

International Gathering of Clan Cameron



Achnacarry, Lochaber, Scotland

August 2-5, 2001

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A WORD OF WELCOME FROM SIR DONALD CAMERON OF LOCHIEL, K.T.

I warmly welcome clansfolk from around the world to Achnacarry for the International Gathering of Clan Cameron in August 2001.

It is a special occasion, enabling us to come together to celebrate our history, family and friendships.

I hope you enjoy it and I look forward to meeting you.

August 2-5, 2001



Welcome to Lochaber, the beautiful mountainous district of Scotland's West Highlands in southern Inverness-shire, sized roughly 12 by 16 miles.

For centuries Lochaber has been home to the Clan Cameron, and is fondly considered "Cameron Country" by many clansfolk and local citizens of Fort William, the largest town in the West Highlands.

Over a four day period in early August of 2001, Camerons, those both of Cameron descent and hailing from the numerous septs of the clan, gathered in Lochaber, being called back to their ancestral homeland by Lochiel, Chief of Clan Cameron.

Join us on this "Virtual Tour" of the 2001 Gathering, and take part in all the planned events - your Cameron kin await!

August 2, 2001
Clan Cameron Ben Nevis Ascent



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Approximately seventy Camerons assembled on the grounds of the Glen Nevis Visitor Centre with the “lofty” goal of ascending to the 4,406 foot summit of Ben Nevis - the highest point not only in Scotland, but all of Great Britain. The would-be climbers undertook a ten mile hike over an estimated eight hour time table, climbing 4,300 feet.

Welcoming clansfolk to the glen were both Donald Angus Cameron, Younger of Lochiel, and his son, Donald Andrew Cameron. On behalf of the Lochiel family, they wished the hikers the very best of luck and sent them on their way skyward at about 8:30AM.



August 2, 2001

Clan Cameron Ben Nevis Ascent



The ascent was gradual at first, but the tourist trail became increasingly steep as the Camerons ventured higher that morning. Rain greeted the clansfolk throughout the morning - thankfully all participants came prepared with foul weather gear.

Shown here is one of the “switchbacks” on the lower half of the trail - look for some Camerons waving their greetings!



August 2, 2001

Clan Cameron Ben Nevis Ascent



Approximately 2 1/2 hours into the ascent the Cameron team reached the Red Burn, which is the half-way point. Located at 680m (2,230 feet), this location was the group's first real rest stop of the morning - many refilled their water bottles from the burn, which flowed with crystal clear, ice cold mountain runoff. At this time about twenty of the participants, accompanied by one of the guides, turned back for the visitor centre. It is a wonderful accomplishment even to even make it to the Red Burn, and these clansfolk took great pride in their effort. The remaining fifty or so headed onward, up into the clouds.

August 2, 2001

Clan Cameron Ben Nevis Ascent

Of the Camerons making the ascent, two held a special place in the participant's hearts. Pictured here are (l) Ryan Cameron, of the U.S., and (r) Maihri Cameron, of England.



Ryan and Mairi, at about 4,000 feet

These nine year olds, who met while on the mountain, were by far the youngest of the clansfolk making the ascent, and could often be seen chatting and climbing together as the ascent crept forward into the early afternoon hours.

Many clansfolk who sported sore muscles and bones in the following days were seen slightly frowning (though in the best of spirits) at these two, who shook off the effects of the ascent within a day or so...ah, to be young.

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The Summit
1:15 PM - 4406 feet

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Clan Cameron Ben Nevis Ascent



The summit greeted the Camerons with temperatures hovering at about 40 degrees, with sleet and moderate winds, in addition to clouds which descended with haste upon the participants.

While there Astie Cameron of the Association's Scotland Branch, unwrapped his bagpipes, which he had packed up The Ben, and treated his clansfolk to a rendition of "March of the Cameron Men." Later, when asked exactly how he fingered his pipes under such conditions, he related the "it wasn't easy!"

Within 1/2 hour the Camerons left the summit and headed downwards toward the glen. Many of the participants were glad to have the professional guides at this time, as there are numerous ways to exit the summit, and in the fog it is all too easy to pick the wrong one...

August 2, 2001

Clan Cameron Ben Nevis Ascent

The descent, as had been long rumored, is much rougher of the legs than the ascent, though it is much easier on one's lungs and heart.

This view of Glen Nevis was taken from approximately the 3,500 foot level, and demonstrates just how lofty The Ben actually is. It is said that portions of Ireland are visible on a clear day, and an excellent view of Lochaber is reason enough to head on up when the sun shines!



Fifty Camerons arrived back down in Glen Nevis about 4 hours later, and despite sore muscles, everyone lived to tell the tale...of the ascent which took the better part of an entire day, where it rained constantly, and of that summit, which one Cameron excitingly described, with a tall-tale gleam in his eye, as “a living nightmare.” The Camerons will return again...