



2013

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La Gazette

Issue # 35

May 2013

Presidents' Greeting

Bonjour la famille

Greetings to you all!

This week has been special as we commemorated ANZAC Day and thought back to the men of the family who fought at Gallipoli and subsequent areas of conflict through the years when families lost loved ones not only on battlefields but in the air and on the sea as well.

Many of you will still have the medals awarded or may have them held for safe keeping in the one of the museums. You may also have treasured letters and photos. Moving house is often a time to look down behind the drawers to see what has slipped out of sight!

Over the last 2 years the NZ DSM has been awarded for service. This has required a visit to have medals remounted. You may want to find out if you have family members from the services who should have applied for this medal.

As I reflected on my own branch of the family I also thought of the cousins in France who enlisted and served in the forces especially Emilie's son, Jean- Theophile Suire who was Military Chief of Staff of the Governor of Algeria from 1935-1940.

Then there were the families who moved to Australia and served in the Australian Expeditionary Force in World War 1. Mary Jane Howarth lost two sons and one seriously wounded.

Many of you will have memories of the earlier generations and of course we now have our younger generations who are serving in the forces and take pride in their contribution to defend our country.

French Visitors

This year has been really exciting with the visit of Gilles and Micheline Fournat from Surgeres.

They have had a wonderful time in New Zealand travelling from North Cape to Bluff and were happy to chat about the places they had visited, the new activities they experienced the people they had stayed with.

In Christchurch Heather and Rob Libeau –Dow hosted a soiree where Gilles presented a sketch of the wharf at Rochefort where the Comte de Paris sailed from in 1840, read out a message from Jeanne Mazet who is the president of the Libeau-Rochefort-Akaroa group and were in return presented with a wood relief of Banks Peninsula.

During their time in Akaroa Robyn and Steven Matheson kindly opened 54 Rue Grehan for them to see Joseph Lucien's first home.

It has been wonderful to return their hospitality. I know several people are planning visits for the summer. Bon voyage to you.

Au revoir
Patricia

Births, Passings, Marriages and New Members

Marriages: None advised

New Members: No new members

Deaths: Gertrude May Clark : Passed on 2nd March 2013.



Gertrude May Clark - b 9 Jan 1919 d 2 Mar 2013.

Gert was the matriarch around which the family revolved. She nurtured and taught, she listened, understood and she comforted. She was always non-judgemental and open-minded even when sorely tested by the hairstyles, clothes and escapades of her grandchildren. She kept the family informed of what was going on for everyone.

Gert was born into a working class family, one of twin daughters and the second oldest in a family of eight children. She lived most of her early life in Cobden, Greymouth. In their mid-teens, Mum and her twin found work at the Forkes Hotel near Okarito in South Westland where Gert met Geoff, whose family had shifted to Whataroa not far away.

Gert and Geoff's early life together must have been pretty stressful. They lived in Hokitika and Otira and when dad went away to the war mum with her first two children, lived with her parents. The post war years were insecure, Geoff looking for work, no home and three more children. But they survived and by the early 1950s, Geoff had started the bike shop in Papanui and they had their house in Manchester Street.

Gert worked hard. She was a generous, capable and strong woman, a strength shown mostly through her quiet determination and energy.

- She helped Geoff at the bike shop and later at the GHB grocery shop they ran in Addington. Together they made sure we didn't go without anything we needed.
- She not only looked after her family, but also various neighbours who were less well off or ill – providing meals and baking.
- She was on the local PTA and with a team of other women organised school lunches on a Monday because at that time you couldn't buy fresh bread at the weekend.
- She was on committees at the various bowling clubs she was a member of.
- She made sweets for ran sweet stalls at church and school fetes.

In all that she did, Gert never sought the limelight or thanks. She was happiest in the background and could usually be found in the kitchen pouring tea or doing dishes.

Gert will be especially remembered for her kindness and caring, her gentleness, sense of humour and twinkle in her eye. Despite her busyness, she always seemed to have time for family and others. No matter how she was feeling or how busy she was, she always had a smile, time to talk to anyone who called and able to offer a cup of tea and cakes and a bed if necessary. And she was a second mum to a number of people.

Gert enjoyed her life, hard and busy though it was. Geoff, her family, grandchildren and great children most of all. She relaxed when visiting relatives and holidays with family and friends were also special times to relax with.

Gilles et Micheline

Our very supportive cousins, Gilles and Micheline Fournat from Surgeres in France, are currently in New Zealand, staying with family members as they tour and at time of writing are in the winterless north with Barbara Linton at Paihia. They are working their way south, leaving Wellington for Picton on 27th February, travelling around the South Island before returning to France on 19th March.

The Hermione

An interesting article received from Michele Libaud, France, in which we are very interested, especially those who saw the very early construction during our tour in 1999.

Hermione, Liberty Frigate !

In Rochefort (Charente-Maritime area), since 1997, in the old maritime arsenal, a team of passionate people have undertaken the construction of the frigate "Hermione" which allowed La Fayette to cross the Atlantic Ocean to get back to America.

In July 2012, Rochefort has celebrated "the Hermione" : the launching of the hull of the Hermione and its launching on the Charente river. Three festive days sharing history, lights, adventure, music and emotion, to make of this launching a magic festival! A green and white flag on top of the sun's door, main entrance of the Arsenal, indicates that a boat is getting constructed.

We could admire a nautical parade of old sailing ships from the transporter bridge until the "Quai de la Liberation" (on the way to Tonnay-Charente), alongside the Royal Corderie.

Many thousands of persons attended the opening of the "ship gate", the departure of the hull of the Hermione, and wanderings on the Charente river, and its mooring for a night in front of the Royal Corderie.

It was an honor that the "Belem" was stationed in Rochefort's harbour for this big festival. It is the oldest three-master in Europe in state of navigation and the second biggest sailing-ship remaining in France. It is used now as a school-boat for young sailors. The "Belem" is classified "historical monument" since 1984.

The final launching of the Hermione for Boston is expected for 2015. Now three masts and sail have to get fixed. A big job: already one mast is fixed (several tons and close to 25 meters high). Twenty-four kilometers of ropes are necessary to fix the sail!

After a look to the aerial photos, you may desire to see the Hermione, unless you prefer to wait until 2015 for the final launching!

Michele.

Out of space. More of these photos in next Gazette



Our Senior Members

Nola Dick has reminded us that Leslie Oswald Norrish is now 98 (born 5/7/1914). Les now lives in the Waterlea Rest Home in Blenheim. His brother is Edward (Ted) Melville Norrish (born 21/12/1925) is a just a youngster at 87 and lives in Nelson.

Olive Braddock

Just a few words and photos from Mum's birthday celebrations in July. Supplied by Carol Ward

Olive Braddock (nee Heyward) turned 90 and celebrated in style with family and friends in July 2012. From as far away as Townsville, Mackay and Hivesville in Queensland, and Auckland, Hawkes Bay and Mosgeil, over 80 joined together for the great occasion. All the siblings were able to travel from Christchurch and Nelson to be together on the day. Olive lives with her daughter Carol in Otaki, 80km north of Wellington on the Kapiti Coast, and together with son Graham and their partners, they catered a luncheon at the local Presbyterian Church where Olive is a member.

Many family contributed to the celebrations - one grandson grew the flowers for the table, another made the cake, a grand daughter and great grand daughter developed the "slide show" and the great grandchildren also helped with table decorations. As many as could helped set up the hall and serve the meal, making it a true family effort to honour a very special person in their lives. Speeches were made by siblings, great grand children and many friends who have been involved in Olive's busy life. The day was one which provided Olive and those who shared with her many great memories to treasure.

The photos show Olive cutting the cake with help from your granddaughter and great granddaughters and the second of her siblings: Gordon and Ross Heyward, Joyce Widgery, Olive and Grace Heyward.



Ken Wright

Tribute at Ken's 90th birthday celebration 26.01.13 Composed by his daughter Morgan.

We're gathered here from near and far
To honour you, our dear Papa.

What a gathering --What a man
You're awesome and amazing.

You've shared your skills, you've given your love,
You're kind and generous too
And for close on 80 years you've danced that old soft shoe.

Rhythm is clearly in your bones
And music in your soul
Your magic feet and unique style
Has spread that beat over many a mile.

They say that groove is in your heart
And yours is like a song
Beating out its rhythm
while we just hum along

So... This is your stage
And we are your fans
We applaud your life as around you we stand.

We shout encore (crowd yells encore)
We shout bravo (crowd yells bravo)
We shout hip hip hooray (crowd repeat)

90 years is quite an act
We all here love you
And that's a fact.

Happy birthday Dad.



Ken in his tap dancing gear with a former pupil.



Ken in action

Rita and Douglas White 60th

Wedding Anniversary

Supplied by Heather Libeau-Dow

On 17th of June, 2012, friends and family gathered at Clearwater Resort, Christchurch, to celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of Douglas and Rita (nee Metherell) White.

Douglas is the youngest child of Clemence Marie (nee Clarke) White, the granddaughter of Joseph Clemence Libeau Junior.

Douglas and Rita were married at St Ninians Church, Riccarton Road, Christchurch on the 19th June 1952.

The celebration was a superb gathering of friends, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews and many grandchildren from both Douglas and Rita's family.

All there had a great catch up while celebrating an admirable milestone for a wonderful and loving couple.



19th June 1952



17th June 2012

Plea from France

Just a reminder of Alain's request sent earlier. (copy below) I am not sure if Alain has been successful to date. (waiting for a reply to confirm current position). If you can help him please e-mail him. Alain's e-mail address is alain.boussiron@orange.fr

Dear cousins

We are writing to ask you for advice & help with the following problem:

Our grandson, Baptiste, 22, is at present studying International Business Marketing in a school of Commerce, INSEEC, in Bordeaux. In October he will begin his fifth & final year, at the end of which he has to again find an internship (training course) abroad.

In the summer holidays (European) of 2010 he was a marketing intern (trainee) for 2 months in London, in a luxury goods shop (Lalique crystalware). In the summer of 2011, he had a training period of 2 months in Bali in humanitarian aid for orphans.

At present (summer 2012) he is in Santiago (Chile) for 4 months as an intern in charge of contacting clients & following up the transactions in a German international transport firm, DH L.

As his final exams take place mid-April 2013, he must find an internship for 4 months from May 2013. We thought of New Zealand as it is an English-speaking country (Baptiste speaks English), and because your economy is more robust than ours. Moreover, we have told him how great the people are and what a wonderful country it is!

Do you think that Baptiste could find a firm in NZ (in industry, agriculture or tourism) prepared to take him on as an intern for 4 months? Among your connections, would you be able to suggest people you know & give us addresses? If you need further information or details, please let us know. Baptiste could send you a CV (résumé) & a letter of motivation in support of his application.

Another question: is it easy to find student accommodation for a few months? He would accept a flat-share.

If you can't suggest anything, don't worry, it's not a real problem; he will try his luck in Australia or the U.S.

Affectionately yours,

Alain

A Trip to France

Anne West September 2012.

LIBEAU RELATIVES PAST AND PRESENT

A trip to France in June was the perfect opportunity to meet Libeau relatives with whom I had been corresponding, and to visit some of the places which have featured in my genealogy research. Our family tree expanded considerably since last November: Francis Fournat discovered the birth of Magdelaine Chauvet, Joseph Libeau's first wife; and I found the family of Clémence Rosalie Gendrot, another 'Comte de Paris' immigrant who was to become the wife of Joseph Lucien Libeau.

We travelled through the Sarthe region, home of Clémence's Gendrot and Brière ancestors, stopping at her birthplace - the small village of Torcé-en-Vallée, where we visited the 16th century church of Notre Dame de Torcé. An ancient dolmen nearby was the ideal place for a picnic lunch, and for the children to play. My travelling companions were daughter Lauren and grand-daughters Brianna (3 years) and Olivia (18 months).

Gilles and Micheline Fournat very kindly hosted us at Surgères, and with them we visited Rochefort and met Michel and Michelle, also Alain and Annick. We enjoyed wonderful French hospitality and ate delicious French food. The Charente-style mussels were the best I have ever tasted, and the Merlu (fish) which Gilles cooked for us in an amazing long pot was *délicieux*. I was thrilled to find I could converse with these cousins in French, they spoke so carefully and slowly in consideration of my limited ability! Next we stayed with friends at Nantes, where of course we had to take small girls for a ride on the elephant, and to visit playgrounds and parks. But there was also time to see the church of Saint Donatien, where many generations of our Libeau ancestors were baptised, married and buried.

Since returning to New Zealand I have spent many more hours within the French Departmental Archives, a wonderful on-line resource. There I have enjoyed tracing various family lines, in villages throughout the Loire regions. I am recording the French branches of my family tree, this is a work-in-progress, you can find details of Libeau and Gendrot ancestors at <http://gw0.geneanet.org/annerachel>



Left photo: Michel, Brianna, Olivia, Gilles and Anne at the river Charente, Rochefort

Right Photo: Olivia, Anne, Micheline, Brianna, Lauren

Subscriptions

Thank you for those members who have sent in their outstanding subs. I would also thank those who pointed out that they had paid but I had omitted to mark as paid. I accept a smack on the hand for that.

However there are a considerable number of you still in arrears. . If you are one of the outstanding and wish to still receive your newsletter, please send your remittance to Bruce Fuller at 25 Hamel lane, Kaiapoi 7630 or make payment direct to our bank account: BNZ 020842 0171869 00. Don't forget, if you are paying direct put your name and if possible society number with your payment.

For the last two years, your committee decided to cease sending "La Gazette" and cancel website accessibility to non-financial members and will do so again this year. This could be your last "La Gazette".

Ensure you don't lose contact with the society by paying your subs now.

Bruce Fuller (treasurer)

Message from our Webmaster

Richard Warlow who is our industrious webmaster (and family member) advises that around 50 members get e-mail communications that includes website updates and other late notices. If you are not getting these, please advise Richard (and our secretary) of your current e-mail address. Contact addresses are at the end of this newsletter.

Richard also advises that he has launched the Society on Facebook. He requests that you "like us" on <http://vwww.facebook.com/Libeau.Family> Please check this out. A chance to have your say and discuss hot topics!

Richard has also advised of an interesting website that has paper clippings from the Akaroa Mail and Banks Peninsula Advertiser (1877-1920). The link (searching Libeau) holds 1467 clippings and can be found at <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?> The full link has been added to our website under links.

Editors' Reminder

Help!!!

Again we ask for help.

Although a few articles have come in, thank you, we are at the stage where we do not have any more reserves for future newsletters. Please get pen to paper, fingers to keyboard and send in some stories/info etc.

Thanks for those gazette contributions that we have received. The editors would still love to hear from you with interesting little tidbits for our readers' enjoyment, ie. family histories/anecdotes, travel (especially in France), photos, etc.

With Gilles and Micheline in New Zealand, I am sure there will be opportunities for stories and photo's from those of us who have enjoyed their company during their travel around our country.

We wish you all a very happy and prosperous 2013.

The Editors

Alliance Francais

N.B.

Alliance Francaise has a new home in Christchurch. Now at 913 Colombo Street. Also the French film festival commences 28th February at Northlands Hoyts. Brochures available from the new Alliance rooms.

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