



Clan Gunn Society of  
New Zealand Inc

**Newsletter**

**February 2011**



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

1. *If you are aware of any member that has not receive the Newsletter, 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).*
2. *Please send/email contributions for the August 2011 Newsletter to me no later than 18 July 2011.*

*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
Secretary:	Marie Gunn	marie.gunn@clear.net.nz
Membership Secretary:	Kathy Sauer	kathyandjohn@xtra.co.nz
Committee:	Dianne Gunn Giles	lendit@pcconnect.co.nz
	Stuart Gunn	lizandstuart@actrix.co.nz
	Mervyn Gunn	merv.tui@xtra.co.nz
	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 wiling to help members find their ancestry.

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

## President's Patter

It was with great sadness that I had occasion to attend the funeral of Ben Gunn just before Christmas. He was a close friend and a stalwart Clan member. He will be sorely missed. My sincere condolences go to Marie and her family as indeed they do to Bonny Flynn, a Clan Council member who lost her husband Errol recently, and to everyone that has lost a loved one in the last six months.

My best wishes go to Chris Gunn, wishing him a speedy recovery after undergoing major heart surgery. This also goes to those who have been hospitalised or are suffering sickness of any kind.

On a happier note I have to say that the AGM weekend in Dunedin was a great success. I felt very humble when the folk from Christchurch attended. Ben Gunn was in a wheel chair, Dick Rawstron was in his nineties, Kathy and John Sauer both with bad injuries, yet they made the effort. A big thank you to all of them, and to those that were not on the sick list, Tony Rawstron and last but certainly not least Marie Gunn. A special mention and thanks must also be made to Christine Wilson who came all the way from Auckland to be with us. They are an example to us all. A big thank you also to the Dunedin folk that made the weekend such a success. Our next AGM will be in Lindisfarne, near Cave in October this year. Please make the effort to come to the Gathering.

My Congratulations and thanks go to John Sauer who has now taken up the vacant position of Vice President.

Bonny Flynn, Joyce Shield, Sheila Wall and I went to Christchurch to support the Christchurch Gunn's at their Christmas Dinner on 27<sup>th</sup> November. After the dinner we all met up at Marie and Ben's house for a social wind down and had a thoroughly enjoyable evening, topped off with Marie and Ben's daughters, Lesley and Amanda, providing a surprise in the form of a birthday cake for Marie who was quite overwhelmed.

I have an impending visit to Auckland for my grand-daughter's wedding celebration in February during which time Christine Wilson is organising a Clan Gunn gathering. She has done a lot of work with notices and advertising in newspapers and posting out invitations to as many people as possible with the Gunn names and is using me as bait so to speak to attract interested folk to come and meet me and other Clan members. She is trying to get a cohesive Auckland Clan Gunn group going which will give us our first North Island group if she is successful. I wish her well with her efforts on the Clan's behalf and I look forward to being part of the Gathering. Let's hope our membership swells in that part of New Zealand. Perhaps others would like to do likewise in other parts of the country. I would like to hope so.

Yours Aye

**Todd Wall**

President, Clan Gunn Society of New Zealand (Inc)

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## President's Annual Report 31 October 2010

Welcome to you all and thank you for attending the AGM for 2010.

**Absent Friends and Family** – First of all I would like you all to join me in remembering those dear friends and Clan members that have passed away or can't be with us due to illness or distance. Let us take a moment's silence now to honour them, please remain seated.

**New Members** – I would like everybody to join me in welcoming two new members of the Clan: Jim and Shelley Wilson from Broad Bay, Dunedin. It's great to have them on board.

**Christchurch Earthquake** – A devastating earthquake magnitude 7.1 took place at 4.35am on Saturday, 4 September 2010 in Christchurch which was the biggest New Zealand earthquake for decades. It did a great deal of damage but miraculously nobody was killed. Our hearts go out to not only all our members situated in Christchurch but to all the other residents, especially the ones that were not so fortunate and suffered massive damage to their homes and properties. It is estimated that it will take years to rebuild and recover. Aftershocks are still occurring as I write, some as high as magnitude 5.0. The authorities say that the aftershocks may last up to a year albeit diminishing as time goes on.

**Lindisfarne** – On Monday 25 August 2010 between 1.00am and 1.30am, Lindisfarne, the venue for our 2010 AGM, was deliberately burnt to the ground by arsonists. As soon as we found out we had to hurriedly arrange an alternative venue for our AGM. We quickly obtained the use of a lovely hall in Dunedin before the Christmas rush

began and set up a skeleton programme for the weekend which I believe we will all find enjoyable. The burning of Lindisfarne was a diabolical act which the police are investigating. John and Heather Gunn and John and Liz McKerchar are the custodians of the venue and were absolutely devastated and very upset. Flowers were sent to both families by Clan Gunn with notes of commiseration. Fortunately the accommodation was untouched and John Gunn assures us that the main hall and kitchen were well insured and will be rebuilt but with much better fire-proof materials.

My apologies to the Christchurch Gunn's for not being able to hold the AGM in Christchurch but we just couldn't afford to dither around looking for venues and arranging the programme for the weekend as venues such as halls become very scarce from the end of October onwards and we had to act quickly.

**Visit by Rich Gunn, President CGSNA** – Rich Gunn (President) Clan Gunn Society North America and his wife Linda will be visiting New Zealand in March 2011 and staying with Todd and Sheila Wall and Joyce Shield in Dunedin. They have expressed an earnest desire to visit Clan Gunn members in Christchurch which we will arrange with the Christchurch folk nearer the time. It would probably be a good time to arrange a dinner venue and put an advert in the newspaper inviting prospective members to come and join us and meet the North American President, etc, which may gain us some new members. We in Dunedin will be doing that as well.

**Clan Gunn Website** – The Clan Gunn website is being revamped so please support it and send in any items or ideas you feel would be appropriate to enhance people's interest in visiting it. The UK Clan Gunn are looking at putting Membership Application forms on their website so that it would be possible for interested parties to be able to join without any delays with postage or cost. I think we will be discussing this idea for our own website and the costs involved in implementing it.

Yours Aye  
Duncan Todd Wall (President)  
Clan Gunn Society of New Zealand Inc

**Editor's Note:** The website is [www.clan Gunn.org.nz](http://www.clan Gunn.org.nz)

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## **Minutes of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Clan Gunn Society of New Zealand held at Green Island, Dunedin 31 October 2010**

The President Todd Wall welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the reason for the late change of venue which was due to the fire at Lindisfarne Camp.

**Present:** Todd Wall, Joyce Shield, Bonny Flynn, Richard Rawstron, Tony Rawstron, Christine Wilson, Kathy and John Sauer, Wilson Daniel, Margaret Godfrey, Julie Fergusson, Margaret Campbell, Jessie Nelson, Jillian McCulloch, Graham Patterson, Viggo Nielsen, Jim and Shelley Wilson, Jan Wyllie, Ben and Marie Gunn.

**Apologies:** Sheila Wall, John and Heather Gunn, John and Liz McKerchar, Ian and Lexie Gunn, Michael and Creena Gibbons, Dianne Gunn-Giles, Chris and Susan Gunn, Barrie and Susan Greenwood, Tom and Shirley Campbell, Val Donald, Helen Gunn, Beatrice Kenrick, Gerald and Valerie Wilson, Bryan Fitzgerald, Peter and Isobel Patterson, Sue Patterson.

It was moved, seconded and *agreed* that the apologies be accepted.

**The Minutes** of the previous Annual General Meeting which had previously been circulated were accepted as a true and accurate record. There were no matters arising out of the Minutes.

**President's Report:** The President, Todd Wall then read his report to the meeting in which he made mention of the September earthquake in Christchurch and also the fire which had destroyed Lindisfarne Camp in August. Plans are in place for the rebuilding of the camp. It is hoped we will be able to hold our 2011 AGM there. Todd also informed the meeting of the proposed visit in March 2011 of Rich and Linda Gunn from USA. Rich Gunn is the President of the Clan Gunn Society of USA. Todd informed the meeting of the revamped website and encouraged members to make use of it in advertising events etc. Joyce Shield then thanked Todd Wall on behalf of all members for the work he had done in furthering the objects of Clan Gunn. Marie Gunn thanked the Dunedin members for the arrangements they had made at the last minute to put together a thoroughly enjoyable gathering. It was moved, seconded and *agreed* that the report be received.

**Financial Report:** Copies of the Treasurer's Report, Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure statement were circulated and explained. It was moved, seconded and Agreed.

1. That the sum of 50 pounds sterling be paid to the Clan Gunn Heritage Centre at Latheron, Caithness; and
2. That the President and Secretary be appointed as Reviewers of the Financial Accounts.

The subject of the annual subscriptions was then raised. It was moved and seconded that the subscriptions be: Single - \$18.00; Couple - \$25.00; and Family - \$30.00. A letter from our Treasurer Ian Gunn was read in which he indicated his agreement with these figures. After discussion the motion was put and Agreed.

**Election of Vice-President:** Todd Wall then informed the meeting of the resignation of Chris Gunn from the position of Vice-President which brought about the need for this election. Todd explained that he had earlier communicated with Chris and thanked him for the work he had done during his term of office. Todd called for nominations for the position of Vice-President. It was then moved, seconded and Agreed that John Sauer should become Vice-President. This was agreed with warm applause.

#### **General Business:**

**Website:** Todd Wall explained the revamping of the website and encouraged members to make use of it. Kathy Sauer suggested that the membership application be put on the website.

**Newsletters:** The cost of printing and publishing the Newsletters was raised by Sue Gunn, the Newsletter Editor, and especially the cost of using coloured photographs. There was general discussion around this topic. A letter from Treasurer, Ian Gunn was also read. It was generally agreed that we should continue to use coloured photographs with the suggestion that all photographs be put in a central page with the remainder of the newsletter being printed in black and white. Another suggestion was seeking the opinion of members with regard to sending out newsletter via email.

**Annual General Meeting 2011:** Our wish is to return to Lindisfarne Camp. Marie will contact Liz McKerchar to check up on the progress of rebuilding.

**Visit of Rich and Linda Gunn:** It was moved, seconded and Agreed that the sum of \$50.00 be set aside for the purchase of a gift for Rich and Linda to mark their visit to New Zealand. Todd Wall will take care of this.

**Appreciation:** Bonny Flynn thanked everyone for their condolences and care after the recent death of her husband Errol.

**Enquiry:** Kathy Sauer asked for any information people had regarding the prevalence of Multiple Sclerosis amongst people of Scottish heritage. Apparently this has been known in some parts as the Scottish Disease.

**Gratitude:** Warm thanks were offered to the people of Dunedin for their efforts in arranging such a superb weekend gathering at such short notice and for their warm hospitality.

The meeting closed at Noon.

*Marie Gunn  
Secretary*

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## **Dunedin Report – February 2011**

### **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

10 of us attended the September Gathering at Bonny Flynn's house. It was a lovely sunny fun day and there was plenty of food on hand with Sheila providing a cream corn, rice and cheese casserole followed by steamed treacle pudding and custard. She was ably assisted by Bonny and Joyce Shield. The lunch was a big success, judging by the way the plates were cleared and the comments coming from the multitude.

The recipe for the lunch dish of corn, rice and cheese casserole was written out a few times by those wishing to experiment with their own culinary skills, all I might add, in line for being the Clan's Master Chef, especially

Jessie Nelson and Margaret Campbell, who both reckoned the others didn't stand a chance, although Viggo Nielsen claimed he could give them a run for their money with his skills.

We had a Spring Raffle with the funds going towards our Dunedin Christmas Dinner.

The last photo of Errol, Bonny's husband, was taken at this Gathering and after editing and framing it, and presenting it to Bonny, it now has pride of place on a wall in the dining area. He died a week after it was taken by yours truly. Usually Errol isn't at home when we have a gathering at this venue so I was lucky this day to get the photo.

#### **AGM Weekend - 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2010**

This was a very successful weekend with 22 Clan members attending the AGM held in Dunedin. Marie and Ben Gunn arrived from Christchurch on Friday evening as did Kathy and John Sauer. Christine Wilson arrived on Saturday morning and so did Dick and Tony Rawstron. It was great to see them all.

Saturday lunch was provided by the Dunedin Clan members at Bonny Flynn's house. After lunch most of us went to a Presbyterian Church in South Dunedin to view a good number of exquisite Banners made by the lady church members, some from way back in time. They were stunning and drew gasps of admiration from us, the visitors. The ladies did us proud by providing a lovely afternoon tea as well, all for \$5.00 a head. It was well worth it.

Later that afternoon we had a couple of hours to spare and most of us ended up at my house in Brighton where we all had drinks and caught up on personal news from around the country. That evening we all went back to Bonny's house for our evening pot luck dinner. All in all the day went very well and everybody enjoyed themselves immensely.

The next day, Sunday, saw us all gathering in the Janet Cameron Hall in Green Island for the AGM and lunch, provided for us by the Home of St Barnabas Caterers. It was a superb lunch and plenty of it. The AGM went well with adjustments made to the membership fees. They are now \$18.00 for a Single Person, \$25.00 for a Married Couple, and \$30.00 for a Family.

#### **Dunedin Christmas Dinner - 8<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

16 Dunedin Clans-folk, the piper, Ray Goodfellow, who is our self-appointed Clan Piper, and his wife plus the Entertainer and her husband, attended our Christmas function at the Janet Cameron Hall in Green Island, Dunedin. It was a very lively affair commencing with the Haggis Ceremony piped in by Ray, followed by the entourage of Haggis, Sword and Whisky bearers and ably addressed by Viggo Nielsen. The ladies of the Dunedin Central Lions Club did the catering for us and turned out a superb Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. Genderless Gifts purchased by each member of the Clan for up to \$5.00 per head were handed out by Sheila Wall and Joyce Shield (dressed as Christmas Bells appropriately named 'Ding' and 'Dong') at a suitable interval to all those present with much hilarity. It was a great evening, thoroughly enjoyed by everybody there.

Sheila, Joyce, Bonny and Julie deserve an accolade for all the organisation and work they have put in, not only the AGM weekend, but into every event we hold during the year. Well done ladies.

*Todd Wall*

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## **Christchurch Report**

A report was not available due to various personal and health reasons. However some of the events that took place were:

- Saturday 28 August 2010 – A pot luck luncheon was held at the home of Ben and Marie Gunn. Jan and Tony Rawstron shared some of their exciting overseas travel adventures including their time in Caithness. They also played a dvd which showed Commander Iain Gunn who took them on a trip around the places of interest in Caithness. All who attended the pot luck will have enjoyed a very pleasant afternoon.
- Sunday 31 October 2010 – Kirkin o' the Tartan was held at St Andrew's Church, Merivale Lane, Christchurch. Attendees were asked to gather at 1.30pm for the start of the service at 2.00pm. A sunny afternoon and well attended by various Clans. Chris Gunn carried the Clan Gunn banner.

- Saturday 27 November 2010 – Annual Christmas Dinner was held at Sequoia 88 Restaurant, Main North Road, Redwood, Christchurch – an event that all attendees enjoyed.



← Kirkin o' the Tartan, Christchurch – Banners of the various Clans



David and Chris Gunn with Clan Gunn Banner



Clan Donald at the Kirkin o' the Tartan, Christchurch

## New Year's Honours List

**Colin Donald Gunn** of Nelson, a Clan Gunn member, was awarded the Queen's Service Medal for Services to the Community. Here is a report from Tracy Neal of The Nelson Mail, 31 December 2010 headlined "**The simple pleasures of People**":

"Volunteers are people who do things they don't have to do, but choose to do, says an exemplary figure in Nelson's voluntary sector who has been recognised in the New Year Honours.

Colin Gunn, 73, has been awarded the Queen's Service Medal for services to the community.

Seated in his sun-drenched bungalow high above Nelson harbour, which is a lifetime removed from the Gisborne state house he was raised in, Mr Gunn contemplates the meaning of community and volunteering.

The former director of the Nelson Community Education Service, who has been active in Nelson's voluntary sector for 30 years, sums it up in the maxim of Roman scholar, teacher and politician Seneca, who said about 2000 years ago that wherever there was a human being, there was a chance for kindness.

"Community work is about kindness. It's people helping others maybe less fortunate or having struggled through something."

Mr Gunn says it is always a privilege dealing with people, such as the volunteers he has mentored and helped along the way, who have always been positive and helpful.

"Working with nice people changes your life."

Mr Gunn is noted for his involvement in the establishment of the Community Worker Training and Support Trust, and has been on the board of about 50 organisations in the Nelson region. He helped to establish the Citizens Advice Bureau in Nelson, the Manuka Street play group and the Health Action Trust.

A key focus for him has been helping groups in difficulty. He wrote and edited three editions of a community work handbook, *Seizing the Moment*, the latest of which is about to go online as an e-book.

Mr Gunn also had a central role in developing the 2004 Social Wellbeing Report, and was co-author of a report for the New Zealand Qualifications Authority on the recognition of prior learning. Mr Gunn's community interests stem from his career as a teacher and lecturer, and finding ways to motivate young people.

"If you are not motivated, then you don't get very far. In independent learning (such as community education), people come to you because they want an answer."

Since he retired, Mr Gunn has continued to volunteer as a mentor for the Community Worker Training and Support Trust.

When he heard about the QSM, he experienced a range of feelings.

"When I first learned, I felt proud, but then it's, 'Oh my God, do I really deserve this?'" Wellington-born Mr Gunn said he learned long ago to live like you don't know what's going to happen in life.

He and wife Marian have lived in their port hills bungalow for 30 years. They have been married for more than 40 years, after meeting in London, hitch-hiking from Paris to South Africa, and arriving in New Zealand penniless.

Mr Gunn, who says he is managing health challenges, says 2011 will be about setting personal milestones and looking forward to the Rugby World Cup. "

*Heartiest Congratulations from the Clan on being awarded the QSM!*

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### **Dunedin AGM Weekend aka Destination Discovery**

I rose early on that Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and left our home in Auckland at 6:00am. I was off on an adventure – alone.

Well, I don't believe we're ever really alone. I mean I wasn't travelling with anybody else that could be seen.

You see, I live in a family where more often than not there are twelve of us at home, so being alone is something quite different. Actually, very rarely and even though I'm a traveller that's certainly not solo.

So here I was being driven to the airport about to embark on a weekend of discovery – alone. I wouldn't describe myself as introverted, shy or an overly anxious individual but I was stepping out of my comfort zone. I must be a pack animal who enjoys the feeling of safety in numbers.

My journey was taking me to Dunedin, that Scottish stronghold in the South. I have lived about 50 years in Auckland, known as the biggest Polynesian city in the world, so even though I'm as pale as a peach myself, any place where there is an absence of brown faces sends me a bit shaky for starters. I carried on.

Todd Wall was waiting for me at the airport resplendent in his Scottish regalia. I felt safe. That was until Discovery No.1 – he suddenly, without warning, turned into a rally driver. Up hill and down dale we sped. I must say very skillfully. The surrounding countryside became a blur, although I did catch a glimpse of the ocean and some animals in fields, here and there.

Then again, without warning, very suddenly we stopped. And there it was Discovery No.2 – the most enchanting, cosy cottage hidden away on the side of a hill above the sea. Could I see the fairies fluttering among their favourite flowers in the garden?

I enjoyed the privilege of being invited to spend the night there.

It was while I was inside that I made the extraordinary Discovery No.3 – Homes in Dunedin don't have any dust – not a speck!

It didn't seem long before my rally driver chauffeur was ready to hurtle us towards our next destination. We collected Margaret on the way and headed towards Bonny's home where the Clan was gathering for lunch.

I was greeted at her front door by a large bed of the tiny, fragrant flowers, lily-of-the-valley. What joy! This little flower is not seen in Auckland yet in my story it plays a huge part. Discovery No.4 – I knew there was certainly magic in the air.

Folks flowed in, all very warm and welcoming and food followed, fast and flavour-some. This was alright.

I was born in Lancashire, in the north west of England. Flowers, food and fabrics are favourites. So, when it was announced that we were going to attend a narrated exhibition of fabric banners at a local Church in the afternoon, I was a fan. Right up my alley. It was fabulous.

More food for thought in the form of a home-baked afternoon tea prepared by the Church ladies, evoked memories of a distant past when owning an Edmonds cookery book and having the cake tins constantly full was standard home-making practice.

More food for thought in the form of a home-baked afternoon tea prepared by the Church ladies, evoked memories of a distant past when owning an Edmonds cookery book and having the cake tins constantly full was standard home-making practice.

We returned to Bonny's again in the evening for a pot luck dinner, more blathering, a raffle and more delicious food. Not at all difficult to deal with.

After dinner, we watched a DVD of the recent funeral of Bonny's husband Errol. Supportive kinship seemed very obvious amongst the group and rich fellowship existed. I felt very comfortable.

The AGM itself which began at 10am the next morning, in the Janet Cameron Hall, was another opportunity to witness the Clan in action. Some had travelled many miles from Christchurch and despite challenges presented by serious health issues, were courageously contributing for the good of the group. I liked that.

I felt deep respect and gratitude for the opportunity to participate.

I love the way we are all woven together in life and the more we weave the bigger the blanket that encircles us all.

The formal business of the meeting which proceeded quite harmoniously, assisted our appetites to appreciate the hearty roast beef dinner and fruity pavlova roll dessert that followed. Caterers delivered and served us all. When you cook for twelve many times during the week, this was heaven.

In Maori culture, hospitality – manaakitanga is paramount. Discovery No.5 – The Clan Gunn Society in Dunedin follows this tradition too.

So how do I feel reflecting on my weekend of discovery?

Discovery No.6 – This journey has joined others which I cherish and are filed away in my 'Journeys of the Heart'.

I thank all of you who shared. I look forward to meeting each of you again.

Arohanui – Shalom  
*Christine Bowker Wilson*

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## **New Members**

We extend a very warm welcome to the following new members:

Neil and Vicky Gunn; Barry and Aloma Wilson  
Carin and Jenney Wilson; Janina Polansky  
Virginia Di Somma; Jessica Wilson  
and Pouroto Ngaropo.

## Report from Kathy and John Sauer of the 22<sup>nd</sup> AGM 2010

Firstly, very many thanks for the fantastic effort from President Toddy and all his Dunedin team for the action packed, fun filled, glorious weekend, all put together at the last minute because of the disastrous fire at Cave destroying the venue that we have enjoyed so much the previous two years - (I believe we have a good chance of being back there this year). We drove down on the Friday and met with a few of the Dunedin Clan and Marie and Ben for a light meal and then went to meet our host for the weekend - Jan Wyllie. We were treated like royalty by Jan and our accommodation was second to none. Saturday Morning we all met at the lovely home of Bonny Flynn for a lovely lunch and catch up with other Clan members.

At 2pm we all gathered at the St Clair Presbyterian Church to view and hear the history of the beautiful banners all handmade by parishioners. Nothing prepared us for the treat in store. It was 'out of this world'. Each banner had a story which was read to us by some of the ladies. It was one of the most interesting and unusual exhibitions I have ever seen. They even had beautiful cards for sale with pictures of the banners. I now realise I didn't buy enough as I used them all very quickly. The ladies then served a memorable afternoon tea. As if this wasn't enough, Toddy invited us all to his house. What a delight this was too.

During a visit to the Scottish Shop in Dunedin we were pleasantly surprised and highly delighted with their display window. A mannequin was dressed with Gunn Tartan. We were thrilled they had entered into the spirit of the weekend although truthfully we have no idea whether it was by design or accident. Whichever - another accolade for Dunedin.

We all gathered again at Bonny's home for a pot luck dinner. We were joined by Richard and Tony Rawstron from Christchurch and more Clan members from Dunedin. It was another wonderful evening of catching up with one another, fabulous food and hoots of laughter all round.

The AGM was scheduled for 10.00am at Janet Cameron Hall at Green Island. An ideal venue, brilliant weather, comfy chairs and off we went for the business in hand. John was elected Vice President and considers it an honour and although he expressed some hesitation of the position initially, he will endeavour to execute his duties to the very best of his ability. (His words not mine).

At the conclusion of the meeting we were served yet another cooked meal at the hall by the folk from St Barnabas Home. We waddled out to our vehicles and headed for home with songs on our lips and the love and hospitality of Clan Gunn Dunedin in our hearts forever.

Words don't adequately express the great effort and teamwork of the Dunedin team. Looking forward to catching up with you all this year and hopefully some of you who haven't yet attended an AGM will be inspired to come along and enjoy the experience of a Clan Gathering. Just bring along your laughing gear and goodwill and all the rest falls into place.

THANK YOU SOOOO MUCH CLAN GUNN – DUNEDIN!

*Kathy and John Sauer*

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## Wedding of Alecia Ferguson and Dave Labes 15<sup>th</sup> January 2011

Congratulations to Alecia and Dave on their recent wedding. The wedding was held in one of Dunedin's beautiful gardens which nestles under the Maungatua Hills.

Alecia was resplendent in a beautiful beaded tulle gown, carrying white roses. Her bridesmaids wore identical dresses of cobalt blue chiffon with bouquets of yellow roses. The ornament on top of the wedding cake was that of a woman in a wedding dress catching a rugby player, so the ensemble in Otago colours were followed through to the bridesmaids, best man and ushers' waistcoats and flowers due to Dave's rugby influence.

Alecia represented Clan Gunn as a contestant at the Queen of the Heather competition in September 2005. Both Alecia and Dave were active members of Clan Gunn prior to their departure to Australia to take up residence. Alecia's parents and grandparents still play active roles in the Clan and support the Clan's activities in every way. We wish Alecia and Dave all the best of good fortune for their future life together.

*Sheila Wall*

## ✂ Obituaries ✂

### Ben Gunn



The news of **Ben (John) Gunn's** passing after a long illness on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2010 was received with great sadness by not only his family but friends and Clan alike. He was a proud Scot, a loving, loyal husband and father, a strong Clansman, and a brilliant craftsman.

Ben was a very loyal and stalwart member of his Clan. He was at every meeting he could get to both locally in Christchurch and Nationally. So determined was Ben to be at the last AGM in October, just before his passing, that he made the five hour trip by car from Christchurch to

Dunedin and back with his wife Marie's help using a wheelchair and walking frame when he arrived. That is Determination, Bravery and Loyalty that we could all learn from.

Ben was born in Dunbeath, Caithness, Scotland and it was his wish that his ashes be taken back there, and that wish will be honoured.

Rest in Peace Ben. You will be sorely missed.

*Todd Wall (President and Friend)*

### Errol Flynn



It was with sadness and regret that we learned of the passing of Errol Flynn, husband of Bonny Flynn (a hard working member of the Clan Gunn Council) on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2010, a week before his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Our sincerest condolences go to Bonny on this occasion. They also go to Errol and Bonny's daughters, Charmaine and Fiona as well. Charmaine represented Clan Gunn on one occasion in the Queen O' the Heather competition here in Dunedin and won the Crown. She currently lives in Auckland. Errol was well acquainted with the Dunedin Clan members and when he was at home he engaged all and sundry in interesting

conversations interspersed with plenty of humour and laughter. He will be sadly missed.

Rest in Peace Errol.

*Todd Wall (President)*

**Hector Coutts**, sadly passed away just before Christmas 2010. He was in his 80<sup>th</sup> year. He leaves behind his wife Noeline and two children, a son and daughter. He will be sadly missed by his family and we offer them our sincerest condolences on their loss.

Rest in Peace Hector.

*Todd Wall (President)*



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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

To realise how powerful the Gunn Clan of Caithness in the Scottish highlands were, here are a few extracts from Sir Iain Moncrieffe's book- 'THE HIGHLAND CLANS'. It is his aim to describe in the book the great and rightful pride which people of Scots and Highland descent feel about their origins, wherever they are now living.

"The chief of Clan Gunn was Gunn of Killearnan, whose Gaelic title was Mac Sheumais Chataich. The family derived their name from their Norse Orcadian ancestor Gunni, whose wife Ragnhild (widow of Lifolf 'Bald-pate')

inherited great estates on the Scottish mainland in Caithness and Sutherland after the death in battle in 1198 of her brother Harald Ungi, Jarl in Orkney and Earl in Caithness. Her father descended from Moddan 'in Dale', probably son of Moddan, mormaer of Caithness (slain in 1040); and her grandfather was Saint Ragnvald (St. Ronald), Jarl in Orkney, who built Kirkwall Cathedral in honour of his own uncle St. Magnus: the bones of both saints still sanctify the building. These Orkney jarls descended from 'Turf' Einar, Jarl of Orkney from 894, who taught the Orcadians to burn turf or peat in their fireplaces and was half-brother of Rolf the Ganger, founder of Normandy. It was Turf Einar who avenged the murder of their father Ragnvald the Wise, Jarl of More, son of Eystein Glumra, Jarl of the Upplanders: descended through the Norse sea –kings of Vestfold and Raumarike from the ancient pagan sacral 'Peace-Kings of Uppsala' in Sweden. Their emblem was the *galley*, the boat that symbolised their ancestral mother-goddess Freya.

The coat of arms of the Gunn chiefs has not yet been recorded in Lyon Register (1967). In 1800, Gun-Munro of Braemore recorded a coat with a three mast ship on the sea, and on a red 'chief' (i.e. the top third of the shield) the Three Legs of Man between two golden stars. The Manx Legs reflected a late and erroneous tradition that the name-father of the clan Gunni was the son of a Norse king of the Isle of Man: whose royal house in fact probably sprang from the same Yarlingar stock as the jarls of Orkney to whom the real historic Gunni was related. The three masted ship is simply a differenced version of the old *galley* of the Orkney jarls, thought up by the heralds to disentangle Caithness from Orkney symbolically. Burkes *General Armory*, which lists a number of officially unrecorded coats-of-arms, attributes to Gunn (Sutherland) a three masted galley, and on a red 'chief' bear's head between two stars; while for Gunne (Caithness) it has a ship under sail on the sea, and three stars on a red 'chief' above the ship. Basically, therefore, the Gunn coat is obviously the Ship of Caithness (derived from the Galley of Orkney) with a 'chief' of Sutherland (golden stars on red) on which another device is usually also incorporated. This device in the Braemore coat is the Three Legs of Man, a late misconception, and on the other attributed coat it is a Mackay bear's head (from so many Gunn-Mackay marriages in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) that was only adopted in error by the Mackays in the seventh century. It therefore falls to be considered what was the earlier device borne by the Gunns in their 'chief': and the obvious answer is, their famous silver brooch (heraldically a 'buckle') as Crowners of Caithness.

Startlingly enough, the earliest surviving example of the Gunn chief's coat-of-arms appears to have been punch-marked by a mediaeval armourer-smith on a rock in Massachusetts in or about 1395. obviously it is impossible to attain certainty in such a matter, especially from photographs, but the heater-shaped shield there, borne by what seems to be the effigy of a fourteenth century knight, appears to show arms of a distinctively Norse-Scottish character: a galley, and in chief a star between two large buckles. As with many Scandinavian heraldic boats, no mast appears to be shewn: but the oars are crossed in saltire at the blades, as in some highland coats.

Since at least 1426 the Gunn chiefs had been locked in conflict with the Keith's of Ackergill, who had inherited through a Cheyne heiress important rival Caithness land-claims derived from her remote ancestor John, Jarl of Orkney (murdered by Snaekoll, 2<sup>nd</sup> Gunn chief, in 1231). The Clan Gunn had been defeated in 1438 in a battle on Tannach Moor near Wick, by the combined forces of the Keith's and Mackays. There is a distinctively Norse flavour about the tale that in another battle, near Halberry Castle itself, a huge Keith was attended by the devil in the shape of a raven sitting on his shoulder and assisting him 'by tearing the eyes out of the sockets of some of the Gunns.' For the raven is the bird that symbolises the spirit of Woden, whose Raven-Banner the old Orkney jarls (ancestors of the Keiths and Gunns alike) had displayed in many a battle: there was a prophecy that it would always have the victory, but its standard bearer would be killed.

The Gunns were again defeated by the Keiths in 1464 in Strathmore near Dirlot. 'Soon thereafter Crownner Gunn and some of his sons were massacred by the Keiths in the chapel of St. Tyer, near Wick. Four of his sons were slain that day, which other accounts place in 1478. There is a well known tale that it had been agreed to hold a reconciliation meeting of twelve horsemen from each side. Twenty four Keiths came, two on each horse, and slew the Gunns, who had sought sanctuary in the chapel.

In 1517, the Clan Gunn played a decisive part in the battle of Torran Dubh in Rogart, when the Sutherland Murray's, supported by the Rosses of Balnagowan, defeated the Mackays and their allies. An old Gaelic song has the stanza: "Thainig na Guinich's gu'n tainig iad, 'S ann an deagh am a thainig iad. Thair iad as Macaoidh's siol Mhothan, Mharbhadh leo siol Phail gun acain." 'The guns came and came they did, It was in an hour of need they came. They Mackays and Mathesons fled, But the Polsons were mercilessly slain. "

*To be continued ....*

*Contributed by Jess Smith, Scottish Authoress & Friend*

Photo Gallery



Clan Gunn Attendees at the 22<sup>nd</sup> AGM in Dunedin



Sheila and Joyce as "Ding" and "Dong"



L-R John Sauer Tony & Richard Rawstron



Alecia Ferguson and Dave Labes



Bonny Flynn and Jessie Nelson

