



Clan Gunn Society of  
New Zealand Inc

**Newsletter**

**August 2011**



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### **Editor's Note:**

*If you are aware of any member that has not receive the Newsletter either by mail or email, please let me know either via email [clangunn@snap.net.nz](mailto:clangunn@snap.net.nz) or 03 323 9011 (please leave a message if I am not in).*

*Thank you.*

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### **Council Members as at October 2010**

President:	Todd Wall	healing@touch-your-heart.co.nz
Vice President:	John Sauer	kathyandjohn@xtra.co.nz
Immediate Past President	Val Donald	Ph: 03 366 4476
Treasurer:	Ian Gunn	ian.gunn@xtra.co.nz
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Membership Secretary:	Kathy Sauer	kathyandjohn@xtra.co.nz
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	Kathy Sauer	kathyandjohn@xtra.co.nz
	Bonny Flynn	
Editor:	Sue Gunn	clangunn@snap.net.nz
Website:	www.clangunn.org.nz	

### **Genealogist:**

A reminder that Clan Gunn's genealogist is Margaret **Godfrey** : Ph: 03 487 6700 / Email: Margaret-g@clear.net.nz. Margaret is only too willing to help members find their ancestry.

**Secretary:** Marie Gunn, 121B Johns Road, Belfast, Christchurch 8051, Ph: 03 323 6608

## President's Patter

I would like to express my sincere condolences to all who have lost a family member or friend over the past six months. I understand how difficult it must be for you at this time.

I would like to mention that despite the Christchurch disaster, Marie Gunn (Secretary), Sue Gunn (Newsletter Editor) and Kathy Sauer (Membership Secretary) have done and are doing a great job under very difficult circumstances in true Gunn spirit. A big 'Thank You' to all of them. I know it can't be easy. I would also like to wish the members in Christchurch every good wish for their future and share their hope that the aftershocks will dissipate very soon. I'm sure that all our members nationwide will join me in that sentiment.

During the time Rich and Linda Gunn from the U.S. spent with us we had an advert in the Newspaper from which we received enquiries from six potentially new members. From those six it seems that we now have four new members joining our group in Dunedin with another two about to join which is good news.

You will have read or heard about the 2009 Clan Gunn International Gathering when the Ngati Awa broke with their own tradition and brought back to Clan Gunn the Spirit of John Mahiti Wilson whose father is descended from the Clan. I was thrown by circumstance into the middle of organising the ceremony for that event, knowing almost nothing of Maori culture or history. Last year we received the news out of left field that the Ngati Awa wish to dedicate one of their Maraes to Clan Gunn to treat as their own, naturally observing Maori protocol as they do so. I am now in the middle of organising the Clan Gunn side of the event with Christine Wilson in Auckland and I have written a more detailed account of events so far in a separate article in this Newsletter. This is not only about Clan Gunn or the Ngati Awa but about New Zealand itself and the history making event it will be. It will also be great publicity for both the Ngati Awa and Clan Gunn.

On an entirely separate note please remember to attend the AGM weekend at the end of October. This is being held at Lindisfarne near Cave in Canterbury. The buildings that were burnt down are being rebuilt as I type and, I am assured, will be ready in time for our AGM. As Marie mentioned in her letter to us all, let's make a real effort to be there and make it a celebration. It's not about anybody being made to take a position on the Committee but about the Clans folk making the effort to come together as a whole family and enjoying the fun events, food and company in a beautiful convivial area. This takes place just once a year, surely we can make that effort just once in the year, especially those living in the South Island. The dates are 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> October 2011. I hope to see as many of you as possible there.

Yours Aye

**Todd Wall**

President, Clan Gunn Society of New Zealand (Inc)

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## Dedication of a Marae to Clan Gunn

As I have mentioned in the President's Patter, there is to be a big Dedication Ceremony to the Clan Gunn worldwide, of a Ngati Awa Marae in Whakatane. This is taking place on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> November 2011. The following is the information I have so far on this event.

In 2009 the Ngati Awa were welcomed onto Clan Gunn territory in Scotland to bring back the Spirit of a Ngati Awa Elder and a son of Clan Gunn to his Clan. He had asked that both his Tribe and his Clan should be honoured and it was. His father was Scottish and his mother was Maori and his name was John Mahiti Wilson, husband of Christine Bowker Wilson. It was Christine who brought her husband's Spirit back to his Clan in the form of a framed photograph and a carved Paddle which now hang in the Clan Gunn museum in Latheron, Scotland. Gifts were also given to our Clan Commander and to all the Presidents from the various nations represented there at that time.

This then set the scene for what is about to happen in Whakatane in November. I received word from the Ngati Awa via Christine Wilson that they wished to Dedicate a Marae to Clan Gunn. This is to be an important affair involving all the Chiefs and sub-Chiefs of the Ngati Awa, representing 19,000 people, taking part. Obviously this was too big for me to handle so I contacted our Commander, Rich Gunn, Alan Robson (past President UK) and Chuck Jameson, the piper in Edinburgh. They have all agreed to come over for the event as there is a document that has to be signed by all the Chiefs on both sides. All the wives will be attending as well and an increasing number of Clan members from both the United States and New Zealand.

Pouroto Ngaropo was the Chief representing the Ngati Awa in Edinburgh and he will also be conducting the ceremony in November. He is also now a member of Clan Gunn. It will be a very important affair which has never been carried out by any Tribe or Clan in New Zealand or anywhere else to my knowledge. It is potentially a history making event for New Zealand and probably Scotland too and will be big news if the television networks

get onto it which no doubt they will since Pouroto works for broadcasting. I will endeavour to make sure the Scottish networks are aware of it as well.

All Clan Gunn members wishing to attend this event will be welcome but will have to arrange their own travel arrangements and accommodation in Whakatane. I have been informed that you will be welcome to stay on the Marae itself if you wish. (Please see the *Stop Press* Notice below).

**Todd Wall**

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**\*\* STOP PRESS \*\***  
**5 – 6 November 2011**

As you all know a very historical event took place in Edinburgh 2009 at the International Clan Gunn Gathering during which time a Maori delegation came to bring back the Spirit of a Clan Gunn ancestor, who was also a Ngati Awa elder, to his Clan. This was a very historical, moving and emotional event.

Subsequently, to honour Clan Gunn, a very historical and momentous event is currently being planned by the Ngati Awa tribe in Whakatane to make their Marae also Clan Gunn's Marae (this invitation was issued to members of Clan Gunn world-wide). A full Maori ceremony and a signed declaration will be taking place. Most of the Chiefs and sub-Chiefs of the Ngati Awa tribe will be present, representing 19,000 people. This is a two day event in which all Clan Gunn members will be welcome.

Our Commander, Iain Gunn and his wife Bunty (UK) thought that this was so important that they will be coming over for the event and so will the President and Commissioner Rich Gunn and his wife Linda (USA). Also coming will be the Clan Gunn Piper Chuck Jameson (USA).

New Zealand will be represented by me as President of New Zealand and my wife Sheila together with our Secretary, Marie Gunn. If anybody in the Clan would like to attend this huge occasion, then please let me or Sheila know. As everything is in its early stages, information on detail has yet to emerge. I will pass on these details to anybody who would like them as and when they become available. Just send your email address to me at my email address: [healing@touch-your-heart.co.nz](mailto:healing@touch-your-heart.co.nz) or contact me on (03) 481 1105.

Yours aye

**Todd Wall**

President, Clan Gunn Society of New Zealand (Inc)

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**Auckland Report**

Gathering of Clan Gunn at **Zarahemla**

I received the green A4 invitation from Christine Bowker-Wilson as an inclusion with the Clan Gunn newsletter and was glad to see that this one was a local event so I would be able to attend.

I didn't recognize the name or the address but found the name of Christine's home **Zarahemla** intriguing. I was not to be disappointed.

On arriving, the Tudor-style façade served to elevate my expectations. How wonderful to walk the cobbled drive and approach a warm hearth to a rousing welcome by piper Jim Jamieson.

Christine's home seemed ideally suited for this kind of event. There was seating for many and the décor was evocative and told us that there was a value placed on people, history, learning and hospitality in her household. I look forward to sitting there again in the winter when the fire is lit.

We were urged to select a piece of jigsaw puzzle each and to write our names on it before adding it to others in a wee bowl. Looking at the faces, I saw people of all ages, stages and skin colours. It felt like no other gathering I had been to and, when Carin Wilson stood to welcome us in te reo Maori, it confirmed for me that this is a special household indeed. My friend Cathy Gunn attended the Homecoming in Edinburgh 2009. She described seeing a Maori man and his wife there with other members of the clan and was curious about the story behind this group of people. It dawned on me pretty smartly that I was going to be able to fill in some of the missing details. I was quietly excited, I can tell you. And we were fortunate to have in attendance Todd Wall, the President of The Clan Gunn Society of New Zealand and his wife Sheila. I hope I have another opportunity to get to know them better in the not too distant future.

When we went around the room introducing ourselves, I was struck by the forthright replies. Though we are all on our individual paths, we felt comfortable enough to be quite honest. I was saddened to hear that one man had had an ancient book about the Gunns but it had since gone missing. Mental note. Find that book! He had drawn his family tree but I didn't get to see it up close. Mental note. Get a closer look some day. One man had an entire collection of Neil Gunn books handed down from his father but hadn't started reading them yet. What a treat he has in store! It turned out that the piper had taken over the band that my former teacher, Jimmy Fitzpatrick, had led. Carin was off to Italy. My sister lives there and I have passed on contact details. Connections formed in smart succession. In my intro, I mentioned that I was researching our history because I felt that ancient currents and conflicts were still at play. When we got back around to Christine and she acknowledged and agreed with this statement, I felt a connection form between her and myself and through her to others from her growing community. She later told me that she thinks that God gave us families, not that we would feel superior, but that we would take care of each other.

The challenge of my life has been in belonging. This is a side effect, it seems to me, of colonization because we were torn away from our ancestral lands. So, when my jigsaw piece was drawn from the bowl, I had not only "won" a prize of prime Scottish treats, I also felt chosen to join a group of people I had only just met. It was great to take the prize home so that my family could enjoy the Barrs Iron Bru [with gurrduurrs], Scottish salt with heather and a delicious mustard.

The afternoon tea/feast included so many Scottish treats – even snowballs! – and tiny home made haggis. It was quite a spread. We only scratched the surface when it came to finding out more about each other and hearing our stories. I am so looking forward to the next gathering at Christine's house. Thank you new friends, clansmen and women.

***Mairi Gunn***

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## **Dunedin Report - August 2011**

### **March 2011**

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011 Rich and Linda Gunn arrived in Dunedin to be welcomed at the airport by Todd and Sheila Wall.

They were genuinely thrilled to be here in New Zealand and were really looking forward to their stay. They wanted to meet as many Gunn's as possible during that stay and had intended to visit Christchurch as well as Dunedin but as we now know the events there made it impossible for them to do so. Anyway, they had decided that they wanted to hire a car which we had arranged for them. It was far cheaper than the hire companies at the airport. We picked their car up at the airport with very little delay and we were off to our house in Brighton. Joyce Shield wanted to be with us to meet them at the airport but she was on duty doing meals on wheels.

Joyce met us all later in Brighton to the delight of Rich and Linda. We all caught up on Gunn happenings around the world during and after lunch and then Joyce took them back to her house where they would be spending the rest of their stay as our house was too small and we didn't have a spare bedroom.

After about three days during which time they were shown around Dunedin, including the albatross colony and the China House on the Peninsula. After that they were whisked off to Fiordland where they went out on a boat to the sea through Milford Sound. They really enjoyed that trip and I managed to take them to places that normally tourists don't go to in big numbers but are well worth visiting. We were staying in Te Anau in a house owned by the Lakeside Motel people. It was excellent and right on the Lake front as well. The weather was brilliant and Rich and Linda visited the Glow Worm Caves while we were staying there. We also visited Manapouri.

Once we had arrived back in Dunedin again a formal dinner was held at the Victoria Hotel for them. Presidents from other Clans and leaders from other Scottish Organisations were invited as indeed were our own Clan members and 39 people attended. Viggo Nielsen did a great job addressing the Haggis after which speeches were made, presents presented to Rich and Linda on the Clan's behalf and a sumptuous meal enjoyed by all. During this Dinner the Chief's Banner was displayed.

The feedback we received afterwards was that it was an overwhelming success.

Rich and Linda departed for Mount Cook for four days as they wanted to see our highest mountain. They went on their own for this trip and thoroughly enjoyed the adventure.

Rich and Linda arrived back in Dunedin in time to take part in our first meeting of the year which was held on 19<sup>th</sup> March at Bonny Flynn's house. Twenty three members and potential members attended. We had the honour of

having them for this occasion. As Rich is the Commissioner for North America he has been commissioned to carry the Chief's Banner for our Commander wherever he goes. This was raised or rather held up on a clothes line with pink pegs in a rather undignified manner to indicate that our Commander was with us. Six new people swelled our ranks as well which was great.

Our ladies did a fine job with the midday meal and everybody thoroughly enjoyed the day, including the new potential members.

Rich and Linda's next trip was to Invercargill via the Catlins which they thoroughly enjoyed. We took them to Bluff so that they could say they had been to the end of the civilised world and they had their photo taken under the famous signpost to prove it.

They departed for the U.S. again on 25<sup>th</sup> March having had what they described as "the best vacation they had ever had anywhere. It was truly memorable and one they would never, ever forget".

The only regret that they had was that they were unable to meet a lot more of the Clan.

### **June 2011**

The second gathering for the Dunedin Clan Gunn folk was held at Bonny Flynn's house once more. Since Errol, her husband, passed away Bonny has made her house available for all Dunedin Clan Gunn gatherings so her house will be our semi permanent Gathering venue. This is no reflection on those whose houses we have used in the past but it is the mere fact that Bonny's house is pretty central for everybody in Dunedin and district. As usual we had a great lunch sitting around a number of tables that Bonny had pushed together. With us all sitting together it was a very animated lunch with lots of laughter and discussion.

Part of that discussion was that a number of Dunedin folk will be going to the AGM venue in a mini bus for which funds have been raised by the Dunedin members generously supporting raffles and a large boot sale held during the summer months and for which they provided items for us to sell.

The table idea was so successful that Bonny is now going to purchase a trestle table for any further occasions. If we have enough in our Dunedin Clan funds we will help her out with this.

Further to this we had a very entertaining afternoon watching an official DVD of the 2009 Homecoming in Scotland provided by Margaret Campbell. It was excellent.

Our next Gathering will be on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

### **Todd Wall**

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## **Upcoming Christchurch Events**

*Due to the on-going after shocks Canterbury is experiencing at the moment, events that were to be organised have been put temporarily on the back burner. However, please note your diary for the upcoming events. It would be super if as many members could attend as is possible. Editor*

- **Kirkin' o the Tartan – Saturday, 2 October 2011 at 1.30pm** at St Andrew's at Rangi Ruru Church, Merivale Lane. Please assemble at 1.45pm for Parade of Banners. Afternoon tea to follow.
- **Pot Luck Lunch – Saturday, 8 October 2011 at Noon** at Marie Gunn's, 121B Johns Road, Northwood, Christchurch.
- **Annual 10 Pin Bowling Challenge and Lunch – Sunday 16 October 2011.** To be confirmed.
- **Annual General Meeting at Lindisfarne Camp, Cave – 28 – 30 October 2011.** You will have received the Notice of Annual General Meeting earlier on; the Registration Form is now included below. Please print the Registration Form, complete and return it to the Secretary **no later than 14 October 2011.**
- **Christmas Lunch** for Clan Members and friends – **Saturday, 10 December 2011 at 12 noon.** Venue – Sequoia 88, Corner Preston and Main North Roads, Redwood. Cost \$20.00 per person. Afternoon tea to follow at 121B Johns Road, Christchurch. Please advise numbers to Marie Gunn, Ph: 03 323 6608.

**A Personal Appeal from Dr Nick Fiddes**  
Founder and Director, Scotweb

Dear Scotweb Friend,

If you care about Scottish traditions, this is the most important thing you'll read for a long time. So please do read on.. The future of Scottish heritage needs your help!

My partner, Adele Telford, and I have stepped in with a last minute rescue package to save Scotland's last surviving traditional taran weaver, D.C. Dalgliesh, of Selkirk, Scotland, which was on the point of closure.

Here's why: if this mill had gone the way of so many others, then **90% of all family tartans would never be woven again**. Most people could never wear their family tartan!

That's not being dramatic. It's a fact. Without this mill, the only tartans that you, or anyone, would find to wear, ever again, would be the popular best-selling designs such as Royal Stewart, Black Watch, and a few hundred other setts that the big mills produce in volume. The thousands of recorded tartans for everyone else's clan, family, business, club, or district would have become effectively impossible to obtain - ever.

We didn't want to see that happen. We know how much tartans matter, to people like us all over the world. So whether or not this is a sensible business decision, Adele and I are staking our commitment and personal savings on the faith that we can turn this amazing mill's fortunes around.

We need **YOUR** help! (Please.) This is a time you can make a serious difference.

**Here's how to help**

We think that the main reason D.C. Dalgliesh found itself in such financial trouble was mostly that not enough people knew about their unique products. So what we really need right now is for YOU to help us spread the word.

Unless you're a famous celebrity or journalist yourself (or know any, in which case please forward this!) the single most important thing you can do is to put up a link or banner advertisement somewhere on the web, perhaps your own web site or blog. There's a page with ideas to help you do this, for [D.C. Dalgliesh Supporters](#). Even 'liking' the D.C. Dalgliesh site on Facebook, or tweeting, would help. But a permanent link is what we really want.

So **please visit the Supporters page at [www.dcdalgliesh.co.uk/support.html](http://www.dcdalgliesh.co.uk/support.html)** and spread the word in any way you can.

**Here's why it matters**

D.C. Dalgliesh is the **ONLY** tartan weaving mill able to produce a short length, just for a single garment like a kilt or skirt. The minimum weaving length at most mills is 30-60 yards. D.C. Dalgliesh will weave just **four yards**, in single width tartan. This makes a special weave affordable for almost anyone, so **anyone can wear their own family tartan**.

That's not the only reason. All D.C. Dalgliesh fabrics are produced on traditional flying shuttle looms, which give the tartan the '**natural**' or '**kilting**' **selvedge** that any proper kilt should have. Most mills have been installing modern high speed computerised looms that need each line of 'weft' to be cut at each side, leaving untidy threads that give a thick edge when tucked in, and can fray. D.C. Dalgliesh is the only mill to promise this.

And that's not all. D.C. Dalgliesh are woven with **heavier yarns**, and **more tightly woven** per inch, than is normal elsewhere. This gives their fabrics a quality you just don't find anywhere else. And it's all done by hand, with immense skill and care. Their product is without doubt the **finest tartan on earth**. It would be a tragedy, not just today, but for future generations, if it weren't to survive. That's why Nick and Adele stepped in.

**Here's what we're doing**

Until now we branded our D.C. Dalgliesh fabrics as Glen Affric. Over the coming weeks we'll be redesigning our site to make their true heritage more prominent. We'll also be increasing the range of tartans available from D.C. Dalgliesh, for anyone wishing the very best tartan on earth.

Meanwhile, Nick and Adele will be working with the D.C. Dalgliesh management to find new ways to return the mill to prosperity. The one thing they don't want to do is to modernise it; we'll do nothing to undermine the qualities that makes this mill so unique.

Nick has already (almost single-handedly!) produced a new [D.C. Dalgliesh web site](#), and a fascinating **short video**, about the D.C. Dalgliesh production process which you'll also find there. The aim of both is to show the

world just how much skill, care, and time goes into each and every piece of fabric. If you can rebroadcast this video anywhere, please do! (Instructions on the site).

**Here's what you can do (again)**

Visit the [D.C. Dalgliesh Supporters](#) page, and please add a link (or encourage someone else to) anywhere you can. **We can't stress enough how important this is.** We need everyone to rally round and help save this unique and historic mill for future generations. It will only take a few minutes.

And please forward this email to anyone you can!

**Thanks!**

Your friendship and support means a lot to us. We like to think of Scotweb as more than just a business. If you share our love of Scotland's history and heritage, and would like your children and grandchildren to be able still to enjoy it as you do, then now is the time for you... to help us... to help you.

With very best wishes to you all,

**Nick Fiddes (Dr)**  
*Founder, Scotweb*

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**New Members**

We extend a very warm welcome to the following new members (and for any we may have missed in this Newsletter, please advise the Editor, Sue Gunn at [clangunn@snap.net.nz](mailto:clangunn@snap.net.nz)):

**Clifford Wilson**, Auckland : **Colleen Gunn**, Keri Keri : **Brent Efford**, Wellington : **Clifford and Shelley Wilson**, Dunedin.

**Kathy Sauer**  
*Membership Secretary*

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**Whistling in the Winds with the Mighty Gunns**

An Extract from "The Highland Clans"  
by Moncrieffe of that ilk and David Hicks  
Published by Bramhall House

*Continuation from February 2011 Newsletter:*

"The famous Crouner of Caithness's son James Gunn, the next Chief, was probably the Seamus from whom the later Gunn chiefs derived their Gaelic title of Mac Sheumais Chataich, son of James of Caithness.' His son William MacKames, the 1<sup>st</sup> Mac Sheumais, was the Chief who avenged the Crouner by killing George Keith of Ackergill and his son, with ten of their men at Drummoy. Famed in Gaelic song, he was the father of David Gunn, whose son Alasdair mac Dhaidh (Alexander son of David) the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mac Sheumais, married Barbara, sister of Uisdean Dubh, Chief of the Mackays, whom he supported with his clan in an unsuccessful attack on the Earl of Caithness's stronghold of Girnigoe in 1589, after which they sacked Wick. The leaden casket containing the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Caithness's hard heart was opened in a vain search for treasure, and its grim dust and ashes scattered to the wind. At Whitsunday in the same year, 'MacHamish Gunn of Killearnan again wasted Caithness with great ferocity...and this was called Creach ne Kamish' (i.e. Mac Sheumais's cattle raid). This great raid was made by Alasdair Gunn of Killearnan, chief of the whole clan, because the ancient friendship between the Clan Gunn and the Sinclair earls of Caithness had some time begun to turn into enmity as the result of the late policies of the ferocious 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Caithness, who had slowly done his own son to death and who in 1556 had had to get a Government remission for his excesses in carrying Fire & Sword into the country of the 'Clan Gunn and Clan Morgun' (i.e. Gunns and Mackays).

But the nearest enemy (with pressing land claims) to the Gunns were a fanatically self-sufficient branch of the Mackays known as the Aberach Mackays, who often acted in opposition to their own chief, Alasdair Gunn of Killearnan's brother-in-law Uisdean Dubh Mackay of Strathnaver."

**Contributed by Jess Smith, Scottish Authoress & Friend**

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## Gathering

By Christine E. Bowker Wilson

Why do we need to Gather?  
To share and have a blather,  
T'ween kinfolk fro' far and near,  
To reminisce the old times,  
Moan about the new crimes,  
For those gone on, a tear

Why do we need to gather?  
Where do our young belong?  
Nourish them with ancient roots  
Their strength will be our song.

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### A New Caithness Author and Book Entitled 'The Stuart Agenda'

Alan Calder is a new Author and his book, *'The Stuart Agenda'*, has just been published as an e-book by the Willow Moon Publishing Company of New Orleans.

'The Stuart Agenda' is an intriguing take on history. It describes a conspiracy to get a young scion of the long defunct Stuart royal dynasty on to the throne of newly independent Scotland. Set in the 2030's, fact and fiction merge as Robert, the charismatic Stuart heir strives to regain his heritage. He finds love and the key to his quest in the heady political atmosphere of Scotland at last going independent. It is a political thriller with adventure and romance thrown in. In fact the perfect holiday read.

You can read excerpts from 'The Stuart Agenda' and download from [www.willowmoonpublishing.com](http://www.willowmoonpublishing.com) as a PDF to computer or i-Pad and other e-readers. You can also free read the first few chapters on amazon.co.uk and download to a Kindle. You can also follow Alan's blog at <http://alancalderwriting.blogspot.com> or contact him via email [alancalder89@btinternet.com](mailto:alancalder89@btinternet.com) or 8 Beaufoy Street, Wick KW1 5QG, Scotland.

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### PHOTO GALLERY

#### Dunedin – March 2011 – Visit by Rich and Linda Gunn, USA



L-R : Rich Gunn, Todd Wall, Linda Gunn



L-R: Sheila and Todd Wall, Rich and Linda Gunn

#### Gathering at Bonnie Flynn's House:

