

Clan Little Society New Zealand & Australia Branch

# *Sprig of Heather*

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• LITTLE • LYTTLE • LYTLE •

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The Official Newsletter of the New Zealand & Australian Branch of Clan Little Society (Scotland and Worldwide)....

## Clan Little Society New Zealand & Australia Branch

### **GREETINGS:**

Hello and welcome to this edition of our local Clan Little Newsletter. I'm 'Allen' and it's my pleasure to have assumed leadership of our small group which for many years has been so ably managed by our good friend Dave. Dave and Lenora have served us well and we wish them a happy much deserved retirement. **Thank you** Dave & Lenora.

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### **BACKGROUND:**

Margaret and I have lived at Levin since 1984 following my Graduation from Bible College of NZ. Having been the first person with Legal Blindness to train and qualify as a Community Nurse in New Zealand, I worked in that capacity and then as Senior Recreation Officer at Levin's Kimberley Centre until the facility was closed by Government of the day. Other interests include a number of Community groups ranging through Radio broadcasting, Ham Radio, Kite flying, Toastmasters, Astronomy; Hot Air Balloons; Disability Advocacy and many more including serving as a local Justice Of the Peace. In 1989 Her Majesty graciously awarded me her QSM for Community Service. Currently I serve as a Parish Councillor and Lay preacher at Levin Uniting Church.



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### WHO AM I...?

In future generations what resources will people have to research their family history? Today we live amongst rapidly advancing technologies some of which some have a capacity to replicate. The common phenomena of texting and email are a direct threat to the traditional mail system and record exchange. Today we see a number of highly commercial Genealogy groups who gather and use information seemingly for profit. It costs money to simply view the existence of records held and even more to access or procure a particular document. The excellent BBC TV programme "**Who do you think you are?**" shows what can be traced in official sources with a little planning and knowledge. Many people have knowledge and information they could share if asked to do so it's a matter of finding them.

The information I have gathered has come about because people have been willing to share what they know. Many years ago our very own **Anne Mee** of Christchurch helped me put my jigsaw together. My interest in Family History has grown as a result of accessible information which could be gathered. But with modern digital technologies will future generations be able to retrieve, compare and share Information about their ancestors and related heritage.



James Little 1876

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My ancestors arrived at Dunedin from Scotland on 25 July 1863 having sailed from Glasgow on the '**Wave Queen**'



**Wave Queen**

They came from Wanlockhead, a led mining village near Sanquhar which I visited in 2006 when I also met the late Dr Johnnie Little. My Grandparents "William (Bill) and Margaret Little" lived at Mungatua then over to Outram in West Taieri. It was Bills father "James" who migrated from Scotland in 1863. Gt,gt,gt Grandparents were Gilbert Little c1720-90 of Leadhills & Agnes Aitkenhead. Their son Thomas and wife Janet were my Gt,gt Grandparents and were tmarrried according to the Sanquhar register on 6 December 1835 and their eldest son "James" born 4 December 1837 was my granddad "William' father. It was Bills father "James" who migrated from Scotland in 1863. My Gt, gt Grandparents Thomas and Janet were married according to the Sanquhar register on 6 December 1835 and their eldest son "James" Born 4 December 1837 was father of my granddad "William'. James" married Miss Grace Henderson Murray at Goodwood Palmerston, on 27 March 1870 and was in Business with his brother as "Little Bros" of Palmerston.

### **So this is my pedigree:-**

Gilbert LITTLE - c1721-1790 & Agnes AITKENHEAD c1725- ????

James LITTLE - 1763-1833 & Helen THOMSON 1764 -1840

Thomas LITTLE - 1806-1877 & Janet FERGUSSON 1813-1893

James LITTLE - 1837-1896 & Grace MURRAY 1844/46-1920

William LITTLE -1882-1962 & Margaret BUCHOLZ 1891-1967

Joseph LITTLE-1923-1996 & Florance WILKINS 1923-1997 (**Parents**)

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### **POSTMANS KNOCK**

The other day Dave mailed to me a file he had found left behind the preceding bulk consignment of CLS documents and paraphernalia. Curious as to its content I began reading and was taken back on a journey in time to the days in which our **Anne Mee** of Christchurch established the New Zealand Branch. This file was the master correspondence archive and was a miscellany of our immediate past. On reviewing the file two things became clear to me :-

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1. There is mention of many people who have had contact or exchange with Clan Little NZ over the years. They don't seem to be associated with us today. Does anyone know where they might have gone and what their current interest is?
2. Corporate administration has been a real challenge wherever on planet earth our Clan has spread its wings. Could this be because of something deep in our psyche where we are prepared to not concede and never surrender?

I think we need to celebrate our diversity with pride and foster knowledge around the positives from our heritage. Reading this thick archive I saw a couple of opportunities. We need to cultivate the home garden and be proud of who we are and where we came from. It seems to me we have an opportunity to pass on what we know and value to the next generation.

- ❖ We need to find innovative ways to share our heritage and pass it on to future generations.
- ❖ I believe we must think about a durable and enduring Corporate Identity for Clan Little New Zealand Australia.

### **HISTORY AT A GLANCE**

In the Anglo-Scottish Border Wars of 1296-1603, the Little's were one of the fighting clans of the West March, living close up to the border on the Scottish side. Constantly raiding and reiving, the borderers on both sides held in contempt all who went on foot. By the close of the 16th Century they had earned a reputation as the finest light cavalry in Europe. The Littles for over three centuries shared, with Armstrongs and Beatties, the steep-sided dales immediately to the north and west of the present town of Langholm at the extreme east end of Dumfriesshire. Their successive chiefs, Little of that Ilk, Lairds of Meikledale, resided at the foot of the side of Meikledale Valley halfway up Ewesdale (beside the present A7 road from Langholm to Hawick).

- The ancestry of Edward Little "of Meikle-dale", founder of the clan, can be traced back through Normandy and Norway to Ingjald III (ruler in 7th Century Gamla Upsulla). Edward was active in 1296-1297 as a guerrilla fighter with William Wallace, the great Scottish patriot hero.
  - Wallace led the first phase of the Wars of Independence against the oppressive occupation of Scotland by Edward I of England. Many of those who supported Wallace most closely were kinsmen, not the least of whom was "Eduard Litill, his sister sone so der" (his sister's son so dear)
  - In 1426, two years after his return from exile, James I, King of Scots, granted to "our beloved Simon Littill", chief of the clan, tenure of the lands of Meikledale, Kirkton, and Sorbie in Ewesdale. Simon thus became the first Laird of Meikledale.
  - The Clan Little of the Scottish West March supported the Stuart Kings of Scots through five reigns. On 26 July 1530, James V, fearful of the mounted strength of the Armstrongs and their supporters, came into Eskdale with a massive "hunting party". Tricking the leader of the Armstrongs and thirty-two "persons of the greatest of them named Armstrangis, Elliotis, Littillis, Irvinis, with others" into a parley, he hanged them out of hand. The Eskdale clans, thrown into a conflict of loyalties, from then on until the end of the wars forsook patriotism for their imperative of survival and sided with the likely winner.

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- At the union of the crowns in 1603, King James VI of Scots left Scotland for London as King James I and VI of a United Kingdom. He was determined to put down the continuing lawlessness on both sides of the border. His wishes were carried through with sword, noose and torch until hardly a building stood in the whole of Eskdale and Liddesdale. Chiefs were hanged those who survived were later ordered to sell out.

- Simon Little of that Ilk was chief of Clan Little at the end of the Border Wars. His son Thomas' successor, David Little, was the last Laird of Meikledale. In 1672, David was the last chief to be officially recognized. Since David's time, the Littles have been one Scotland's many headless (headless) clans.

The clan began to scatter in the 17th Century. Littles, and Lytles, with neighbouring Beatties, Thomsons, Elliots, Armstrongs and Irvings fled from persecution, poverty and overcrowding to the Ulster plantations. Many moved later into neighbouring English Cumberland, where today, as in Ulster, there are twice as many Littles as in their home county of **Dumfriesshire**. Many moved deeper into the heartland of the "auld enemy" now open to them for the first time. They crossed the oceans to North America, Australia and New Zealand, proud of their origins, but over the generations, losing contact with the descendants of those who stayed behind.

<http://www.nwrain.net/~little/ancestry.htm>

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**Our future is rooted in the past ...!**

One of the most important things we can do today is make sure our culture and heritage are preserved; enabling convenient access by future generations. We need to get our children and grand children excited about their pedigree. We should be on the look out for opportunities to grow our knowledge and share with others. If you have a 'story to tell' about how you have preserved or shared 'your' family history why not email me [kiwilittle@inspire.net.nz](mailto:kiwilittle@inspire.net.nz) AJ L

## GETTING STARTED IN GAENAEOLGY

“ one should start from oneself and work back”

One of our Australian members Edith van Drielhe kindly sent some comments about getting underway in uncovering the past through Genealogy. Her best advice was “start from the information you have about your parents and grandparents and the most important thing is to ask these family members, including uncles, aunts and great uncles and great aunts for any information they have or can remember being told, before they pass away. The information may not all exactly correct but it does give something to go on. It is expensive buying copies of BMD certificates and Wills so do that as a last resort (Birth and Marriage certificates give the most reliable information). It is surprising what clues may be found written in old books in the cupboard, old bibles, on the backs of old photos, newspaper clippings, autograph books, insurance papers etc. After Edith’s father died her brother found the marriage certificates of our parents and our father’s baptism certificate, his parent’s and grandparent’s marriage certificates as well as old insurance policies and our grandfather’s Freemason certificate with his signature, all in my father’s deed box that had belonged to his father She says “ I was lucky though, as both my father’s and mother’s families were well known and they kept a lot of family heirlooms”. She found the Latter Day Saints library was a great help with films of Sasines for Scotland. These may hold information if the Scottish ancestor worked for one of the big estates. Scotland’s People site holds records for Scotland. Ancestry (LDS) are on the Internet and their Family Search was good but I have heard that it is being changed. I think the LDS IGI fiche and films are still available to view from their libraries or local public libraries.

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The Census for Scotland, UK, Australia and probably NZ are available to view on Find My Past, Ancestry, etc. and although a lot of basic information is free to view one has to pay to view any extra detail. Edith was given a great start, thanks to my Great Grandmother Little who wrote down everything she could find about the Little, Maxwell and Carlyle families. Some of the detail given to her by her husband's aunt was incorrect but a lot of it helped me to explore further. If ones ancestors were in the East India service either civil servants or army, there are sites on the Internet with a lot of family information. The India Office Library in London holds documents but unless one goes to the Library, a record searcher is needed. My father's family were in that service and I spent a lot of money on a researcher but he was very good and it was great to get copies of old official letters or documents with details on my ancestors.

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### **CALEDONIAN & SCOTTISH GROUPS**

In many communities throughout New Zealand and Australia there are Caledonian Societies. Its worth keeping an eye on local newspapers for a variety of convenient activities and events at which common interests can be shared. Some Caledonian and Scottish Societies have a proud tradition of staging various community events for public enjoyment. There is more information at :-

**[www.scottish.org.nz](http://www.scottish.org.nz)**

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Ian S Little

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### **Greetings everyone,**

Some 20 years ago I got involved with the Clan Little Society Scotland and World Wide and in 2001 Dr.J.C.Little the then Clan Guardian gave me the job as Quartermaster which is the person that orders Clan items for sale, then in 2002 I became Treasurer for the Clan now I have two jobs but that is not all 2003 I became Membership Secretary now I have three jobs within the Clan. In 2009 at the A.G.M. in Dumfries I was voted in as Clan Guardian by members because Crawford Little and John Little resigned from the Clan so without me there would be no Clan in Scotland. When I finished working in 2007 it made it easier for me to fulfil this role, which includes being responsible for the upkeep of the Clan. Since I took over in 2009 membership was 50 members now it is 83 and this not per person but for all family members that live at their address, sale of Clan items have gone 1000% we sell Clan items all over the world. Linda Harris (nee Little) is a great help to me she is the one who did the Clan web-site and who Edits the winged stirrup news letter for the Clan.

Kind regards,

*Ian.S.Little* (Clan Guardian)

**[www.clanlittlesociety.co.uk](http://www.clanlittlesociety.co.uk)**

## The next generation...!

Have you ever listened to teenagers as they enthuse over some latest phenomena. Adolescents today are basically no different than they have been in times past. Ultimately, today's teens are not all that different from past generations. They just have more technology and information at their disposal.

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Every generation of older people makes the claim that teens today are out of control, have no discipline, are into crime, their clothes are weird, their music is noise, blah blah. Its all an illusion. People said the same things about young people 25 years ago.. Socrates said it about teens 2400 years ago. Where ever people have been there's always some recollection of the good, bad and ugly in the generation gap. Older people want to think they were well-behaved teens and that crime didn't exist in their grandparents' time, but they're simply wrong. Obviously it can't be true that every generation is getting "worse" from the one before, because that would mean our world was a utopia just 200 years ago and history clearly shows wasn't so.

How do we get the next generation interest in the past when they seem to struggle with the present Getting young people excited about who they are today and how they came to be is where it begins.

## Pass it on



### **Readers Digest published the following comments and ten tips about sharing History:**

.... Everyone loves a good story – and that goes double for kids. Fortunately family history is full of fascinating stories, particularly if you know how to tell them. Try the following tips for making **family history** interesting to historians of all ages.

- 1. Speak to your audience.** Mention finding a 110-year-old passenger list with a bunch of names and dates on it and the kids may roll their eyes and run off. But tell those same kids the story about how that same ancestor spent three weeks crammed into the hull of a ship fending off sea-sickness and storms and you could find yourself with an audience begging to see that same list.
- 2. Play up the similarities.** A 10-year-old whose favourite pastime is building model tall ships may be thrilled to discover a great-great-great-uncle who was a sailor on one during the late 19th century. The only redhead in the family will love learning about the great-grandmother whose auburn locks she inherited.

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**3. Demonstrate the differences.** Have a soccer player in the house? Tell him or her how Granddad used to play kick the can – and why he wasn't playing games with brand new, store-bought toys instead.

**4. Illustrate your stories.** Every story and every person seems more real with images. Show family photos and relay stories of the people in each. Don't have a family photo? Find historic images from the time period in question and explain how your ancestor was affected.

**5. Get cooking.** Can't convince the kids to be interested in their Italian roots? A hearty serving of homemade pasta and sauce – complete with details about how the recipe was passed down through generations – may do the trick.

**6. Know what they're learning.** Ask questions about what they're discussing in school. Captain Cook? William Hobson? Hongi Hika? Use events being covered in schools as an open invitation to start a discussion about your family's personal side of that same historic moment.

**7. Accept limitations.** Some children are born family historians. Others take a little more coaxing. Be patient, persistent, and most of all, make sure the stories are fascinating.

**8. Be excited!** Family history isn't a contact sport but it can always use a good cheerleader. If you're excited about the stories you relate to the children, they'll be excited, too.

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**9. Get creative.** Try projects, like creating, colouring or decorating a family tree. Create your own scavenger hunt, in which members of a web-savvy younger generation search for specific people (family or historic figures) in the records at Ancestry. Or write up a list of questions for each one to ask at the next family reunion – then offer a prize for the child who finishes first or finds the best answers.

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**10. Make movies.** Set children loose with video recorders (or audio recorders) and have them create documentaries about their own family. They'll focus on subjects that interest them and learn more about their personal history while doing so. And you get a lasting reminder of how the family is seen through a child's eyes.

❖ In April 2012 I approached a Senior Advisor at the Ministry of Education exploring '**what it means' to be a New Zealander in the context of our diverse heritage**'. For me it's about the things which make us different and yet bind us together as citizens of Aotearoa NZ. I'm keen to support a conversation leading to the next generation being excited about who they are, where they come from and what they carry into our shared future. I believe within the School Curriculum there are a variety of learning opportunities where we could share our Heritage and Culture. We need to be innovative and connected to tell the **Clan Little** story and contribution our family settlers have made to Aotearoa NZ

*AJL*

# Connexion's

Included with this "Sprig Of Heather" is a simple form which you are invited to complete and return. It will serve two purposes which are helping to make sure we have all the correct names and addresses of current members and any additional suggested contacts you care to introduce.

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## *How will you celebrate St Andrews Day*

**FRIDAY NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup> 2012**

St. Andrew's Day is the feast day of Saint Andrew. It is celebrated on November 30 in Scotland. Saint Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, and St. Andrew's Day (Scots: Saunt Andra's Day, Scottish Gaelic: Latha Naomh Anndra) is Scotland's official national day. In 2006, the Scottish Parliament designated St Andrew's Day as an official bank holiday. **A day for family and culture where ever you are.**

**Please send all correspondence  
direct to:-**

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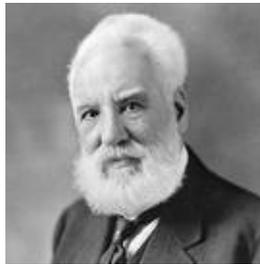
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*Who is this.... ?*



*A well known Scotsman  
who changed the world !*

The thoughts and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author alone and not necessarily those of any other party.

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