



2013

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La Gazette

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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

Births: Annette and Alastair McGowan are proud to announce the arrival of their grandson, Eden McGowan, born 15th April 2013 to Nathan and Kirsty McGowan. Joseph and Magdalaine would have been his great, great, great, great, great grandparents.



Marriages: None advised

New Members: No new members

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



From Bruce Clark

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.

French Genealogy

From Anne West.

I am a descendant of two French families who emigrated to New Zealand in 1840 on the Comte de Paris : Joseph Libeau and his wife Magdelaine Chauvet, also Pierre Gendrot and his wife Anne Victoire Brière. Joseph Lucien Libeau (son of Joseph and Magdelaine) married Clémence Rosalie Gendrot (daughter of Pierre and Anne Victoire), they were my great-great-grandparents. Searching for the ancestors of these people, I had found several generations of the Libeau line in the department Loire Atlantique. But the origins of the Chauvet, Gendrot and Brière families eluded me.

In November 2011 I came across some clues as to the origins of the Gendrots and Brières, my searches led me to the Sarthe department, where I discovered the marriage of Pierre Gendrot and Anne Victoire Brière, and the baptism of their daughter Clémence Rosalie on the 18th December 1834 in the village of Torcé-en-Vallée! With help and encouragement from Peter Tremewen I began searching the online departmental archives, from these I have found records of baptisms, marriages and burials, tracing back several generations of the Gendrot and Brière families.

At about the same time I had made contact with our cousins Francis and Gilles Fournat in France, who have researched the Libeau family tree. From their information I was able to fill in more details of the Libeau ancestry, but Magdelaine Chauvet remained a mystery. Then I heard from Francis that he had just found Magdelaine's marriage and birth!

Magdelaine Chauvet was born 13 June 1810, at Saint-Vincent-Fort-du-Lay, Vendée, France, her parents François Chauvet and Rose Auger; she married Joseph Libeau on 6 October 1829, at Saint-Vincent-Fort-du-Lay. This discovery opens another branch of the family tree, we are now searching for earlier generations of the Chauvet and Auger families.

(Apologies Anne. It appears that we missed your contribution when originally submitted- The editors)

French Houses to Rent

We received the following notice from France. Members may like to take advantage of it if you are travelling. The society has no prior knowledge of it and is published solely for your information.

Enquiry from Madleen - reservation@charminghouses.net

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are a French agency located in the South of France, in the city of St Rémy de Provence, created 13 years ago: Charming Houses.

We would like to develop our activity with kiwi travellers by making partnerships with local agencies for example for the vacations in France and benefit from the attractiveness and richness of the Provence countryside. We want to promote French culture, language, regions through vacations in France and can organize French lessons, cooking classes, wine tours, cheese degustation... during the stay.

Do you have (French or not) contacts who can be interested in travelling France? Do you have addresses of French native, thematic groups like sport group...? Could you help us in our approach?

If you want, we can send you by email a small presentation of our agency.

Do not hesitate to contact us by phone or by email, we remain at your disposal for any further information.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Madleen & Marie Pierre Peilleron

Charming and luxury houses to rent and buy (Provence, Megeve and Mauritius)

Tel. + 33 (0)4 90 95 10 29

Mobile. + 33 (0)6 22 77 92 00

E.mail : reservation@charminghouses.net

Web : www.charminghouses.net

Gilles et Micheline

From Ailsa McKenzie.

It was a real pleasure to be able to host Gilles and Micheline for a couple of days during their recent visit to the South Island and Waimate. We certainly enjoyed their company and it was good to update some more of the family tree which they have recently discovered.

Here is what they wrote in our visitors' book:

"At the end of our 7 weeks' trip in New Zealand, we say a hearty 'thank-you' to the whole people of Aotearoa and today a special 'Merci' to our dear cousins, Ailsa and Ewan McKenzie. We were very happy to see Mount Cook, at last, with you and Desiree. Ailsa, you had promised fine weather and you held your promise! As for you, Ewan, it was a pleasure to rely on your calm and steady driving.

Joseph Libeau, born 1807 in Le Leoroux Battereau, France, was a simple peasant, who had the courage to face dangers. He was rewarded by this wonderful land that the Kisis call 'Godzone' (or Gold's Own) and founded a very large family with some help of Madeline Chauvet and Mary Ann Hedgeman. And the New Zealand melting pot allowed us to meet, coming from Ireland, Scotland, England, France, Moia Ailsa and Ewan, moia beaucoup. Gilles and Micheline."



From Heather Libeau-Dow

Tour de Force 2013.

Gilles and Micheline Fournat left their home in Sugeres- the Charente- Maritime district at the end of January this year for a six-week tour of New Zealand. Visiting Libeau relatives along the way they travelled from the north of Auckland to the very south and back to Christchurch for a final visit to the family sites at Akaroa.

Since the reunion in 2000, many Libeau family members have been welcomed to their home in France with warmth and generosity. It was a privilege to reciprocate their hospitality. On March 9, a soiree at Heather Libeau-Dow's home was held to welcome Giles and Micheline where relatives gathered to share, eat and sing together. The President of the Libeau Descendant's Society, Patricia Stoneman, presented the French group with a detailed wood engraving of Banks Peninsula. Gilles spoke on behalf of their president; Jeanne Mazet, and presented us

with a print of an early engraving of the port of Rochefort as it would have looked in 1840 when Joseph Libeau departed for New Zealand.

Sunday March 17 was a special day of memories with visits to significant gravestones at little River and Akaroa cemeteries. The highlight was a tour of Joseph (Junior) and Clemence Libeau's first home at 54 Rue Grehan. Sensitive restored by the Matheson's, it was a step back in time to our family roots

Gilles was bitterly disappointed at the absence of fresh oysters for sale in Bluff. They need to plan their next visit to coincide with the Bluff Oyster Festival in May!

They have shared their stories, photos and video footage with the relations in France. They want the next generation to be inspired about their heritage and become actively involved in the Libeau-Descendants Society

For those who have not yet met this wonderful couple, read about them and their family from page 880 in the revised edition of the Libeau Family book.



Gilles also read out the following on behalf of Jean Mazet, President of French branch of the society.

Cher Tata, Cher Tonton, Chers veinards !
Voici le tremolo speech ...

As the spokesman of our French association, I have the great honour and pleasure to be part of the " very happy few" to come back to my second homeland.

The ones I left behind are green with envy, especially Jeanne, the chairwoman, who has never shown her lovely face in New-Zealand.

Yet, they assure you that their thoughts are with you and wish you a very happy new year. They are also concerned about the never-ending earthquakes you have been going through, and hope the situation is going to go back to normal and soothe your pains.

They were also glad to receive the family book. However, they'd like to know whether the editor would be so kind as to correct a few mistakes and just print an erratum.

Well, let me tell you the new generation is very proud of our heritage and really eager to discover our remote country.

Again, with all their love, they wish you all the best for 2013 !

(Tu pourrais rajouter : As for me, it's a good start since Micheline and I are here with you. Thank you for your warmest welcome)

Subscriptions

It is again disappointing to advise that it was necessary to cull out a further 15 members who have not paid their last years subs. Several notices have been sent but we can only assume their interest in the society has waned. I will be sending out the current years subscription demands in the near future. (possibly this weekend all going well.)

Spread the word amongst your family who aren't members and see if you can get them to join up.

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/Libeaufamily>. 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

Please! Please! Please!

Again we ask for help.

After our previous pleas, it was good to receive some further articles. Thank you. However we are again 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.

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.

For the many people that met Gilles and Micheline, do you have an article and/or photos?

Should you have sent something to us and it has not appeared, please let us know and we will get it into print. (e.g. Anne Wests article above)

The Editor

Committee Contacts

Chairperson	Patricia Stoneman Ph (03) 312 6555 2 Chain Road Road Ohoka cdpstoneman@xtra.co.nz	Secretary	Leone Fuller Ph (03) 327 2829 25 Hamel Lane Kaiapoi 7630 leonef@ihug.co.nz
Minutes Secretary	Bruce Clark Ph (03) 942 1702 7 Mahars Road Christchurch 8013 diana-bruceclark@paradise.net.nz	Treasurer	Bruce Fuller Ph (03) 327 2829 25 Hamel Lane Kaiapoi 7630 brucef@ihug.co.nz
Northern Nrth Island	Bethel Clark Ph 027 282 0765 bethel@xtra.co.nz	South Canterbury Rep	Desiree McKenzie Ph (03)689 8872 deay@xtra.co.nz
Central North Island	Jocelyn Benefield Ph (06) 765 5900 jocelyn.ian@xtra.co.nz	Webmaster	Richard Warlow webmaster@libeau-family.org
Southern Nrth Island	Kevin Clark Ph(04)3892706 kevin_clark@xtra.co.nz (contains underscore after Kevin)	France	alain.boussiron@orange.fr
Editors	Leone et Bruce Fuller Ph(03)3272829 25 Hamel Lane Kaiapoi 7630 brucief@ihug.co.nz		

