



Crest Badge of a Member of Clan Hunter

hunters' halloo

Newsletter of the Clan Hunter Association, Canada

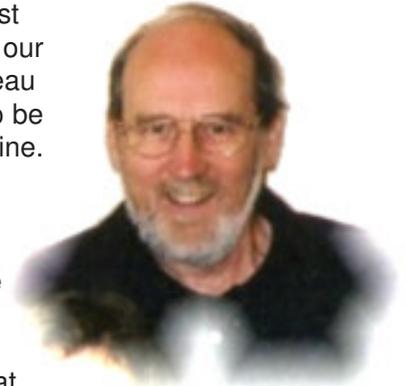
Jul 2008

Vol 5,8

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Hello everyone, I hope you are all having a great summer. Things were quite exciting for us last weekend as my daughter, Lizz, gave birth to our 11th grandchild. Isla Christina Janet Thibodeau weighed in at a heafy 10lbs 5oz. A big girl to be sure. Both baby and mummy are doing just fine. More good news... In the last newsletter I intimated that the Holiday Inn, Guelph would not be doing their Saturday evening suppers and so it looked like Clan Hunter would have to find another spot for their AGM/supper. However I approached the Holiday Inn personally and we came to an agreement that if I supplied 30 people they would supply the roast beef buffet that we have enjoyed for the last few years. So folks it is imperative that you let me know if you intend joining us for the meal and meeting on Saturday 9th August. You will find all the Fergus information again on page 8 of this newsletter. We are still looking for a few delinquent dues folks so if you are one of the people who keep forgetting to send in your annual payment please take a moment right now and write us a cheque. My special congratulations to Muriel Mann, mother of Marion (Mann) Hunter of Toronto on reaching her 100 birthday. What an achievement and what a lovely lady. My thanks to Lizz who has really taken hold of this Connections Corner column and has been involved in another Ontario research project. Well done Lizz. And to Christine for her article on the first two Games of the season. We will be attending .. Chatham 12 Jul, Orillia 19 Jul, Maxville 2 Aug, Montreal 3 Aug and Fergus 8, 9, and 10 Aug. Come and say Hi!



Congratulations Lizz and Andrew Thibodeau

Lizz and Andrew celebrated the birth of a baby girl, Isla Christina Janet, on Sunday 6th July, 2008. Photos are better than words.



Come and Meet Us

Tom and I decided to add a few more Highland Games to our summer schedule this year and so on June 14th we headed up to Georgetown to attend their games. We found the folks there to be very friendly and since we were allowed to park our mini van behind our tent, the day started off well. No carrying of tents, tables, chairs and boxes made for a much easier day. The set up was lovely, but if it had been a hot sticky day, there was no shade. However even this was in our favour. The day was sunny, but not at all humid. We met up with a couple of families that were already clan members, and had a nice visit with them, but no new Hunters came by our tent. Our grandson, Tom Ball, was with us at these games and was a big help at the set up and tear down times. The clan tents looked onto the field where the Heavy Events took place, so we all enjoyed watching them. Later in the day we were able to watch a demonstration of sheep dogs at work, and that was really interesting.

Last weekend (July 5th) saw us heading to Kincardine for the Games there. These Games are held in Victoria Park in downtown Kincardine, and the Avenue of the Clans was quite well placed under some lovely trees. Saturday was a hot day, but there was a lovely breeze coming off the lake, so with the trees and the breeze, it was a very pleasant day. Again we met up with a couple of families who were already members and had a nice visit. It is so nice to meet old friends

at these games, and to put faces on some of the members that we haven't met before. We also met a couple of families at these games who are not members, so we may see some new members joining the Association. This coming Saturday (July 12th) will see us heading out of London again for the Games at Chatham. Catherine and Dave Elder have always been very involved in these games and although we don't meet too many Hunters in this area, we enjoy visiting with the Elders and with Ted Hunter, who always comes by the tent for a chat.

Check out the list of Games we will be attending, and come out to the one nearest your area – or take a trip to one that you fancy visiting. We would love to see you, and it is a real affirmation for us that going to the games is really worthwhile. Of course we want new members, but we also want to meet and greet our current members.



Lorne, Matt, Kate and Gord Hunter visit the clan tent at Georgetown

Christine Hunter

A Hundred Congratulations Muriel

Muriel Mann, mother of Toronto Clan member Marion Hunter, celebrated her 100th birthday on April 6, 2008. A family dinner was held on March 30th and an open house on April 6th for other friends and relatives. Both were held at the senior residence in Oshawa where she resides. As April 6th is Tartan Day, Marion and Don both wore their Hunter Tartan to the open house to honour their Scottish Heritage.



Connections Corner



 We are Family, I've got
all my cousins with me!

Sometimes genealogy takes years of research, dead-ends and frustration. Other times, it's amazing what can happen in a matter of days. Five days ago, I received an email from one of our Clan members, Doug, requesting some help with an Irish link in his genealogy. Now the word "Ireland" strikes fear into any genealogist because of the lack of records available in that country (due, at least in part, to a fire in the Belfast records in the early 1900s). However, Doug's ancestor, William Hunter had emigrated from Ireland to Canada in the 1800s and had settled in South-Western Ontario, so I wondered if there was any more information that I could dig up about him before looking in Ireland, since the more we know the easier that search will be.

Of course my first step was to check the LDS website (www.familysearch.org) to see what information was available there. I immediately found William Hunter and his wife Leticia, along with their 13 children. This was not greatly helpful since we already had that information, but it's always a good place to start.

In the information that Doug had provided to me about William Hunter, he had stated that William was buried in Dunboyne Cemetery (near Aylmer Ontario). I checked the Ontario Cemetery Finding Aid (www.islandnet.com/ocfa/homepage.html) but was unable to find William or Leticia in that cemetery. I could find four other Williams buried in Elgin County but no Leticia. So, on a whim, I googled Dunboyne Cemetery and found that it has been fully transcribed by the Elgin County branch of the Ontario Genealogy Society (OGS). And there was no William or Leticia Hunter listed. Hmm. Strange. So I emailed Doug back to find his source and it turned out that it had been handed down by word of mouth that W&L Hunter had been buried next to the Laidlaws in that cemetery but that there was no marker (either they were too poor to erect one at all, or a wooden one had rotted away). Well, this was something I had never dealt with before so I sent an email to the group responsible for transcribing Dunboyne Cemetery to ask how I could verify someone buried in an unmarked grave. What a jackpot I hit with that email! I came into contact with Bruce of the Elgin OGS. I have since had five emails from him (in three days) containing photographs of the Laidlaw gravesite, census records for William Hunter, death registrations for William, Leticia and two of their children, and even a diary entry from the man who owned the Dunboyne Cemetery land before it was an official graveyard stating that he had attended William Hunter's funeral. Bruce has seven of his own ancestors buried in the Dunboyne cemetery so research associated with it is a bit of a passion for him.

Now, in five days, we have not managed to get any further back in the ancestry chain; however, we have gathered some incredible information, confirmed some facts, corrected others, and opened up some new possibilities (eg. Leticia's maiden name was believed to be Kerr but it is recorded as Carr on her death registration. This could be a misspelling but it also opens up new searches.) All of this puts us in a better position when looking for information in Ireland. And on top of that, Doug, Bruce & I have all had a fun and exciting weekend exchanging information and filling in clues.

Anyone with any genealogy news, questions, or requests, please contact me at lizzt@rogers.com. And if anyone has a William (1812-1873) & Leticia Hunter in their background, let me know and I'll connect you to your long-lost cousin!

Lizz

Tales of Scotland

The Eyemouth Disaster

BBC Scotland's Peter Aitchison, who wrote *Children of the Sea: The Story of the Eyemouth Disaster*, considers the legacy of that day.

For most people the Scottish fishing industry means that knuckle of coast around the north east promontory. Peterhead,

Fortunes were made from huge catches of haddock and herring and the population swelled with migrants who arrived on virtually every tide and from every part of Britain. But while tens of thousands of pounds was



A modern day fishing boat entering Eyemouth harbour



The Catherine Walker. A fishing boat of the same type as lost in the Eyemouth Disaster.

Fraserburgh, Aberdeen and Buckie.

Few think of Berwickshire and the still substantial fleet that is based at Eyemouth, a town of 4,000 folk just a few miles north of the English border.

Fishing was the town's main industry

Yet had it not been for a remarkable series of events and coincidences, culminating in the worst tragedy to strike the sea going communities of Scotland, the whole nature of the fishing economy might have been radically different.

For many decades in the nineteenth century Eyemouth was a boom town.

expended by the state creating safe new piers at a rash of other havens, Eyemouth got nothing.

It was, for all its success, a pariah port; the people as renowned for being rebels as expert seamen.

Legal intervention

In the 1840s a simmering row with the Church of Scotland, which claimed a right to a tenth of the local catch, erupted into violent confrontation.

This "teind" was an historic anomaly which had long since been abolished elsewhere and

the men of Eyemouth, led by their leader William Spears, came together to rid themselves of the hated tax once and for all. It led to almost 40 years of trouble.

Eyemouth became a by word for riots and lawlessness. Eventually the Lord Advocate intervened and brokered a compromise, with the Kirk agreeing to surrender its right on payment of substantial compensation from the fishermen.

Women were employed curing herring

Only in the late 1870's, with the row settled, could application be made to the government for money to improve Eyemouth's crumbling piers and unsafe harbour entrance.

By then the place that had once been pre-eminent in the fishing industry had fallen far behind Peterhead, Fraserburgh and Aberdeen.

In the interim the Eyemouth men became used to taking risks. They sailed in the fiercest weather, they put to sea when others would not,



Looking down on "the Hurkars" where many of the boats were lost attempting to enter the harbour.

and they prospered in spite of the poor state of their piers. But they

also knew that they were testing fate.

A plan to create a deep water port, accessible at all states of the tide, was finally published in August 1881. Six weeks later a



Entrance to the new harbour

massive hurricane swept down over Berwickshire

Friday 14th October 1881 dawned bright, calm and clear and as their boats had been tied up in port for a week, the fisherman of Eyemouth were impatient to be off to the fishing grounds to earn a wage.

As customary, they made their way to the pierhead weatherglass. It had never been so low, forecasting severe storms to come. There was much discussion as to whether they should set sail or not but the men had families to provide for, and it being such "a grand day", they decided to take the risk. Picking up their heavy seaboots, sou'westers and "doppers" (oilskins) they prepared to sail.

It was a point of honour that if one boat sailed the rest of the fleet were obliged to follow, so around 8am watched by onlookers and families, 45 boats set off in tight formation, fanning out as they

passed the Hurkur rocks.

They'll no be sae close thegither when they come hame.

One old fisherman was heard to prophesies, as the fleet headed for the fishing grounds some 8 or 9 miles away.

They started shooting the lines, two for each crew member, each line with a complement of 1000 hooks which had been painstakingly baited with shelled limpets and mussels by their womenfolk the previous day. An ar-

duous, finger numbing exercise. Then around 11am an eerie stillness fell. Kutch dipped sails hung limply from the masts. Not a breath of air stirred. On land, hurricane "Euroclydon" struck. Skies grew leaden, darkening till it was black as night, and the feeble glow of oil lamps were needed in homes. The wind shrieked and howled as it increased in intensity, laying flat 30,000 trees.

An [Eyemouth](#) draper saw his horse and van blown into a pond, and watched unbelievably as uprooted mature trees were propelled along, upright, by the sheer force of the storm. At sea, waves were whipped up to a mountainous seething cauldron, bitter driving rain and stinging spray cut visibility to 500 yards. Masts snapped like matchsticks as the men cut lines and headed desperately for home.

In the hours that followed, 19 boats, each worth

around £350, were lost, foundered at sea, or smashed on rocks while trying to gain safe harbour, some within sight and hailing distance of would-be rescuers, who could do nothing but helplessly watch them drown.

Two boats had a miraculous escape, when waves that could have smashed them to matchwood on rocks, lifted them over the danger and deposited them safely on land. Men were swept from decks, but two of them managed to grasp a rope, a gunwale, to be washed back aboard to eventual safety.

'Unparalleled magnitude'

By dusk on 14 October, 1881, 19 local boats had been sunk and nearly 200 men killed - many were drowned in the approaches to the bay, in full view of their wives, mothers and children.

The storm, which might have been a tragedy with some lives lost, had become a disaster of unparalleled magnitude because of the inadequate state of Eyemouth harbour.

Seventy widows and close on 300 children were left in penury. Donations poured into a Disaster fund from all over the land, till the incredible sum of £54,000 was



Part of a large tapestry woven by local folks depicting the disaster.

raised. A pension of 5/-(25p) per week was paid to each widow from this, for life or until remarriage, with a further 2/6 for each child until they reached age 14, which kept the families together without recourse to the "poor-house".

In 1981 the book "An Old Time Fishing Town, Eyemouth" published by Rev. D. McIver in 1906 was reprinted to mark the centenary of the disaster, the proceeds to commission a magnificent granite memorial in the form of a broken mast which now stands in the old cemetery overlooking the bay where so many lives were lost.

In spite of countless memorials and petitions, the works that would have prevented the carnage were never started.

Whitehall decided that a town which had lost half its fleet and a third of its men was no longer viable. The harbour of refuge was instead to be built at Peterhead. A memorial was built to honour the town's dead

It was a decision that dismayed the Scotsman newspaper, which said: "A harbour there would be of no use to boats running for shelter south of the Tay. It is to be hoped that the government will see their way to construct a harbour accessible to the Berwickshire fishing fleet."

But it did not - at least not until the 1960s, and those works are a pale shadow of plans that were pasted outside the fishery office on the very eve of the storm.

It took a century for the population of Eyemouth to reach the level of 1881, but the legacy of the disaster has neither dimmed nor diminished.

The families who live in the town today are the descendants of the lost and of the sorrowful who watched the men drown when the heavens opened in a most hellish way on 14 October, a day still recalled by all as Black Friday.

Editor's Note:

This story holds a particular place in my wife Christine's heart as her great Grandfather George Collin, his brother Robert Collin and both their sons along with a further 7 relatives all perished in this disaster.

Kincardine Highland Games



A lovely shaded spot for Clan Hunter's tent at Kincardine



Don and Helen Noels drop in at the clan tent Kincardine

Georgetown Highland Games



Christine with grandson Tom hold down the tent duties at Georgetown



Re-enactors at georgetown



Dancing up a storm at Georgetown



Re-enactors at georgetown



Up Up and away. Throwing the hammer at Georgetown



Meeting up with old friends, Bill and Joan Jones at Georgetown

Clan Hunter Association - Canada

Fergus Scottish Festival & Highland Games
Aug 8, 9, 10 2008

Preliminary plans include

- Fergus Tattoo & Lighting 6.45pm Friday 8 Aug 2008 Fergus
- Fergus Highland games 7.00am Saturday 9 Aug 2008 Fergus
- Clan Hunter AGM 5.00pm Saturday 9 Aug 2008 Holiday Inn 601 Scottsdale Dr.,
Guelph
- Supper 6.30pm Saturday 9 Aug 2008 Holiday Inn 601 Scottsdale Dr.,
Guelph
- Kirkin' o' the Tartan 10.00am Sunday 10 Aug 2008 St Andrew's Presb. Fergus
- Fergus Highland games 12 noon Sunday 11 Aug 2008 Fergus

Why not plan to attend this special gathering

Stay over in the Fergus area

Enjoy the Games - Hang out at the Clan Tent

Join in with other Hunters in the Clan Parade - 11.30 am on 9th

Enjoy the fabulous Celtic Music

Meet some old and new Clan friends

Attend the Kirkin' of the Tartan
in St Andrews Presbyterian Church, fergus
10 am Sunday morning

Share your genealogy with other clan members

Check out the Fergus Highland Games website

for up to date information

<http://www.fergusscottishfestival.com>



Clan Hunter Association - Canada

Annual Clan Gathering 9-10th August 2008

Yes I/we will be attending the Tattoo & Lighting on Friday 8th August Number in Party _____

Yes I/we will be taking part in the parade on Saturday 9th August Number in Party _____

Yes I/we will be attending the dinner on Saturday 9th August Number in Party _____

Yes I/we will be attending the Kirkin' o' the Tartan on Sunday 10th August Number in Party _____

Name: _____

Address: _____