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La Gazette

Issue # 32

July 2012

President's Greetings

Bonjour la famille

It seems no time since La Gazette was published in March and now it is the end of winter! Time flies and the first signs of Spring, along with the lighter mornings is very cheering.

However, it has not been 'hibernation time' as the publication of The Libeau Family of Banks Peninsula has taken priority.

Thank you to everyone contributed with wonderful biographical details and photos.

Along side this several researchers have delved into the past and produced extensions to the family tree going further back to our roots in France.

The proof reading took some time as there are over 1000 pages in the second edition.

There was a few days delay in returning the draft to Alison as we had a snowstorm in Christchurch and 400 pages were snowbound! Alison said this was the first time this had occurred!

The final pages have been completed and are ready to be printed. The next step is the binding followed by packaging and mailing. Not long to go now!

Other changes have taken place with the website which now has a 'Facebook' link.

Please check it out! Some of us were reluctant to go this far but I have been reassured by Richard that he has control of the website! Richard came up from Dunedin in April and took a website workshop for the committee members. There have been several requests for this form of communication.

The AGM was held on May 20. There was a disappointing turnout this year but I really appreciated the 21 apologies that were tabled and appreciate that family commitments, overseas travel and ill health affect our attendance.

Our guest speaker was a young French lady who works at The Alliance Francais.

It was really enlightening to find out about her as a young person and the activities she organizes. As always Martine Marshall-Durieux, our Patron attended.

News that arrived unexpectedly in June was disappointing and means you will no longer be able to visit Joseph Libeau Snr's house. This house, the white one back from the road, was burnt down by the Fire Brigade as an organized practice on Tuesday 26.

The house has recently been sold and the new owner's obviously wanted to clear the site.

There was a notice in the Akaroa Mail on the previous Friday. It is our intention to find out more and intend to express our disappointment that we were not informed.

The house is the only one that did not have a Historic Trust category.

On a brighter note we have more French cousins visiting in February and March next year.

Gilles and Micheline Fournat live in Surgeres. More information is coming but thank you for those who have already made hosting arrangements.

Take care and take time to smell the flowers!

Patricia

Births, Passings and New Members

Births

A grandson for John & Joy masters. Harry Samuel Gawith -born 15/01/2012. Son of Sarah and Sam Gawith.

From France: A grandson for Michele & Michele Libaud. Hugo Hayetine -born 29th March 2012. Son of Fabienne Libaud and Nicholas Hayetine

Passings

It is with regret we acknowledge the passing of the following family members:

Sylvia Beryl Le Beau on 17th July 2012. A twin sister to Max Le Beau.

Garth Sergison on 21st July 2012.

New Members

No new members this period

Libeau Famile Tree Book

The book is still available at pre-publication prices if ordered urgently. Order form attached to the back of this newsletter.

Annual General Meeting
Presidents' Report for the year 2011/2012

Bonjour a la patron Martine, Laure-Anne Larreur et monsieurs et madames.

It is my pleasure to present the President's Report to the 19th Annual General Meeting of the Libeau Descendents Incorporated Society.

This year has been a particularly rewarding and productive year as we managed to achieve all three of the objectives set out in our constitution.

These are:

1. To organize and/or foster any reunion of Joseph and his wives, Magdelaine Libeau (nee Chauvet) and Mary-Ann Libeau (Hedgman) in the future.
2. To assist with the organization and/or the fostering of any reunion of the settlers of other settler families that arrived at Akaroa on board the Comte de Paris on 17 August 1840.
3. To preserve and /assist with the preservation of historical artifacts and/or information of the Libeau family.

To plan, coordinate and implement two of the activities has involved a commitment from both members of the committee and others who have made an invaluable contribution to the success of these.

The first activity was the Family Reunion held at Wainui Heights Conference Centre over the weekend of 7/8/9/ October.

A gathering of 49 members and guests gathered at the various events, commencing with a dinner at Bully Hayes restaurant in Akaroa. Barbara McGlavish travelled from the States and several other families travelled from the North Island. It was wonderful to have such a mix of family members.

The programme began with the Reunion Dinner at Bully Hayes, a visit to the Akaroa Museum, the planting of a native shrub at the Heritage Park, a French-style picnic, viewing of Joseph Lucien's house, owned by Robyn and Steven Maitland, strolling along Rue Grehan and the old Libeau block of land and wandering through the cemeteries.

Bruce Clark had prepared a map and marked the various sites to help with locating points of interest.

By 4:00 it was back to Wainui to prepare for dinner, view the items of genealogical interest, watch the rugby on the large screen specially set up for the occasion

and meeting cousins from far and near. Those from out of town were greeted with an earthquake followed by an after shock!

After dinner and a semi-final World Cup game it was time to conclude. All too soon the weekend was over, it was time to depart but it had been a great opportunity to foster family ties.

It was disappointing that because of the earthquakes Gisele and Francois Tausin could not join us as their tour flights were changed.

The second major event is the near completion of the reprint of 'The Libeau Family of Akaroa'.

It was with great excitement I received the draft copy of 'The Book' on Friday.

After 17 months in the compilation stage the end of the publication is near.

By the time the proofing has been completed the book will go to press.

The order forms will be mailed in the next week or two.

There has been some wonderful research resulting in a copy which will be over 900 pages.

The improvement in digital photography has resulted in clear images of the old photos.

There is also new research that returns us to France. Anne West who was at the reunion has been able to locate Clemence Gendrot's birthplace. There is a section on this in the book.

Earlier in the year Rita Libeau/Jenkins expressed a wish that her research should be given to the Libeau Desc. She had spent a good deal of time scanning and filing photos. I was able to download these with the help of her son, Peter. These files will now be archived. There were 2325 photos in 220 folders. Our sincere thanks must go to Rita as she was the person who finally located Mary-Ann's burial site at Spreydon cemetery.

The topic of research and sharing information would not be complete without mention of Kevin Clark's progress of his publication which is well underway.

The first chapters are in draft form. It is quite a different approach and focuses on the first three generations and day to day life.

Our involvement with the **Comte de Paris** has become a strong focus over the years as we celebrate Bastille Day, Landing Day and of course the Akaroa French Fest.

This year **Bastille Day** was celebrated on the 14th July at the Bordeaux Restaurant in Rangiora. It was organized by the Comte de Paris Group and was a really lovely evening at a very 'French- style venue.

Bethel Clark organized a function for a group in Auckland.

Landing Day was again celebrated at the Cashmere Club. As many of us are involved with both organizations it appears to be the logical option to combine for these events. We also know we are welcome to attend the Alliance Francaise celebrations.

Akaroa French Fest

This was held during the last weekend of October. We were pleased with fantastic weather and being out on the water under sail was a joy. The crowds soon gathered around the old French Bay site as Sukey Thompson narrated the story of early Akaroa.

This year the weekend started with a Street Party at 7:00. The New Zealand Army Band played, the crowd swelled and by 9:15 the music ceased and the enthusiastic crowd dispersed to meet again on the foreshore next morning.

Following the re-enactment the parade moved down to the Recreation Centre for the Powhiri and formal opening of the festivities. The French frigate was in Lyttelton and along with French Consul's representative escorted by Martine made a real presence in Akaroa. By 7:00 it was down to the Gaeity Theatre for the Settlers Ball. This was a great social occasion with the NZ Army band providing the music. Altogether the weekend was a real success and a fun way to demonstrate our heritage.

The final event of the year was a French Theme night in February. The numbers were down but a small group had an enjoyable evening at Leone and Bruce's home.

Now to the day to functioning of the committee.

During the year four meetings and two workshops were held. One of the workshops was specific to the Reunion held in October and the second focused on website familiarization and development of new ideas.

Bruce, has had a particularly busy year taking charge of the Reunion enrolments and chasing up subscriptions. This has been is an on-going task!

We would like to draw in more family members to be actively involved in tasks.

Leone has not only carried out her role as secretary but has also been our representative on the Comte de Paris Group. As you can see by the activities over the last 6 months of 2011 this has been an extremely busy time.

Both Leone and Bruce have collated items and published La Gazette. This year we have had a good selection of articles contributing both reflections and current news.

I didn't realize what a valuable resource this is. The first Newsletter was in 1995. There have been 31 editions. Richard Clark published 26 of these. We are endeavouring to publish them on the website as well.

Richard Warlow, our webmaster, was able to come up from Dunedin to tutor us on the format of the website and use of the folders..

Time was spent looking at ways to encourage members to use the site also.

It has been very successful in gaining attention as we have had several inquiries with people seeking links. A series of folders has been set up for the photo gallery, family notices as well as archives.

Each of the committee has played their part in the activities carried out, particularly the Reunion. My sincere thanks for your support and involvement. Bruce Clark, Norman Clark, Richard Clark, Linda Joughan, Bradley Joughan, Heather Libeau-Dow, Desiree McKenzie and Ken Wright. My thanks also to our co-ordinators Jocelyn Benefield, Bethel Clark, Kevin Clark, Alain Boussiron and Grant Wright. Your role is important in keeping in touch with distant places.

It has been with sadness that we have farewelled a number of our family this year.

As Sheryl Baker commented when sending the news that her husband, Denis, had passed away 'another leaf has fallen from the tree'.

Several of the cousins were in their nineties. The longevity genes are passing down the blood line! I think the eldest is 96 b.15.10 1916. Lily McKenzie lives at Lister House in Waimate

Looking forward to the year ahead

- The publication of The Libeau Family of Akaroa-near future
- Kevin Clark-drafting of book well underway.
- Suggestion that the AGM be held on a rotational basis-evidence of this is the enthusiasm demonstrated by the number of North Island cousins who travelled south for the Reunion. If planned well in advance bookings can be made around Queens Birthday weekend. The meeting would commence in Christchurch at the same time but recess and re convene in Wellington.
- Upgrading the website
- Create another DVD This time of cameos of the older family members
- Artifacts – Family Register on the website
- Finding new committee members. Some of us are aging we need new blood!
- Support in publishing the newsletter-both Leone and Bruce are carrying two heavy tasks.
- French Visitors in February- Gilles and Michelline Fournat- Hosting/French Theme night/Petenque/picnic etc

Continuing with the discovery and preservation of family history continues to be our underlying philosophy. Participating in family activities establishes a caring environment where memories are created and passed on to the next generation.

In closing I would like to take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for your attendance and support and wish the new committee every success in the ventures for the year ahead.

Remember a task shared is a task halved

I now wish to table this report and recommend its acceptance.

Reflections from the Past



Canterbury's 150th Anniversary December 16 2000

A small but enthusiastic group of Libeau Family members met in the Christchurch Square at 9:30 to take part in the Civic Service to commemorate the arrival of the First Four Ships at Lyttleton and the Formal settlement of Canterbury. The first of these ships was the Charlotte Jane on 16th December 1850.

As the Comte de Paris arrived 10 years prior to this we represented this earlier group of settlers.

The youngest member was Connor Kearns born on 9 May 2000 and the eldest Neville Clark, who had just celebrated his 77th birthday. It was a pleasure to have Margaret McEwen with us at the Service in the Cathedral, but unfortunately she was not well enough to take part in the walk.

The journey to Hagley Park was quite an event as we had the Caledonian Pipe Band behind us! Our numbers swelled as we encouraged family members to join us.

As we proceeded through the gates of the Botanical Gardens we were delighted to be acknowledged by the descendants of John Robert Godley.

A group of family members stayed on in the Gardens to have a picnic lunch and enjoy the wonderful music and activities of an earlier era.

Pictured are Leigh McEwen, Margaret McEwen, Stan and Rita Jenkins, Leone Fuller, Richard Clark, Rosemary Sutton, Connor Kearns, Bruce Clark, Neville Clark and Patricia Stoneman

Mini Reunion

The families of Andrew Frank Clark are invited to join together for a Mini Reunion to be held on Sunday November 11th 2012 in the Sheffield/Waddington area.

It is hoped to join for a shared lunch, travel through some of the old family areas and reminisce. It is the Sunday before Show Weekend.

For further information and expressions of interest please ph: 03 3557151 or email cpdstoneman@xtra.co.nz

Frederick John Clark

The brief finale of an article provided by granddaughter, Margaret Castleton.

For 50 years Granddad was Lay-Preacher for the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches and preached at Pahiatua, Mangatainoka, Makomako, Hukanui, Eketahuna and Woodville.

For as long as I remember Granddad wore a hearing aid and suffered a hand tremor yet despite these handicaps I can never remember him complain about anything no matter how difficult things were for him. I believe God had chosen him to endure these things to be an example to us all and to be thankful for our good health and for what the Lord has provided.

All the wider family loved Granddad and I believe this was because he accepted everyone for who they were and never passed judgement on anyone. We all believed he would live to be 100 like his mother but sadly Granddad passed away in 1986 at the age of 98 after breaking his hip in a fall.

Les Norrish

Part 1

UNCLE LES's STORY as told to niece Nola Dick (Noel's daughter) in 2010 at age 96. This upright kindly little gentleman's mobility is limited only by his impaired sight and hearing. His mind is very alert and memory excellent. He enjoys one on one conversation frequently adding wisdom and humour. They still live in their own townhouse where he is ably cared for by his wife of almost 70 years, Auntie Noeline, now also in her 90's.

Early years

SCHOOLING : St Andrews/Sth Canterbury; Spreydon (while living at Tankerville Rd, Chch), and Robinsons Bay for three years where he can remember the names of all 24 pupils.

For the 3 years the family were at Robinsons Bay near Akaroa they leased a Dairy Farm with a lovely home built by a builder. Fred and Albert had left school and worked in Chch before going to Robinsons Bay. Fred worked at Mason Struthers and Albert at Sucklings Bootshop.

At Robinsons Bay Dad, Fred and Albert milked the cows (maybe up to 40) night and morning and Fred made cheese which was sold to a firm in Chch. Dad would take a sample (possibly to Barrys Bay Company) and negotiate the price and quantity. He also had a contract from the Council to supply stone for road metal and in the winter the boys worked with horse and dray gathering rocks from the hillsides, paddocks, creek beds and foreshore.

When they had a large pile – approx 40mtrs x 10mtrs x 1mtr high the gravel crusher would come.

There was always plenty of work to be done on the farm grubbing gorse, thistles etc. Each autumn cocksfoot was cut from the steep Banks Peninsula hillsides to be manually flailed for seed - very hard, hot work. If the seed was good and ready it was threshed out of the husks and put through a riddle. A flail was a long stick, like a broom stick, joined in between another threshing stick. The seed was threshed out by continuous arm movement.

TO OWAKA - 31 July 1928

Oldest boy Fred (age 19) was sent on ahead two weeks before to learn about the farm. The eight family members travelled via Express from Christchurch to Balclutha then slow train to Owaka which shunted at every siding and took about two hours for the 20 mile (32km) trip. The seating was forms along the side of the carriage. After a very long tiring day it was dark and late when they arrived in Owaka on a freezing cold frosty night.

They were picked up by transport company Searle & Dreaver, where the brothers, tired, cold and hungry, had to travel on the back of the open deck. Les felt they were all quite distressed by this time, particularly Mother. It was four miles from Owaka up Owaka Valley to School Corner where they turned left up Saddle Hill to near the ridge top between Owaka Valley and Tawanui. Fred had the open fire burning when they arrived but there was no electricity or means of hot water in the house, only a cold tap. The house was small and basic with no bathroom. It was particularly hard on Mother having come from the nice home at Robinsons Bay. Les had just turned 14, Noel 10 and Teddy was 2 ½.

STOCK AND FARMING – The farm was 600 acres, 300 cleared and 300 in bush, with milking shed and separator shed. It was leased at 110 pound per year from a Mr Oliver Andrews.

It was stocked with about 300 sheep, and 15 cows which were milked. The first year prices were good. They received 112 pound for the total wool clip and 27/6d (\$2.75) for each lamb. Heifer calves were kept and bull calves were killed as newly born and the skins sold.

The SLUMP hit and two years later lambs sold for 7/6d (75c) and 12 pound (\$24) for the total wool clip but 'the Firm' kept the money. During the slump years 40 pound (\$80) was owed to the Grocer and 30 pound (\$60) to the Butcher but it was all paid off after the Slump. If the butcher had savaloy's left at the end of his run he would sometimes leave them in their mailbox.

The boys worked at home and other farms, all money earned went to the parents. They did a lot of turnip thinning on other farms @ 9d an hour. Les, age 20, had a girlfriend Elsie who wanted to go to the Pictures. It cost 1/6d each but Les didn't have 3/- to take her.

CHURCH – It was too far to Owaka but sometimes a minister would come out to the School and hold a service there. Dad also took services, as a Lay Preacher.