wall, Chris Gunn, Marie Gunn, Ben Gunn, Kathy and John Sauer and Sue Gunn) to discuss certain outstanding items with them such as the Website, Newsletter and other matters. It was great to catch up with the Canterbury Gunns. We had lunch at Marie and Ben's house for which many thanks to Marie. Chris and Sue went home to have lunch and change into Highland gear to attend the unveiling of the plaque to the Early Canterbury Scottish Pioneers and we all met at the venue for the unveiling where it was my pleasure to meet up again with Pouroto Ngaropo and Christine Wilson who had been in Edinburgh for the Gathering. It was a fitting tribute and a handsome bronze plaque. Marie took me to the airport and I flew back to Dunedin that evening.

13 June 2010: 13 Dunedin Clan members attended a Gathering at Graham and Sue Patterson's house where a

lovely lunch of soup with plain or crusty rolls, followed by Jam Roly Poly with custard or cream which was consumed amidst convivial conversation and laughter, as everybody caught up on the latest news from their fellow clans folk. I reminded everybody about the upcoming AGM and most of them seemed keen to attend and I think this is due to the mini bus being so popular.

Our next meeting will be in September.

Todd Wall

Mid Winter Celtic Lunch

The day dawned clear and bright albeit cold for the Dunedin Green Island Probus Ladies Celtic Lunch. Joyce Shield and I, both Gunn members, arranged for Dougal MacKay to pipe the ladies off the coach which had transported them to the Leisure Lodge Hotel. Everyone was asked to wear tartan or green for Ireland (no leeks appeared for Wales). They got into the spirit of the occasion and obliged with a resplendent turnout in tartans and greens. Once drinks had been purchased we were all piped into the dining room and Dougal kindly said a Gaelic blessing before playing a few Scottish Melodies. During lunch Irene, a student of music at the University, entertained us with Celtic music. All in all a very enjoyable mid Winter Celtic lunch.

Sheila Wall

Auckland Contact

Anyone wishing to get together with other Clan members in Auckland and district, please contact **Christine Wilson on 09 624 2125** who would welcome your enquiries and she will be glad to organise a gathering and begin an Auckland Group to strengthen the Clan in the North Island. Your support for the Clan would be invaluable.

Sheila Wall



Advertising in this Newsletter.

It has been decided to offer space in our Newsletters for people wishing to advertise their products or services. The acceptance of advertisements will be entirely at the discretion of the Council. The cost will be half page - \$30 – full page \$50.

Contact Todd Wall or Marie Gunn – phone numbers and e mail addresses in this Newsletter.

different occupations. My room-mate was Myra Wynn, a telephone exchange operator.

Christchurch - Clan Gunn Report

A 90th Birthday Celebration.



On March 28th this year we celebrated the 90th birthday of Isabel Findlay (nee Gunn). Isabel is the daughter of the late Davey Gunn of Hollyford, and the sister of Murray Gunn who took over the running of Gunn's Camp in Hollyford Valley after his Father's death – and was to stay there for 50 years before his retirement. We all enjoyed a very pleasant afternoon. Congratulations Isabel! As you will see from the photograph, Isabel is a very young 90 year old.

Isabel (seated), Marie, Val, Chris, Helen and Ben (seated) & Sue

Remembering our Scottish Pioneers: On April 11th this year, members of Clan Gunn joined with members of many other clans to

witness the unveiling of a memorial to the Scottish pioneers in Canterbury.

It has taken many years and much dedicated work by members of the Scottish Heritage Council to raise the funds for this memorial as well as going through all the necessary protocol. We applaud those people whose persistence brought about this memorable occasion. *

An Enjoyable Gathering: Twenty-eight people gathered together on 10th April to enjoy a Ceilidh. We started with a pot-luck lunch. This was followed by the afternoon's entertainment and we finished with afternoon tea.

We were entertained with bagpipes, border pipes, shuttle pipes, keyboard, a piano trio, the cornet and the saxophone as well as poetry. We are most grateful to all our entertainers – Ann Smith, John and Kathy Sauer, Peter and Shirley Aitken and friend, Helen Gunn and friends and Marie Gunn. We also enjoyed a Highland Sing-a-long and the entertainment concluded with Ann on bagpipes and John on Cornet playing Amazing Grace.

We are doubly grateful to John Sauer who managed to play his Cornet despite having cracked ribs and a damaged shoulder. You just can't keep a good man down.

Marie Gunn

Unveiling of the Plaque – A Scottish Pioneer Tribute

Clan members who attended the unveiling of our Memorial Plaque to our Scottish Ancestors on Sunday 11 April 2010, have spoken of the pleasant and friendly afternoon they had with the Blessing from Tom Campbell and the welcome from Pouroto Ngaropo. We were entertained by the City of Christchurch Highland Pipe band and Highland Dancers.

Each Clan that was present had their Banners displayed in the Caledonian Hall, where Clan members spent time talking about their Clans with not only the locals but also overseas visitors. All folks that attended enjoyed a cup of tea and having a chat in the hall after the unveiling.

Val Donald

On behalf of the Heritage Council

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to Bruce and Linda Gunn of Christchurch.

Kathy Sauer

Membership Secretary

ANNUAL 10-PIN BOWLING CLASH: CLAN GUNN v CLAN DONALD

This annual event was held on Sunday 30th May 2010 at Garden City Bowl, preceded by an excellent lunch at Stadium Sports Bar & Bistro opposite AMI Stadium. There was a good turnout again this year, and the competitive fever was running high on both sides, with Clan Gunn's team determined to take the honours for the fourth year in a row, and Clan Donald's team equally determined that this was not going to be! As usual, we all took some time to warm up our bowling arms, and there were the usual "high points and low points in both teams' efforts to get the ever-elusive "STRIKE"!" More of the latter, I feel, and after an hour, Clan Donald emerged the victors with a comprehensive drubbing of Clan Gunn. We salvaged a little smidgeon of honour with Chris Gunn taking out the top score of 113 points, but Clan Donald definitely had the consistency in results with a good solid performance. We look forward to "righting the injustice" next year when we meet again.

Chris Gunn

A Time to Remember – A Time to Honour

To remember and to honour our ancestors can create moving, magical and memorable moments.

At first it was the hand weavers deftly moving those shuttles carrying the weft threads across and between the warp ones - endlessly weaving. Weaving, weaving, weaving.

Then came the mills. Many, many mills and more, smothering the Manchester and Lancashire landscapes. All

endlessly weaving - weaving, weaving, weaving.

My great grandparents, Charles and Mary Jane Dalton lived in Shuttle Street, Eccles, not far from where I was born in 1947. Eccles, in Lancashire in the North-West of England is famous for the delicious currant filled sweet pastries now baked in ovens all around the world. I guess it's because of these roots that I have a love affair with fabrics and food. Lovingly prepared soul food that warms not only our tummies but our hearts as well.

I think of our lives endlessly being woven and intertwined into a magnificent giant quilt of many colourful shades and hues, quaintly decorated with curious designs. I also have roots in Scotland, but the unveiling ceremony that we performed recently at Purewa Cemetery in Auckland on Saturday 3rd July was a celebration and an honoring of my husband's roots.

My husband, John Mahiti Wilson is a descendant of two tribes. His mother Anahera (means Angel) Akuhata Kingi is of the hapu (sub-tribe) of Ngai Te Rangihouhiri, of the iwi (tribe) Ngati Awa of Whakatane, in the Bay of Plenty. His father, Andrew Wilson, of Clan Gunn, ventured as a 16 year old, 100 years ago in 1910, to seek his fortune in this beautiful land of Aotearoa, New Zealand. He left his home in Edinburgh, Scotland carrying a pound note and a Bible gifted to him by his father whose name is also Andrew.

Many adventures followed and many descendants have followed.

My husband's grandparents, Andrew and Marion Wilson also uprooted from Edinburgh and followed some time later and made a new home in Remuera, Auckland.

When they passed, their bodies were buried at Purewa Cemetery and later their daughter, Phyllis, my husband's aunt was also laid to rest there. She had never married.

My husband passed in September 2008. His body was buried near to his mother in Whakatane.

So, on that wintry Saturday morning, cold and crisp but bathed in brilliant sunshine we gathered. A bunch of thirteen of us, including the talented piper, Mervyn Appleton.

We were unveiling the memorial plaque on Aunty Phyl's grave and also visiting the combined grave of her parents Andrew and Marion which was close by. Mervyn's lament pierced the air and I could feel the veil between our two worlds lifting. Tears flowed. Tears of joy – tears of connection – tears of love.

I said there was a bunch of thirteen of us gathered there. Those were the ones who were plainly seen. I felt there were many more. We talked to them and reminisced. We held that 100 year old Bible. We thanked them for their contributions not only to our lives but also to that magnificent quilt of many colours. I read a verse that I had discovered recently in one of Jess Smith's books, "Tales from the Tent." Jess is a renowned Scottish author and storyteller who I learned about after attending 'The Gathering' a year ago in Edinburgh. We have become friends. Apparently this verse is engraved in the kirkyard wall in the wee village of Aberfoyle in Scotland. It goes like this:

*"Think passenger, as you pass by,
And on my tombstone cast an eye,
As you are now so once was I,
As I am now you soon must be,
Therefore prepare to follow me!"*

And the piper played some more.

We decorated the two graves with exquisite circular floral wreaths – the Celtic circle of life – endless - eternal. My local florist, Minam, comes from Korea. She had interpreted my vision for the floral tributes perfectly. I was thrilled. I had desired the look of blooms picked from a Scottish garden of long ago. Delicate and fragrant. Aunty Phyl loved her garden and spent many hours there. I gathered ivy, rosemary, lavender and fern from our own garden. Our Scottish thistles are not blooming at this time. Minam combined these with white roses, some twisted willow and flimsy mauve organza ribbon intertwined. We also included native white manuka to symbolize the connection with this land. Manuka flowers cast in bronze adorned her plaque.

The youngest family member present, our great grandson Enzo, aged 18 months, lifted the plaid covering to reveal the plaque to all. It had been made by Enzo's grandfather, Carin Wilson, John's eldest son.

And the piper played some more.

We motored back to our home in Royal Oak to share some of that soul food together. We live not far from the Scottish shop in Epsom where I'd been able to purchase some delightful paper napkins adorned with Scottish thistles and verses of Robbie

Burns. We also have a precious china cup, saucer and plate decorated with Scottish thistles and this served as a centerpiece on the table acting as a vase to hold some white manuka. A silk Scottish thistle lay beside on the green velvet cloth.

A Scottish friend, Jack Cairns played a CD of traditional tunes he'd been sent by his niece from Scotland. It was brunch time and the menu was simple and hearty. Plenty of piping, hot Scotch broth (meatless – some are vegetarians) with oaten bread rolls, Nairns oat cakes and cheese, Tunnocks Snowballs and caramel wafers and Walkers shortbread – all washed down with IrnBru the famous Scottish soft drink. We are fortunate to have nearby 'The English Corner Shop' owned and operated by Rachel and Graham Lane who import the oat cakes, IrnBru and Tunnocks goodies.

We ate and blathered and ate some more. We looked at old Wilson family photos and were amazed. Little Sandy, Aunty Phyl's brother who passed as a young child was the spitting image of Enzo. How about that? Magic! Weaving... weaving...weaving – weaving us all together!

Christine Bowker Wilson

Doris Margaret Thomson (nee Gunn)



In this Newsletter we feature a number of articles related to one particular Gunn family and it is appropriate that we do so. In November of last year Doris Margaret Thomson (nee Gunn) passed away in her 90th year. Doris was the youngest of four children of John and Margaret Gunn of East Winton. Her sisters Jane and Adelaide and her brother John predeceased her, bringing an end to a chapter in the life of one particular Gunn family. All four had been members of Clan Gunn Society of NZ for many years.

Doris and her husband John had two sons, John and Ross. We include here some of the comments they made at Doris` funeral by John and Ross.

John: "Doris was born in April 1919. Doris was told later on in life that her brother John hid away for a day when she was born because he was hoping for a brother. However they developed a real bond between them and they both went on to work on the family farm. When Doris was 21 she was accepted for nursing in Dunedin Hospital. Ironically her grand daughter Rebecca who turned 21 this year has been accepted for nursing at Perth Royal Hospital, Australia. So Doris` dream of the continuation of Gunn nurses continues for another generation. I can remember her mentioning the blackouts in Dunedin during World War II and the sad farewells made to the troop trains at the Dunedin Railway Station. One of Doris` fears was if the Balclutha Bridge was to be bombed how would she get home to see her family?"

21st AGM Lindisfarne October 2009



Clan Gunn Banner



Addressing the Haggis



Preparatory Work – John & Kathy Sauer



A veritable and enjoyable Feast



A oratory drama – skit



Time to Relax and Enjoy the Sun



In the Caledonian Hall – After the Unveiling of the Plaque – A Tribute to our Scottish Pioneers – 11 April 2010



President Todd Wall holding a Clan Gunn Emblem carving by Harry Wilson of Moerewa who presented it to the Clan



Dunedin Clan Luncheon March/June 2010



The Plaque – Cnr Kilmore Street and Oxford Terrace

The journey of nursing meant that she did her maternity training at Greymouth, followed by a 5 year nursing career at Cromwell. While in Cromwell a certain young man, John McCall Thomson arrived on his AJS motorbike to attend a young farmers' weekend. The rest is history. Romance blossomed and they were engaged in 1948. A long and happy life ensued. We give thanks for the life of Doris Margaret Thomson. May she rest in peace."

Ross: “Today, surrounded by family and friends it is important to consider the significance of Mum’s passing in relation to our Gunn heritage.

During my early days at school I must admit I wasn’t too impressed with the middle name my parents had bestowed on me – Gunn, but now I use it with pride when I’m required to give my full name.

I know that each of our cousins, all seven of them, who are here today are acutely aware of the significance of today as we close the chapter on a generation of Gunn heritage. Aunt Jane, Uncle John and Aunt Addie, in their own way demonstrated to us all about the important things in life, respecting a person’s individuality, friendship, the giving of oneself and most importantly a Christian faith. Mum was no exception.

Grandchildren brought much pleasure to our parents and they extended huge support in those early days with many hours of baby sitting.

It was always ‘convenient’ for grandchildren to come and stay, baking was sure to be on the activity list and Mum never complained about the inevitable mess in the kitchen. I do remember Dad grumbling when most of the goodies baked were sent home!

The memories of Mum are bounteous but today we also turn the final pages of John and Margaret Gunn’s family. However, the chapter has a happy ending. Mum is once again united with her family and her husband John. Both the memories and the heritage will continue.”

*Reproduced with the kind permission of the Thomson Family
Marie Gunn*

Thomas (Tom) Hawker

The late Jane Campbell (nee Gunn) was an active member of all clan activities. She had many attributes, one of which was the place of family in her life.

At her 100th birthday, she gave thanks that two of her great grandsons were present.

One of these was Tom Hawker (who is only about 21 or 22) who had a movie camera on his shoulder.

His occupation is in the television industry and works at the Canterbury TV station, CTV. He began in graphics and has worked his way through the different responsibilities in a TV station and is now the Presentation Director. His role is to set up all the programmes that go on air every 24 hours.

Last October 2009, he was invited to accompany Mr Toogood on a trip to the Bible Lands.

He was to film material to be used in the religious broadcasts in Christchurch which are also used in the United States and Australia. He accompanied a party to Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Egypt and Rome. The tour was for 4 weeks duration.

His impressions were:

- Amazement at the lifestyle of other cultures.
- The problems of a \$30,000 camera being cabin luggage.
- Border security problems with camera clearance.
- A 1 hour interrogation at Israel.
- The heat, very different to NZ sun.
- The tight security at Bethlehem.
- The change in relaxation on a River Nile cruise.
- The upmarket hotel in Cairo where a slice of chocolate cake is NZ\$30.
- The sound and light show of the Pyramids. Unbelievable!
- The custom of passengers when a plane lands.

There are many more stories to tell. *[To be continued]*

Tom Campbell

Coming Events - Christchurch

Sunday 31 October 2010 at 1.30pm – Kirkin o' the Tartan – Held at St Andrew's Church, Merivale Lane, Christchurch. Service starts at 2pm. Help is needed with the afternoon tea. If you are able to assist, please contact **Val Donald** on 366 4476.

Saturday 27 November 2010 – Annual Christmas dinner to be held at Sequoia 88 Restaurant, Main North Road, Redwood, Christchurch. Time 5.30pm. Cost about \$26.00. Please contact **Marie Gunn** on 323 6608 **no later than 20 November 2010** if you intend joining us.

Some Thoughts from the Past By the late Jane Campbell

Our Grandparents were of Scottish descent. Grandad Gunn had come from Dunbeath, Latheron, Caithness to work on the farm of a relative at Wairepa. Grandma's maiden name was Jane Burgess and she was from Laurencekirk, Aberdeen, coming to New Zealand as governess to a family. When she wrote home to her parents telling of her romance with a fine Scotsman and announcing the fact that she was going to be married, her Father's reply was "You have gone far from home to meet your Highland Laddie".

After marriage in Knox Church, Dunedin, they went to live at Cairn Station, Popotunoa where Dad was born. Then on to Moa Flat Station and later to Ettrick Station. Grandad was a shepherd on all three stations. Next, my grandparents moved to live at East Winton. Grandad was a drover and worked away from home frequently.

I would like to begin this short account of my childhood memories by paying tribute to my parents who were both people of great integrity, commitment and compassion and gave me, my brother and two sisters such a warm and loving home. Often times were hard and it was a big struggle for them. We all look back on our childhood as a time of much happiness derived from simple pleasures. It says much for the strength of their love that we have remained a very close family. We have always been immensely proud of our parents and what they achieved in their lives.

My early memories are centred on the little town of Waikaia in Southland. At that time it was the centre of a rich gold mining area. There were many Chinese in the district and in the evening when the men were coming off the daylight shift the town was full of sights and sounds that made quite vivid impressions. Two uncles, brothers of my Father, lived with us and they too were working the dredges. Sometimes Mother had to provide meals to suit three different shift-workers. When one got up there was always another one ready for bed. Needless to say I had to keep my noise level low. Aunt Edith (sister to our Mother) was the housekeeper for the Presbyterian minister, a tall stately man with a neatly trimmed white beard. One of my delights was to have a meal at the manse. I remember it as a very big place, which had one room with the walls lined with books. I was fascinated by the slide that was between the kitchen and dining room. My introduction to manse life!

Our house was made of sods and had an iron roof. To begin with, it had a thatched roof but when our parents were married, Dad had the iron put on. The house was white-washed every year. The path up to the house was paved with beautifully marked flat stones resembling marble – colours of browns and yellows. Dad carried them all home from the dredge in a sugar bag on his back. Each day when he came home he had a few more. To this day I can see in my mind that beautiful piece of mosaic art. The sod cottage, which was always glistening white, was surrounded by a beautiful garden. On one occasion when the Reverend Alexander Don, a missionary came to visit the Chinese who were in a settlement near us, he thought our place was a Chinese hospital. Every year at the back of the cottage was a long row of cream sweet peas with blue cornflowers in front and at the base were bright nasturtiums in all shades of yellow and orange. At the front door were lovely asters, single and double, from the palest shades right through to the dark strong colours. Along with this was mignonette. These were my Father's favourite flowers.

Another memory I have is of the coach with a little step at the back. It took passengers from the township to the railway station, which was opened during our time at Waikaia. What a gala day that was. The women wore big hats and long flouncy frocks. I remember riding in the coach the day we left Waikaia for Winton. My sister Addie was just a little baby in a dress basket. My brother John wore a little sailor suit.

On arrival in Winton we lived in a little cottage in the township. I don't remember much about it except that in the front room there was a new basket chair and a goatskin mat on the floor. Each day we got a billy of milk from our grandparents who lived at East Winton. When I was old enough it was one of my tasks to go for it and what a long walk it seemed to be. I used to like when grandad was about because he always walked with me part of the way home and carried the billy. At the same time he told me fascinating stories of his beloved Scotland. He could speak Gaelic and recite long passages of Burns' poems. One day when he had walked a good long way with me and was going to turn for home I said, "Come to the next corner grandad, the billy is so heavy for me to carry". His reply was, "if it is too heavy just sit down and drink some then be on your way".

Grandad was a very loving friendly old man with a long gingery beard. He died suddenly at Dacre while on a droving assignment. This was my first experience of a family bereavement. I remember the casket in the front bedroom of the house at East Winton and the hushed atmosphere of the whole house. Friends and neighbours came to pay their respects. Mrs John Brown walked from Winton township carrying a wreath made from white geraniums and Auntie Mary came from Christchurch carrying a babe in her arms. Grandma was grief stricken. Eventually she went to live in Christchurch with the Telford family and we moved over to the East Winton residence with its few acres of land.

At that time Dad was working at the Browns Lime Works, commuting each day by horse and trap, leaving early in the morning. It was during this period that he became ill – double pneumonia and pleurisy. He spent many weeks in Nurse Brown's private hospital. Auntie Ede used to do the night nursing. Mum struggled away milking the cow, feeding the animals and doing her best to keep us fed and comfortably clothed. There was no money coming into the home. Dad had some surgery that left him with just one lung.

Across the paddock lived the Hamilton family. What a tower of strength they were supporting Mum in her time of need. My brother John had a cart made from a box on pram wheels and he and I used to take it over the paddock to the slaughter house where it was filled with "offal" – liver, brains, kidneys, sheep's heads, tripe etc. The tripe we had to clean by dipping it in boiling water in the copper, then putting it on a board and scraping it with a big knife. Our mother was a genius at making delicious potted meat and all kinds of nutritious tasty dishes from the ingredients supplied. There was no money to buy meat.

Our Grandma, who lived in Mosgiel (Granny Hicks), regularly sent us parcels of second-hand clothing. What excitement when these parcels arrived. They were real "op" shops. Excitement ran high as always amongst the contests would be little surprises such as pencils, crayons and sweets or even an orange. It was always a big event if Grandma came to stay. Her visits were never long. She used to say she had to get back to the hens!

Dad's brothers, Uncle Bob and Jim made their headquarters with us at Winton just as they had done at Waikaia.

After Dad's convalescence he leased an adjoining property from the Reiley brothers, later purchasing it. This was the beginning of his farming career.

We had a long walk to school each day over very muddy roads. We frequently met up with other families along the way. There were the Lumsdens and Edgertons, who had further to walk than us; the Corsons and Sands from Gap Road; Stewarts, Kennedys and others. I remember proudly taking my brother to school for his first day. On the way we met Dan Moore. He looked us both up and down then blurted out, "John, pull up your socks and look smart". With his new school bag and outfit I thought he was just the smartest little boy and resented the comment.

Each Sunday we walked to Church and Sunday School. All our primary school education was at Winton School. Mr D S McKillop was headmaster.

Great joy came to our home when our baby sister Doris arrived. There was always someone at hand to give her a nurse and cuddle. We considered it a great privilege if we were allowed to take her in the pushchair up the street on a Saturday afternoon to be admired by all our friends.

Addie and I went to High School in Invercargill travelling in and out by train each day. For the winter terms I boarded in town from Monday to Friday, going home for the weekends.

After leaving school I went to teach at the Manual Training School in Gore for one year. I boarded with Miss Davidson who had a boarding house in the same street as the hospital and she made home to all the nurses. There were seven boarders, all different occupations. My room-mate was Myra Wynn, a telephone exchange operator.

My next move was to Dunedin to enrol at University as a Home Science student. At first I lived in Studholm House, the Home Science hostel. After that I boarded privately with Mrs Fraser at the Gardens Corner. She had a son Perce who was a teacher, and two student boarders, Todd Tapp and Tom Campbell. Prior to my arrival they called themselves the "Bachelors' Club". Thus began the Campbell chapter!

[To be Continued]

Reproduced by kind permission of Tom Campbell and Family

CELEBRATIONS

Helen Gunn celebrated her 80th birthday in fine style on Saturday 21 August 2010 at St Mary's Merivale, Christchurch with family and friends.

Photo L-R: Hamish (son), Pru (daughter), Warwick (son) and the Birthday Girl, Helen.

Also, Chris and Sue Gunn of Christchurch are delighted to announce the engagement on 22 August 2010 of their only child David and his partner Carolyn. Both work in the Oncology field, and met through their work at Christchurch Hospital, where Carolyn is a Senior Dosimetrist (Radiation Therapist) and David is one of two Service Engineers for the new linear accelerators being installed at both Christchurch Public and St George's Hospitals.

Christine Wilson - Jess's Story

Life is but moments of thought blown across our spiritual horizons by a breath of eternal wind; gossamer souls from a time when all life was afforded only to the gods. Then a mighty seamstress inhaled and threaded each of us mortals together, rested on high and watched while we unravelled.

When I met Christine Wilson it wasn't like two people shaking hands, making eye contact and sitting over a cup of tea sharing each other through our memories of families and places, our likes and dislikes. Truth is we have never met, yet I feel I've known and loved her all our lives. 'Zarahemla' that big roomy house she shares with her extended family at 103 Symonds Street in Auckland is my home too. The trees and flowers described so vividly in her emails have become dear to me. I smell the fragrant blossoms and cannot wait to hear if the buds are bursting forth from their birth places hanging from their mother tree in the garden which holds a world of New Zealand's flora and fauna. "Its winter, "she tells me often, "we can get very cold, even lower than 14c."

I smile as I compare my winter when temperature drops below zero and everything freezes.

I'm a porridge Scot, cannot start my day without it. One day I said, "Christine you know what, I hate the thought of spring approaching because I suffer dreadfully from hay fever."

"Oh Jess you don't have to suffer from that, take Manuka honey". "I've tried everything," I told her. "Just take the Manuka," she said. So I took the honey and guess what? All signs of hay fever have gone. No runny eyes, red itchy nose or uncontrollable sneezing. I am cured thanks to my sister from the other side of the world.

My postman smiles these days as he reads the address of the sender, Here's another slice of New Zealand," he calls handing me another book of coast line, flowers, folk tales or big trees. Christine loves her land and it's obvious she loves to show it to me.

So did the mighty seamstress thread us together and why?

Well it is a long and many threaded journey, held deep in history, but this may have something to do with it.

Christine tells me she feels a connection to my people - the old tinker/Gypsy of ancient Britain. I, as a writer of my life on the road and researcher has for over 20 years been searching for the origins of my culture.

In Mitchell Library in Glasgow a friend who was helping me phoned one day, very excited. He'd found a book called 'Caird the clan and Caird the surname'. It stated that Caird was an ancient name for Tinker. My theory of them belonging to the bible lands of ancient Egyptians with their metal forging cousins the Wittites (Hittites) saw credence with this information. I believe they were enslaved by the Romans then brought to Scotland as weapon makers. I think their skills far out classed those of the Romans.

Old Scotland was the land of the Picts; fierce warriors who defied anyone intent on conquering them. The Romans referred to them as barbarians. It would take a lot of armed strategy to win them over. In time if we believe historians of old this was no easy matter. Anyway in the Caird book it states- 'during the fourth century the Caird bought their freedom and went to SW Ireland and became nobility. They wore a single garment, held the cardus as

a sacred emblem (thistle) and were strangely connected to the music of a bag which had several pipes protruding from it.'

As merchants of metal and other hand made goods it goes on to say, they regularly sailed the short waterways from Rathlin to Campbeltown; a distance of 12 miles. In time they settled both in Ireland and the west coast of Scotland. As weapon makers their skills would become prominent within the growing clan system and in the Duke of Argyll's census records at Inverary Castle, there is mention of the Macarthur's as the clan Campbell's top sword smiths. (My ancestors).

As time proceeded and Scotland fought countless battles within its boundaries the Caird smith grew powerful. In English his name was Sinclair. When the greatest battle of all loomed between Edward of England and Robert the Bruce, weapons and the art of war would at Bannockburn render the latter the winner and for the next five hundred years Scotland was mistress of her own soil. On the field at Bruce's side were the Earls of Sinclair (St Clairs of Orkney), their cousins the black Douglas and the Thurso Gunns. All had through marriage a connection to Norway.

I've read of these clans and just like the Tinkers they used nick-names to describe each other and had done so for hundreds of years; for instance-Thorfinn the skull cleaver, Rolf the ganger, Aud the deep minded, Halfdan the sting and Eystein the fart.

Time changes everything -the sword was replaced by the gun - religion forcing the common man into obedience-dynasties dying and descending into poverty-the clans broken-the Gaelic no longer spoken and my Tinker clans adhering to the nomadic existence of their ancient forbears- the Egyptian Hittites of bible days.

Was this the thread that the great and mighty seamstress found flitting among the Gathering in Edinburgh- did she pluck the thread of the widow of John Mahiti Wilson- he of the Gunn clan and join it to me through my book 'Jessie's Journey'- a story of a Tinker from the Caird people?

Christine and I believe strongly that something holds us together - but for what purpose? Well only the great seamstress of the heavens holds the answer to that.

But whatever it is I am overjoyed that we found each other - through the breath of souls. Did John have anything to do with it -I wonder? Did my great grandfather Alexander Macarthur a tinsmith/piper of Argyll also take a hand?

Last winter a star began to shine in my night sky. I live in a lovely but lonely glen in Perthshire which is the largest shire in Scotland. It hung loosely from Orion's belt and I was convinced I'd never seen it before. I call it my Maori Gunn and that is what it shall remain as long as I live.

Jess Smith
Scottish Authoress and Friend



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