

# **THE MEMORIES PROJECT**

## **Remembering Parents, Grandparents And Great Grandparents**



This symbol, used throughout, is a Celtic knot, symbolizing eternal life and never ending love.



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### **Cover Photo Collage on a background of Blair Tartan, clockwise:**

1. Auntie Anna & Uncle John Cannon Scottish country dancing, 1965, Earlston
2. Eunice & Bill Milne with grandson Julian, June 19, 1999, McLean House, Toronto
3. Grandpa Alec Keillor with Yorkshire Terrier, Chico, and cups won for lawn bowling & prize onions, 1965, Coldstream, age 73
4. Eunice & Bill Milne at Hubbard Glacier, Alaska, aboard *Sun Viking*, June, 1995

Compiled, Researched & Written

By Susan Milne



## THE MEMORIES PROJECT TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction & Acknowledgements .....	3
Chart of Susan Milne's Parents, Grandparents and Great Grandparents .....	4
Maps: British Places Mentioned in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition & Scotland's Regions .....	5, 6
 <b>PART I: Eunice Milne, her Parents and Grandparents</b> <span style="float: right;">7</span>	
Eunice Milne .....	8
Early Life .....	9
After High School – Careers .....	12
WWII and the WAAF .....	13
Meeting Bill, Marriage and Honeymoon .....	15
Gas, Electricity, Solar – Men in Power Production .....	17
Life Together .....	17
Life in South Africa .....	18
Life in Canada .....	20
Travels from Guelph .....	22
Life in Vancouver .....	27
Travels from Vancouver .....	29
The <i>Endeavour</i> Arrives .....	30
Dad's Passing and Life After .....	31
Later Travels, 9-11 and New Great Grandchildren .....	32
Life at Haro Park Centre .....	36
 Susan Nicoll (Keillor) .....	40
Alexander Marshall Keillor .....	47
George Keillor and Betsy Dempster .....	53
William Nicoll and Jane Ann Tavendale – West Park Then and Now .....	56
 <b>PART II: Bill Milne, his Parents and Grandparents</b> <span style="float: right;">61</span>	
Bill Milne – Early Life .....	62
Professional Electrical Engineer .....	66
Philosophy and Politics .....	67
WWII – West Africa and Norway .....	68
Meeting Eunice, Marriage and Honeymoon .....	72
Move to and Life in South Africa – Rhodesian Journey .....	73
Apartheid and Decision to leave .....	77
In Transit to Canada .....	79
Auntie Nell and Thornhill .....	81
Life in Guelph – Marketing Engineer, Home and Interests .....	82
GE, Computer Department and Teaching Maths .....	87
1970's Highlights .....	89
First Aneurysm and Retirement .....	90
Travels Continue .....	92
1996 – 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Move to Vancouver .....	95
Second Aneurysm and Life After .....	98
Dad's Notes on Early Life & WWII for Julian's Interview .....	101
WWII Summary of Dad's Movements .....	104
 Isabella Stewart (Milne) .....	105
Edward James Milne .....	110
George Milne and Ann Dean Forman .....	113
William Stewart and Margaret McKenzie .....	115

<b>Part III: Our Family Clans and Tartans &amp; New Scottish Ties</b>	<b>118</b>
Our Family's Official Clans and Tartans .....	119
Clan Stewart .....	119
Clan MacLeod .....	120
Clan McKenzie .....	121
Milne and Clan Gordon History and Tartans .....	123
Keillor History and Tartan .....	125
McGregor-Milne Family Tie and A Wedding at McLean House .....	126
Dunans – Logan's Castle and Clan Fletcher .....	128
<b>Part IV: Eachraidh aithghearr na h-Alba – A Brief History of Scotland, Highland Dress &amp; Tartan</b>	<b>131</b>
A Brief History of Scotland .....	132
The Land in the North and Its Ancient History .....	132
The Rise of the Clans .....	134
Social Advancement and Language .....	135
The Scottish Border .....	135
Scottish – English Battles .....	136
Stirling Bridge .....	136
Bannockburn .....	136
Flodden Field .....	137
Culloden .....	137
Culloden's Aftermath – Highland Suppression .....	138
Scotland Becomes an Early Tourist Hot Spot .....	139
The Scottish Nationalist Movement.....	140
Scotland's Economy .....	140
Scottish Sports .....	141
Bagpipes and Spurtles .....	142
The Evolution of Highland Dress .....	143
Tartan: Scotland's Masterpiece of Weaving .....	145
<b>Notes &amp; Sources</b>	<b>147</b>
Notes .....	147
Sources: Books, Documentaries, Websites, Certificates .....	153





## THE MEMORIES PROJECT INTRODUCTION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With this expanded 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, The Memories Project has evolved into a more comprehensive family history and picture book. You'll find maps, many more memories, details, dates and photos along with two new sections providing insight into our ancient and modern Scottish ties:

Part III – Our ancient clan associations and tartans along with details about new Scottish ties: the McGregor–Milne connection and Logan's Castle – Dunans.

Part IV – A brief history of Scotland, Highland dress and tartan gives a description of the events and culture our ancestors experienced over the centuries.

Research, proofing and polishing continued to complete this final edition. Some incorrect dates and one name on the family trees I had on file have been corrected after studying birth, death and marriage certificates, so the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition is also more accurate. Note this is a history book and does not cover events beyond Mum's death in 2011. Any family changes since that time are not included.

When I was growing up, Mum and Dad spoke often about the past, sharing memories and discussing what life was like from my Great Grandparents' time through WWII. There were often fascinating stories and tales of interesting relatives as well as important historical reminiscences. Many of my friends tell me their families never talked about the past. I was fortunate to hear these stories which gave me an appreciation for history and how the world evolved.

While I can still remember these conversations, I am recording them so future generations can catch a glimpse of what life was like before the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I have expanded the content by researching places and events which were a part of our ancestors' lives.

I'd like to acknowledge the very important contributions made to this work by several cousins and I thank them for their assistance. Maureen in Adelaide sent photos and first-hand accounts of events in Aberdeen in the 1940's as well as life in Australia. Thanks to Alicia for assisting with Maureen's photos. Cousin Kerry in Port Elliot, South Australia, also shared many family memories which have added to the content. Ken Milne in Shropshire, England generously shared family info and birth, death and marriage certificates which have been invaluable in the search for accurate dates. Cousins Dorothy in Perth, Australia and Elinor in Edinburgh confirmed some Keillor family facts which were enlightening. Cousin Leigh in Queensland put me in touch with some very helpful Keillor family trees many years ago. I corresponded with Mum's cousin, the late Errol Nicoll, for many years and the photos and information he sent have enhanced the section on Great Grandpa William Nicoll. Thanks to Mum's cousin Mamie (Mary Keillor) in York, England, for the wonderful historic photos she has sent over the years.

I'd also like to thank my son Julian for interviewing Dad in 1990 for a Carleton University School of Journalism project which has greatly contributed to our understanding of Dad's life particularly in WWII. I have included the notes Dad made for this project in Part II.

Many thanks to my good friend, Janice Chan, who teaches Gaelic in Toronto and is very active with the American Gaelic Society. Janice's Gaelic translations have certainly added some Scottish flare to this 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition.

I hope this final edition brings the past to life and you find it enjoyable to read.

*Susan Milne*

Kelowna, BC, Canada – May, 2021

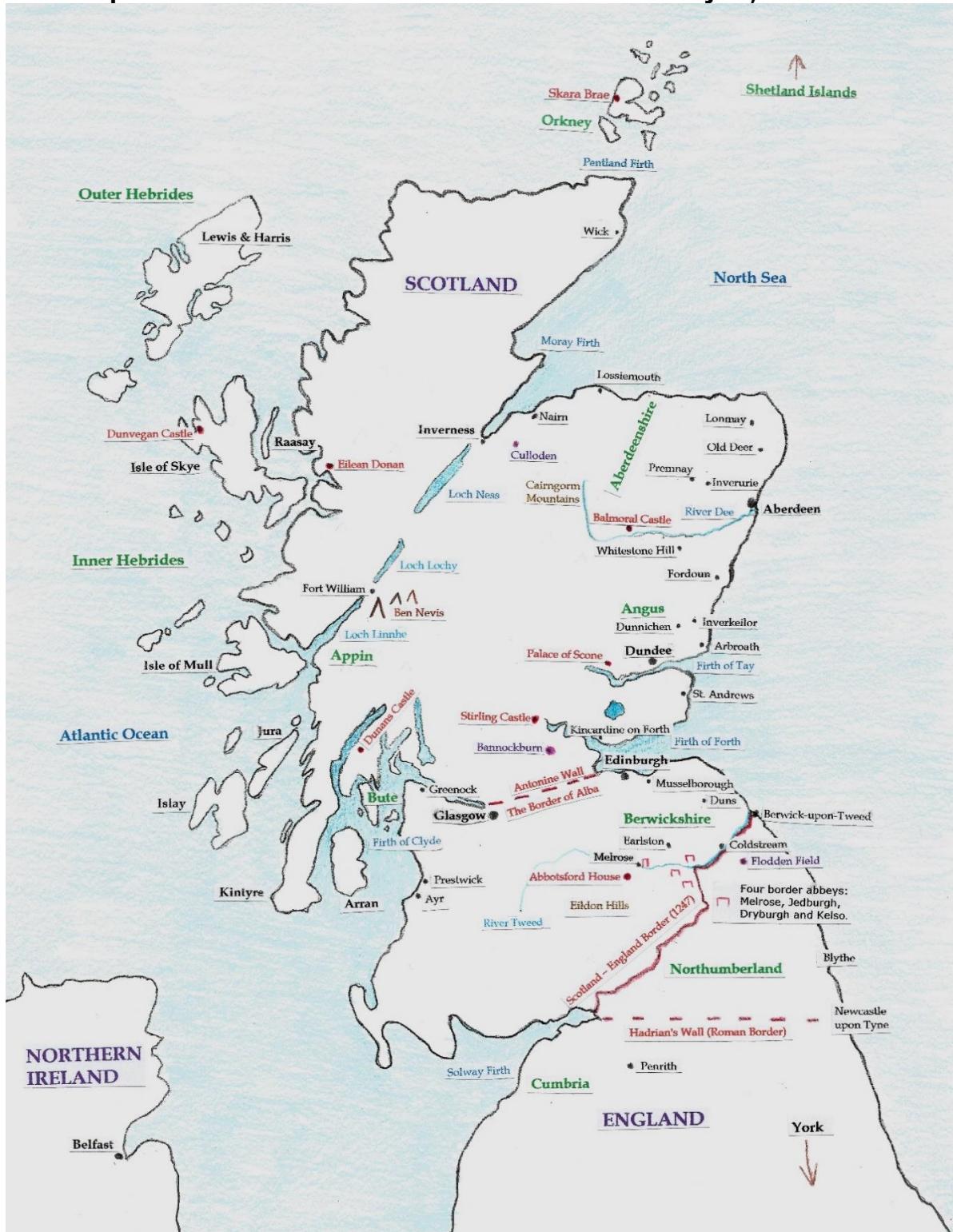


## CHART OF SUSAN MILNE'S PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS & GREAT GRANDPARENTS

<b>Mother</b>	<b>Eunice May Dobbie Keillor</b> May 3, 1921, Kincardine on Forth – July 4, 2011, Vancouver, age 90	Married Bill Milne, June 7, 1946 Edinburgh
Grandmother & Grandfather	<b>Susan Henderson Nicoll</b> August 20, 1889, Abbeythune Estate – May 29, 1943, Earlston, age 53 <b>Alexander Marshall Keillor</b> November 16, 1891, Nairn – July, 21, 1974, Coldstream, age 82	Married February 2, 1916 West Park, Dundee
Grandfather's Parents	<b>George Keillor</b> December 9, 1853, Inverkeilor – January 25, 1947, Coldstream, age 93 <b>Betsy Dempster</b> September 28, 1854, Arbroath – August 17, 1905, Nairn, age 50	Married July 19, 1873 Arbroath
Grandmother's Parents	<b>William Nicoll</b> June 10, 1851, Dunnichen – August 18, 1926, Dundee, age 75 <b>Jane Ann Tavendale</b> March 11, 1855, Fordoun – February 28, 1919, Dundee, age 63	Married June 4, 1878 Church of Scotland, Fordoun
<b>Father</b>	<b>William George Milne</b> November 20, 1917, Aberdeen – June 27, 2001, Vancouver, age 83	Married Eunice Keillor, June 7, 1946 Edinburgh
Grandmother & Grandfather	<b>Isabella Forest Hill Stewart</b> October 31, 1895, Aberdeen – September 5, 1980, Inverurie, age 84 <b>Edward James Milne</b> December 12, 1895, Aberdeen – March 16, 1953, Musselburgh, age 57	Married June 25, 1915 Aberdeen
Grandfather's Parents	<b>George Milne</b> October 20, 1867, Premnay – July 14, 1941, Aberdeen, age 73 <b>Ann Dean Forman</b> November 30, 1869, Long Hill – May 2, 1952, Aberdeen, age 82	Married January 16, 1891 Shiprow, Aberdeen
Grandmother's Parents	<b>William Ferguson Stewart</b> March 19, 1871, Whitestone Hill – August 25, 1961, Aberdeen, age 90 <b>Margaret Ann McKenzie</b> November 13, 1872, Aberdeen – September 8, 1957, Aberdeen, age 84	Married December 21, 1891 St. Macher's, Aberdeen

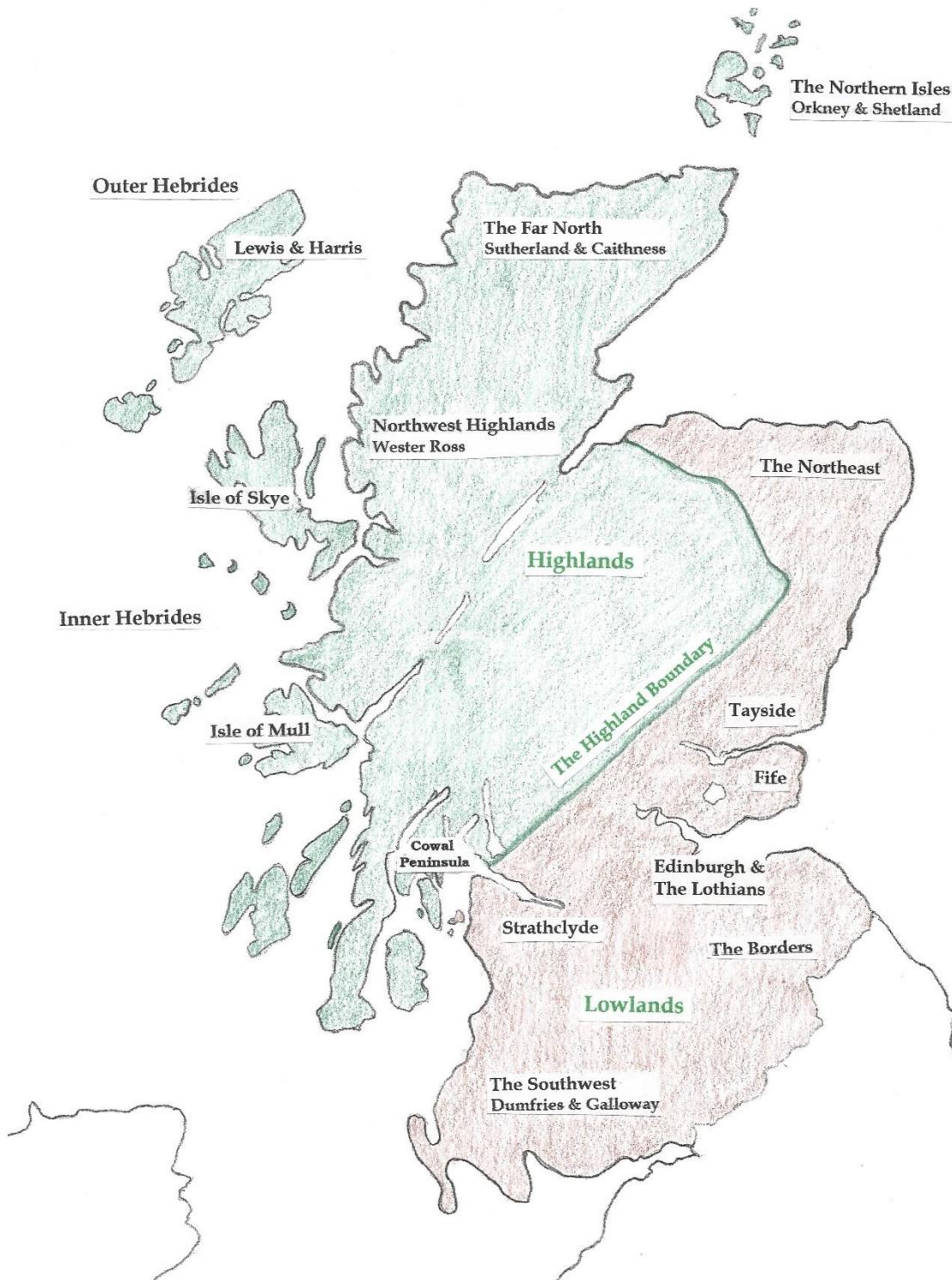


## Map of British Places Mentioned in the Memories Project, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition





## Map of Scotland's Regions



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# PART I



## MUM'S FAMILY

**Eunice Milne, her Parents & Grandparents**



Eunice Keillor in the WAAF, 1944

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## **My Mother**

### **Eunice Milne**

#### **EUNICE MAY DOBBIE KEILLOR**

May 3, 1921, Kincardine on Forth, Fife – July 4, 2011, Vancouver, Canada

Ballet Dancer & Teacher, MRAD (Member of the Royal Academy of Dancing)  
Teleprinter operator and fitness instructor in the  
Woman's Auxiliary Air force (WAAF) during WWII

Married William George Milne, June 7, 1946, Edinburgh

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Michael born April 3, 1947, Aberdeen, Scotland  
Married Donna Marie Sobol, March 15, 1968, Fergus, Ontario, Canada

Susan born September 16, 1952, Krugersdorp, South Africa  
Married Paul Francis Egelstaff, January 15, 1972, London, England  
Separated March, 1982. Divorced, 1986

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Eunice was born in Kincardine on Forth where her Father was the gas manager, however, she considered Earlston to be her home as they moved there when she was very young. Earlston is a market town in the county of Berwickshire in The Borders, south of Edinburgh. It's a scenic area with rolling hills, rivers and beautiful views. The main A68 highway from Edinburgh to England runs through Earlston. Points of interest close by are the town of Galashiels, the ruins of the four Border Abbeys, Mellerstain House – a Georgian mansion built by notable architects, William Adam and his son Robert – and the Trimontium Roman Fort near Melrose. This is also Scott country where you'll find Sir Walter Scott's stately home, Abbotsford, and his favourite view, the Eildon Hills.

A very happy woman with great charisma, Mum charmed everyone she met. Strangers were drawn to her, even in later life. It was quite amusing at times. On the day she moved into Haro Park nursing home, after being very ill in hospital for six weeks with shingles and kidney infections, the receptionist commented to me "oh, by the way, your Mum is a lovely, charming woman".

Mum was also very accomplished and competitive, excelling at everything she did. Being a perfectionist, her projects were done exquisitely with great attention to detail. She won many awards for everything from needlepoint to tennis. She was prolific with her needlepoint from the time she was young and later took up tapestry. The first year she joined the tennis club in Earlston, she won the annual trophy, much to her sisters' chagrin. In later life she took a typing course at night school and came top of the class of much younger students.

Bette Davis was her favourite actress and orange her favourite colour. Mum's favourite food was dessert – she had a very sweet tooth! During Christmas dinner buffets at the Hotel Vancouver, she would be up once for turkey but 5 times for dessert!

## Early Life

Mum was named after Eunice May Dobbie, her Mother's best friend. They had worked together as domestic servants at Henderson House, West Park, Dundee. Despite a difficult birth – which saw Mum placed immediately into a sink while the Doctor attended to her Mother – she grew up to be strong and feisty.

Childhood years were very happy, growing up with two elder sisters, Anna and Betty.



Betty, Eunice & Anna, c.1929



l-r Eunice, Betty, Anna with their Mum, Susan Keillor c.1936

**1. Jane Ann (Anna) Tavendale** (February 2, 1917 – October 24, 1990) Anna was named after her maternal Grandmother and was born on her Mum and Dad's anniversary day. Anna was very clever at school and worked at the Post Office after high school. In 1939 she moved to London to work. Mum spent a holiday with Anna and on post cards home in July, 1939, Mum wrote about a day they spent visiting Brighton and Hove. *"Could spend a lovely holiday here. Swell hotels. The gardens are lovely ... Having a great holiday."*

Anna returned home and married John Cannon on November 22, 1940. John spent his career with A. & R. Brownlie, Timber Merchants, becoming a Director of both Brownlie's and Cameron's Chapelton (Timber) Ltd. in Inverness-shire. Not surprisingly, John was very interested in the trees and timber industry in Canada when he visited us, as well as farms and agriculture generally.

Anna and John built and lived at Ardenlea, a lovely modern bungalow on the edge of Earlston. They came up with the name by combining garden and lea which surrounded the house.

Mum was quite close to Anna and she and John visited Canada a few times. (They were the aunt and uncle I knew best and I was very fond of them.) Anna and John were excellent Scottish Country Dancers. See a photo of them dancing on page 144.

Anna and John had one son and two daughters: Robert who owned the Butchers shop in Earlston and still lives at Ardenlea with his wife, Davina; Elinor now living in Edinburgh with her husband, Dennis and Dorothy who lives in Duncraig, Perth, Western Australia with her husband, Richard.

**2. Betsy (Betty) Dempster Keillor** (August 3, 1918 – 2000 ?) was Mum's middle sister named after her paternal Grandmother. Mum said Betty was always the odd one out being the middle child when they were growing up. She had bright red hair like her Mother, Susan. I remember Betty was a very nice, friendly person. She married Eric Lowis and spent her married life in Penrith in the spectacular Lake District of England. Their address was 64 Penine Way, Shaws Estate, Penrith, Cumberland (now Cumbria). Betty died early this century. Her daughter Mary called Mum when Betty passed away and said she would write with more details but never did. The rest of the family were not very close to Betty and her family, mainly because Eric was not well liked I believe. Betty and Eric only visited us once in Canada. They had two daughters, Mary and Christine, and one son, John.



Anna, Eunice, Betty, 1976

Grandma Susan told Mum "you were born to be a lady but you weren't needed" which gives you an idea of what Mum was like. She also frequently said "Can you not sit still, Eunice?" Mum was so hyperactive growing up which continued until very late in life.

The family enjoyed walks in the hills around Coldstream on Sundays, their quiet day. Mum said she was not allowed to play outside on Sundays and they attended Earlston Parish Church morning and evening. The Parish Church is a Church of Scotland congregation (Presbyterian).

There were visits from family on Sunday though. Auntie Minnie, her Dad's eldest sister, and her husband, Robert Ainslie, often drove their beautiful car (something similar to a Bentley) from Edinburgh to Earlston and Mum remembered these Sundays well. She enjoyed playing with her Ainslie cousins. Sadly, cousin Stanley had Downs Syndrome and died at age 23 in 1936.

Betty Ainslie was one of Mum's favourite cousins. Betty had suffered a stroke when she was a baby which affected her walking. In later life, Betty became a Scottish Nationalist and Gaelic speaker; a very energetic and enthusiastic person. Her car was specially fitted for her to drive. She and her husband owned a health food store on Princess Street in Edinburgh. Mum remembered Betty bringing strange smelling things to cook when she visited them in Earlston, all part of her healthy eating regime! (The shop was later run by her son, Ainslie. By 2018 there was a Holland & Barrett health store on Princess Street so I suspect the old shop was transformed into part of this British health food chain.)



Grandma Susan playing in the sand with Eunice at Berwick-upon-Tweed, 1924.

Each year there was a family vacation. They would go away, usually to the North Sea coast at Berwick-upon-Tweed, or to a cottage on a farm to get away for a break. Everyone looked forward to these summer vacations which were lots of fun and an escape from the daily routine.

Mum mentioned visits with many aunts, uncles and cousins while growing up as well. She especially enjoyed trips to see cousins Mamie in Comrie, Jean in Dundee and Betty in Edinburgh. Mamie recalls Mum teaching her how to knit and the fun they had together.

Attending high school in the 1930's in Duns, 18 miles from Earlston, meant taking the steam train each day. Not being focused on academics, Mum would often be doing her homework all the way on the train. Mum preferred being out doing active things in the evenings like playing tennis, dancing, or acting as caddy for her Dad at the golf course.

## After High School – Careers

After high school, Mum moved to Edinburgh to study ballet at the dance academy. She became a Member of the Royal Academy of Dancing in London (MRAD) in 1937 having successfully completed her ballet exams. She then performed with a small dance troupe around the Borders.



Eunice striking a pose wearing her ballet tutu

According to a newspaper clipping from the 1930's, Mum was "much in demand" as an entertainer. She also taught dance, not just ballet, but Spanish, Highland, ballroom and other types of dancing as well. Mum had excellent posture and was remarkably strong throughout her life which she attributed to her dancing and very active lifestyle when she was young.

During her time living in Edinburgh, she stayed at 24 Shandwick Place, an address which appears to be apartments today.



Grandma Susan and Mum in her kilt speaking with a Canadian Mountie at the Empire Exhibition in Glasgow, 1938

There was one exciting trip to Glasgow in 1938. From May to October, the Empire Exhibition was held there and Grandpa took the family to see it. The forerunner of today's Expos, the Empire Exhibition was a showcase of the world and its products at a time when very few people travelled internationally and there was no TV or Internet. Almost 13 million people attended with an entry fee of 1 shilling. 6 pence for children.

According to Dad's notes on his early life, he had also attended the Empire Exhibition for his vacation in 1938, a major event somewhat overshadowed by the impending war.



Eunice & friend outside Dawson Smith's the news agent's shop she managed.

Mum also managed a news agent's shop in Earlston for a friend of her father's, something she really enjoyed, from 1938 to 1941. She would arrive early in the morning to organize the newspapers and magazines for delivery around Earlston. She also did the banking for the shop which helped her understand accounting. Later she would manage all our family's financial affairs. Apparently, Dad would just hand her the pay cheques and bonds and she took it all from there. This was rare in those days. I hear so many people of her generation say they don't know how to run the finances when their husband dies. Mum had no such difficulty. In fact, she often said she would like to have been an accountant like her cousin Jack in Bermuda if she had worked after her marriage.

## WWII and the WAAF

During the rise of Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany in the 1930's there was a great deal of violence, upheaval and shocking incidents. Many believed this would lead to another war. Then German expansion began with the annexation of Austria in March, 1938. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain met with Adolph Hitler in 1938 and signed an agreement to stop the expansion and prevent war between Britain and Germany. On returning to England, he famously waved the paper in the air saying "Peace for our time." Chamberlain failed to realize that Hitler could not be trusted and the agreement meant nothing. On March 15, 1939 Germany occupied Czechoslovakia and on September 1, invaded Poland against Hitler's agreements with Britain and France. This was the last straw. On September 3, 1939, Mum and her family were at church in Earlston when the minister announced Britain had declared war on Nazi Germany. Everyone was in shock and the minister sent them home. This was of course a life changing event which Mum spoke of often. The war created a new reality which was extremely traumatic for many people.

- Homes had to be prepared for war with black out curtains. The Home Guard, who monitored the situation with civilians, would knock on your door if there was any light showing as this was fatal should bombers be flying above. Everything needed to be in complete darkness.
- Bomb shelters were created in basements, gardens, London's underground stations and anywhere you could be safe below ground.
- Food and petrol rationing began in 1940 and continued until July 4, 1954. Mum and Dad said it was difficult if someone dropped in at dinner time as there was so little food. Dad

laughed, "you just had to add another cup of water to the soup!" One egg a week was the egg ration at one point.

- Road and railway sign posts were removed so that spies would not know where they were. This made it really difficult if you were able to take a train because you never knew where you actually were. The conductor would make a quick announcement but Mum said it was often garbled so you weren't sure if it was time to get off or not. This was when she was in transit for the RAF. Train travel for civilians was disrupted because moving goods and people for the war effort took priority.
- Industry and transportation were transformed to serve the war effort so people's jobs and movement changed.
- Merchandise and sweets became hard to get. Mum often spoke about silk stockings being unattainable unless you could get them from America, something the American soldiers could help with. Mum said the RAF stockings were thick and they were envious of the girls in the American forces who wore silk stockings.

Mum joined the WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Air Force) on May 9, 1941 and was discharged on April 2, 1946. Being only 4'11 1/2" tall (1.49m), she was actually too short to join up but the recruiting officer said "You'll do" and she got in. Mum always said she had a good war, unlike so many people. She found it an exciting time, doing a job she enjoyed and feeling she was contributing to the war effort.

For most of the time she was stationed at the RAF Northern Ireland Signals Centre near Belfast. As a teleprinter operator, she was recognized for her abilities being handed the most difficult ciphers to type. A teleprinter is an electromechanical typewriter that can be used to send and receive typed messages like a telegraph. Mum found the reports on servicemen recently killed the hardest to do.

A very fussy eater all her life, Mum wondered how it would go in the RAF but it turned out she had folks in the RAF canteens running after her to give her what she wanted! They would actually prepare special meals for her.

It seems all her life people looked out for her. She was always well looked after and often said her life was a bowl of cherries.

During the war Mum made several trips to various RAF stations to train as a Physical Education Instructor (fitness instructor, or trainer). It was another activity which contributed to her wonderful posture all her life.

I believe it was during one of the Phys Ed training sojourns that she met up with her cousin Bill Gauld from Montana who was in the U.S. Air Force stationed in England. He had leave and they had a wonderful time together for a few days. Mum was actually AWOL at the end having stayed away from her base longer than she was supposed to. Again, everything fell into place for her – when she returned to her base in Ireland, they just said "Oh, are you back already, Eunice?"

On May 29, 1943 Mum received the tragic news that her Mother, Susan Keillor, had been killed in a road accident. Mum was completely devastated and immediately left for Earlston. She was in such shock that she left Belfast without getting any spending money for the journey so she couldn't buy anything to eat or drink en route. Travel was very restricted throughout the war so she secured passage on the ferry and train through the RAF. It took two days for her to get home to Earlston. Grandpa was hoping Mum would leave the WAAF and return home after her Mother's death, however it was not easy to leave the military during the war. She stayed in the WAAF until April, 1946, by which time, Grandpa had remarried.

### **Meeting Bill, Marriage & Honeymoon**

Within 10 days of Hitler's suicide on April 30, 1945, Germany surrendered unconditionally and the war in Europe was finally over.<sup>1</sup> Mum was in London at the time and said the celebrations were understandably euphoric with people even climbing the lamp posts in Trafalgar Square.

Mum and Dad met at Christmas that year while stationed at RAF East Moor, near York, England:

East Moor was a 1942, type 'A' full bomber airfield with three runways. 2,094 men and 407 WAAFs worked here, putting it in the major league of RAF aerodromes.<sup>2</sup>

It was at East Moor, on December 23, 1945 that Dad was doing the rounds with another Officer to wish the men and women Merry Christmas. They entered the teleprinter station and Mum and Dad met. He later asked her to have Christmas dinner with him at the Officers' mess (dining room) which she did. They started dating and attended the theatre and ballet in nearby York. Mum remembered it as a wonderful and exciting time. Dad always had money for dining out and theatre tickets since he was a Flight Sergeant so better paid than her!

They shared the same interest in cinema and the performing arts, something which lasted all through their life together. Something else which brought them together was both having suffered a tragic loss in 1943; Dad losing his first wife to tuberculosis and Mum's Mother having been killed in a road accident. The third connection was their dream of travelling and seeing the world; a dream that would certainly be realized in the coming years.

In April, 1946 Mum and Dad were both demobbed (demobilized from the RAF to return to civilian life.) They were engaged on April 22, 1946 just four months after their first meeting.<sup>3</sup>



Gladys, Bill, Eunice and Charlie  
June 7, 1946

as Mackie's was a renowned bakery with world wide orders for their Edinburgh shortbread. I do remember Mum saying there was a problem with the wedding cake due to post-war food rationing. Photos were taken in Princess Street Gardens but there are none of the reception or the cake.

In the evening, Mum, Dad, Charlie and Gladys went out for drinks and a concert at the King's Theatre. The weekend was spent at the opulent Caledonian Hotel, built in 1903 at the top of Princess Street. This five-star hotel is now a Waldorf Astoria. The cost of the weekend was less than four pounds, a surprising price given today's hotel rates. Here is the reception letter and the hotel invoice/receipt.<sup>5</sup>



Mum and Dad married on Friday June 7, 1946 in Edinburgh. June 6 was their first choice but it was the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of D Day so they had to make it the 7<sup>th</sup> instead. Their banns<sup>4</sup> had been read at the Church of Scotland in Earlston but they chose to be married at a registry office in Edinburgh since family had to come from Aberdeen and Coldstream. The central location of Edinburgh was most convenient. Dad's brother Charlie was best man and Mum's friend from the WAAF, Gladys, was her bridesmaid. Dad's parents and Mum's Dad and 2<sup>nd</sup> wife, Grace, attended.

The reception was a High Tea for eight, served in the board room of J.W. Mackie & Son's, at 108 Princess Street. As shown in the letter below, Mum and Dad were to supply the wedding cake and wine – curious

Mum and Dad now spent their life together, so, for a complete picture of the following years with more information from Dad's point of view, see Dad's section from page 72.

Due to the post war housing shortage, Mum and Dad moved in with Dad's parents at 46 Primrose Hill Drive in Aberdeen. Dad was back working as an Engineer at the power station.

The honeymoon was delayed to August when they took the *ss Jupiter* to Oslo, Norway from Newcastle. Mum wrote in her diary "*Wednesday, August 21, 1946: We left Aberdeen 8:50am (by train). Arrived Newcastle, Tyne Commission Quay 6:30pm. Sailed on ss Jupiter (cabin 34) for Norway at 8:30pm. Food on board very good.*" There were no scheduled steamship services to book after the war. You had to wait till there was space on a ship, so they had to wait till August. The cabin had a curtain instead of a door as there was still a serious threat from sea mines laid during WWII. If the ship hit a mine, doors could become jarred and you would be trapped. They visited Oslo, Bergen, Sandnes and Stavanger and all Dad's friends he had met the previous year when he was in Norway with the liberation forces. Mum said it was an amazing experience with parties every night, everyone was so happy to see Dad again. In those days, people were happy to still be alive so celebrations took on added importance and jubilation. See page 73 for a photo.

### **Gas, Electricity and Solar – Men in Power Production**

It's interesting that Mum married an Electrical Engineer who specialized in hydro electric power and transformer design – while her family had been at the cutting edge of power as Coal Gas Managers and Engineers since the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century! Also, here's an interesting occurrence and coincidence: The gas works in Vancouver were managed by Grandpa's brother, John, and were later taken over by the electrical company that became BC Hydro, whose office building, the Electra, Mum and Dad later lived in! My son, Julian, continues the power tradition today with a serious interest in solar. He developed a website on the subject and has solar panels on the roof of his home in Toronto, generating enough power to run his home and selling the surplus to Ontario Hydro. Julian has also donated solar lights to families in underdeveloped countries through World Vision. This year he purchased a Hyundai Kona Electric car which he will power through the solar outlet in his garage. Power production is definitely a family tradition!

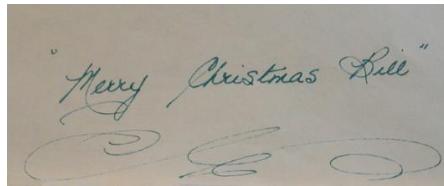
### **Life Together**

Throughout their life together, Mum and Dad were a very devoted couple whose main focus was each other and their happiness, something that was remarked on by many people as rare and special, which it was. They were very happy and there was a lot of laughter, music and fun. Mum had a beautiful singing voice and she sang as she worked around the house.

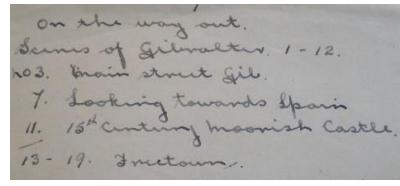
While Mum was from the Borders of Scotland, Dad was from Aberdeen near the Highlands so there was a healthy rivalry and good-humoured banter about their differences. Dad would remark on the

sheep stealers in the Borders – historically Scottish farmers would cross the border to England and steal sheep. The easiest way to tell they were from different parts of the country was their accents which were completely different. I would ask them to pronounce certain words to hear how differently they said it. 'Bird' was one which particularly illustrated their different accents, so we all had fun with it.

Another very notable difference was their handwriting. Mum's was cursive and beautiful while Dad's was hard to read, not messy, just a very unique style. Take a look:



Mum's cursive writing. People frequently commented on her beautiful penmanship.



Dad's unusual style of writing. This sample is easier to read than many.

Mum and Dad were great adventurers who made three major moves during their marriage: Scotland to South Africa in 1948. South Africa to Canada in 1956. Guelph, Ontario to Vancouver, BC, 1996.

## Life in South Africa

After the war, life was challenging in Britain with a housing shortage, food rationing and generally trying to get life back to normal. Mum and Dad decided to leave Britain and start their life of travel.

Dad had loved his time in West Africa during the war so his first thoughts were to return to that exciting continent. He secured a position with the municipal electrical department in Krugersdorp and later taught at the Witwatersrand Technical College in nearby Randfontein. They set sail for South Africa aboard the *RMMV Winchester Castle* on August 24, 1948 with Michael who was just over 1 year old. For more on their move to South Africa and getting settled, see pages 73–75.

In Krugersdorp, Mum enjoyed a very social way of life. Some days she would still be at the wall talking to neighbours when Dad returned from his morning lectures! After marrying, Mum didn't go out to work. In South Africa none of the wives of their friends did.

Mum suffered an ovarian cyst in 1952 before I was born. It became so large that my face was quite squashed at birth that September from the pressure from the cyst. Grandma Milne came out to South Africa in 1953, after her husband Edward died, to look after Michael and I while Mum had surgery by which time the cyst weighed 5lbs (2.26kg). Mum was very lucky she did not have more complications with this. She was extremely weak after the surgery and couldn't even cut a piece of meat when trying to prepare a meal at that time. She made a complete recovery though and the cyst didn't recur.



Mum and I in the front garden, November, 1952



Tea in the garden at 94 Piet Joubert  
when Grandma Milne visited us in South Africa, 1953-4

Mum and Dad had many friends in Krugersdorp and the sociable way of life continued throughout their time there. Visiting friends was a daily pastime in South Africa. Michael and I were young children during those years so there was a focus on their family, new home and the garden. Mum and Dad loved the years they spent there.



Mum on a rickshaw in Durban, 1951

Dad had six weeks off a year while working at the college so there was plenty of time to travel. The Drakensburg Mountains, Port Elizabeth and Durban were early trips in the new Morris Minor and in 1955 a wonderful journey to the Victoria Falls, through Southern Rhodesia and back via the entire length of the Kruger National Park was undertaken. For details and photos of this 'Rhodesian Journey', see pages 75-76.

Krugersdorp is on the Witwatersrand, white waters' ridge, which is the gold reef, 5,000 ft. (1,524m) above sea level. The thunder storms are very severe here. Given the severity of the storms it is surprising that Mum and Dad settled there as Mum was terrified of thunder storms. She had to lie down and hide her face whenever one was performing its noisy magic, something she had done since childhood apparently. The noise from the rain on the corrugated iron roofs was deafening. Hail could be the size of golf balls. (While living in Johannesburg in 1972-3, I temped at a car agency for a while and all the cars were dented by hail one day.) A very fierce environment – climatically as well as socially.

Unfortunately, life in South Africa had to come to an end. For the story of life under Apartheid, the move to Canada and settling in, see pages 77-87.

### **Life in Canada**

Spring, 1956 found Mum and Dad living in Ontario, Canada. Not where they had intended to move to but they made the best of it, eventually settling in Guelph, Ontario where Dad had secured an Engineering Marketing position with GE Transformer Division.

In Canada Mum found that more wives were going out to work. Our Scottish friends Jay and Molly were secretaries and Grace was a nurse who later became a master baker and started a specialty cake business.

With Mum at home, I found it created a very high quality of life for everyone. In those days, people had the time and inclination to do everything well. Being a housewife was turned into a fulfilling experience by Mum. She was able to pursue all her hobbies as well as take care of all aspects of running the home. She had everything under control.

Mum was exceptional at cooking, baking and entertaining. Guests were always very well looked after at parties, dinners and afternoon teas, complete with fresh flowers from the garden. I realize now just what a wonderful cook she was! Everything was delicious and beautifully served with immaculate, formal table settings. The annual New Year's Parties were quite wonderful and I still remember them fondly. They included dancing and games which everyone enjoyed in the recreation room along with a magnificent buffet meal. Over the years, friends who attended have remarked on the fun they had at Mum's New Year's Eve parties. While she was a great entertainer in younger years, after Dad's retirement, their life became quieter.



Mum and Dad at friends Jo and George Jason's Christmas party, 1963  
*Photo by George Jason*

Another thing Mum excelled at was sewing and knitting. Her work was like that of a professional tailor she was so good at making anything from dresses to complete suits with proper lapel jackets.

She knew all the tricks of the trade and her perfectionism really helped out here. I enjoyed a wonderful wardrobe growing up as I would design something I wanted and she would help me make it. When I think of the clothes we get now in mass production, these outfits, particularly in high school, were really special! She also knitted beautifully and won awards for this too, including complicated Fair Isle and Norwegian designs. She later took up tapestry.



Doing a tapestry of the Tower of London, winter 1975-6  
on the stand Dad made for her.

The Robins' Return was Mum's party piece at the piano. She was quite a good piano player, but she stopped playing so much once I reached an advanced level.

Green thumbs were inherited from her father and grandfather so Mum was an avid gardener. She loved her colourful borders around the house and beds of bright petunias in front of the fence. Dad pruned the cedar bushes beautifully into tall boxes, like sentries standing at the gate. It was only when Mum couldn't continue managing the garden that they decided to move to Vancouver, when they were in their late 70's. And, there was always a jigsaw puzzle on the go over the years!



Mum with her gold Camaro

Mum and Dad were avid Formula 1 Racing fans and wouldn't miss a race on TV. Michael Schumacher was Mum's favourite driver. Her passion for racing no doubt was an incentive for owning her own sporty car which she was lucky enough to get in 1970 when they bought a gold, Camaro, the year the snazzy new design was introduced. Mum loved driving this car and kept it for many years.

A member of the Toronto Blue Jays fan club, Mum and Dad watched all their baseball games on TV and would take the bus charter to Toronto's dome stadium to watch some games live. This was a real passion and especially exciting in 1992 and 1993 when the team won the World Series two years in a row!

And of course, there was her Captain James Cook scholarship. Mum knew all about this great man's life and voyages of exploration. She also collected stamps related to Cook, wrote several pieces for the Cook Study Unit journal in Britain and put together a timeline of his life. Many of her travels followed in the footsteps of Captain James Cook including in 1980 when she visited Cook's birthplace in Whitby, Yorkshire and other places related to his life on a trip from Scotland with Dad, Auntie Anna and Uncle John.

Something very special was Mum and Dad's ballroom dancing. They could glide across a dance floor so smoothly and knew all the steps. Cruising gave them opportunities to dance to live bands, another reason they enjoyed it so much. I was frequently asked if they were professionals; that's how good they looked on a dance floor!



Mum, Dennis, Roger, Julian, Peter, Dad  
Summer picnic at Dundurn Castle, 1984

The four Grandsons arrived in the 1970's. Michael's sons Roger (May 28, 1971) and Dennis (January 27, 1974) were born in England. Peter (February 10, 1977) was born in Guelph. My son Julian arrived on December 5, 1973, also born in Guelph. Mum and Dad took great interest in the boys and spent a lot of time with them, particularly with Julian who lived close by. There was a lot of much appreciated help with babysitting too!

### Travels from Guelph

They continued to travel, going further afield as Dad's time off increased. Vacations were the highlight of the year. Notably, in 1971 they went to Australia and New Zealand for six weeks, they were invited to Russia during the cold war with an engineering group who visited various facilities while there, visited China and Vietnam shortly after each country opened for tourism and they were aboard the first cruise ship to visit Cuba since the revolution in 1975.

So, one of Mum's focuses was planning and researching vacations which she did with great diligence, writing to cruise lines, travel companies and hotels herself to make arrangements only sometimes working with a travel agent. The Australia / New Zealand trip which was particularly complicated to arrange in those days. Mum and Dad would decide where they'd go next and Mum would take care of the arrangements, without the ease of online booking.

The destinations were thoroughly researched which turned travel into an educational pursuit. Trips were to relax or get away from it all but rather to explore some new part of North America or the world and they took Michael and I with them until we graduated from high school.

Early trips in Canada were to Manitoulin Island, Detroit, Kentucky, Ottawa, a camping holiday to New England and a trip to Indiana to visit Mum's Aunt and cousins. With several of Mum and Dad's aunts and uncles having emigrated to North America, we often had relatives to visit on our journeys.



Mum and I with our red, convertible rental car in Nassau.  
The 1930's built *ss Florida* can be seen in the background.

In 1963 it was Florida including Marine World and a wonderful cruise to the Bahamas aboard the *ss Florida*. One day we were having an ice cream at the car when we saw giraffes across the fence!! "Are we back in Africa?" we questioned but it turned out to be the beginnings of Busch Gardens: Florida was turning into a family vacation destination and Disney World, Epcot and all the other theme parks would follow.

August 1964 saw us on a cruise to Bermuda from New York which was one of the best vacations we have ever had. The *Queen of Bermuda* had all first-class accommodation, wonderful food and service and many entertainment options. Docked right beside Front Street in Hamilton for several days, we explored the islands and visited Mum's cousin Jack's family. He was the accountant for a department store there. Mum and I wore lovely dresses and white gloves as we shopped. An elegant vacation on board and on shore.



Our Christmas card 1964, dining aboard the *Queen of Bermuda*. Note the waiter is serving us individually (Silver Service) which was the way it was done on ships and fine restaurants at that time.

Then in 1965 Mum and Dad shipped the rambler station wagon and took the train across Canada to Vancouver, driving back through the States, a very adventuresome trip. This time we visited Mum's uncle Bob in Seattle and Mum's cousins, Harry and Bill Gauld and family at Flathead Lake, Montana – this was Bill Gauld who Mum had met in England during the war.

The trip was not without its challenges though. Just before leaving, Mum learned CN had only booked the train as far as Edmonton! We spent the day in Edmonton with their head of Public Relations who showed us around the city and took us to dinner at the Hotel Macdonald, complete with silver finger bowls. We boarded another train in the evening so we would be travelling through the mountains during the following day. Then in Vancouver, our car didn't arrive. The Rambler had been dropped off in Kamloops we eventually found out – but not before Dad confronted the manager of the Hotel Vancouver saying we weren't leaving, or paying for our stay, until our car was found!!! The delay meant we had a shorter time on Vancouver Island.

There were visits to see friends and family as well. In 1966 we flew for the very first time back to Scotland and Norway to visit friends and family again. We dressed up for the occasion, as you did in those days, and Dad ordered floral corsages for Mum and I to wear. Beautiful! When we boarded the Air Canada Douglas DC8 in Toronto for the flight to London, Heathrow, we found a welcome card at our seat with the menu for the flight. I had the beef bourguignon as my entrée and a cheese omelette for breakfast before landing. Service was very elegant and the stewardesses very smartly dressed. Michael pointed out what all the various sounds were throughout the flight which Mum wasn't so pleased about as she was really afraid of flying in the early days.<sup>6</sup>

There was another driving trip West with Auntie Anna and Uncle John (Mum's sister and husband) in 1967 when we drove as far as Banff Alberta in a week – Anna and John were amazed at the distances and vastness of Canada. We had some wonderful experiences and stayed at beautiful hotels including the Jasper Park Lodge and Lake McDonald Lodge at Glacier National Park. We also took them to Expo 67 in Montreal before they sailed home on the *Empress of Canada*. Canadian Pacific still had ships sailing the North Atlantic run at that time.



Mount Rushmore, South Dakota, 1967  
l-r Bill, Anna, John, Eunice

The trip to Hawaii in 1969 was superb, visiting the four major islands, having private tours each day with a driver and staying at some fabulous hotels, including the iconic Coco Palms on Kauai. We then sailed from Honolulu to Vancouver via Las Angeles and San Francisco aboard P&O's *Orsova*. Mum and Dad thought of moving to Hawaii and we looked at houses while there, but every time they contemplated moving, Dad would be promoted so it wasn't worth leaving Guelph.



With Auntie Anna at the top of the  
Bank of Commerce building, Toronto, 1967

Mum and Dad made more trips back to Scotland and we had many visits from family and friends over the years with both Grandma Milne and Mum's sister Anna and husband John staying for six weeks each in 1967. We took visitors to Niagara Falls, Canada's Capital city of Ottawa and Toronto, where going to the top of the Bank of Commerce Head Office building was a highlight. At 34 storeys,<sup>7</sup> it was the tallest building in the British Empire from 1931 to 1962. In the photo, see the new city hall in the distance – and the white gloves?

After I left home in 1971, Mum and Dad continued to travel as they explored the world together covering all continents except Antarctica – although Dad's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated with a cruise to Cape Horn and Argentina's province of Tierra del Fuego, Antarctica and the South Atlantic Islands.



Only Eunice would be ironing the tea towels,  
in the van, on a camping trip – and smiling while she does it!

Slides were Mum's preferred way of recording her journeys and later she switched to photos while Dad did the filming. Mum's extensive slide collection covered many decades of travel.

In 1972 Mum and Dad acquired a Ford Econoline van which Dad fitted out for camping with a stove, fridge, bed, sitting area and toilet. This widened their scope of travel to include camping weekends and some longer road trips. The comfort of the van and protection from the elements made it very inviting for getaways. For more details and photos on these adventures, see page 89.

In 1975 they were aboard the Russian cruise ship, *Alexandr Pushkin*, for a three-week cruise from Montreal to the Gaspe, Bermuda, Nassau and Cuba. This was the first cruise ship to visit Cuba since the revolution. Dad was voted most active passenger on this wonderful cruise.



Disembarking in Dubrovnik  
39<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cruise

Dad's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated aboard Sitmar's *Fairsea* on a Panama Canal cruise in 1977. This was the year before Dad retired following surgery for an aortic aneurysm. This gave them more time and flexibility for their travels. They began to focus on cruising, which they had always loved, as the best way for them to travel at this stage in their lives.

In retirement they cruised the South Pacific, Southeast Asia, Mediterranean, Black Sea, Caribbean, Mexico, Panama Canal, Alaska, Hawaii and South America. Many of these regions were visited several times. Japan & China were explored on an unforgettable American Express land/cruise tour. There were also trips back to Scotland during these years. See more photos on pages 92–95.

Notable sailings with special celebrations or events while living in Guelph were:

- 1983 – Japan and China aboard the *Pearl of Scandinavia* on an American Express land/cruise tour. The TV show *The Love Boat* was being filmed on board during this cruise. China had only recently opened for tourism.
- 1985 – 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary: A one-month transatlantic/Europe cruise. Ft Lauderdale to Venice, aboard the 5-star *Royal Viking Sea*.
- 1986 – 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary: French Polynesia from Tahiti aboard *ss Liberté*. They renewed their vows in a ceremony conducted by Captain Anderson. The island of Moorea became Mum's favourite place on earth.
- 1986 & 1992 – Two sailings aboard the famous liner *ss Rotterdam*: A Christmas cruise to the Caribbean with Julian and I and 16 days, Ft. Lauderdale to Rio de Janeiro with three days in Rio after disembarking.
- 1988 – The second voyage of the *Sovereign of the Seas* in January, a ground breaking ship and the first 'megaship' at 78,000 tons, (mid-size ship by today's standards.)



Aboard *Sovereign of the Seas*  
January, 1988

- 1989 – Black Sea and Mediterranean cruise aboard the *Eugenio Costa*, an Italian cruise with some amazing shore experiences. In Odessa dinner was delayed till 10pm so we could attend the ballet.



Dancing at the French Liberation Ball,  
*QE2* with the Glenn Miller Band

- 1994 – Their 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day cruise aboard the famous *QE2* for commemorations in Britain and the beaches of Normandy. Amongst the notables on board were WWII celebrities they were familiar with: Comedian Bob Hope, singer Vera Lynn and journalist Walter Cronkite. They saw and met many dignitaries; the Canadian Prime Minister, Canada's only surviving Victoria Cross winner and many others at ceremonies at Juno Beach.

- 1996 – Hong Kong to Singapore, 14 nights, once again aboard the small ship, *Sun Viking*, with three days in Hong Kong before sailing and two weeks in Singapore at the end. Countries visited were China, Vietnam which had just opened for tourism, and Thailand. This was Royal Caribbean Cruise Line's first season in Asia.
- 1996 – 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cruise, Vancouver to Alaska, aboard *Legend of the Seas*, while they were selling their home in Guelph and planning their move to Vancouver.



The champagne fountain was a highlight on cruises with Princess.  
Here Mum pours the bubbly with the help of  
Maitre d' Giuseppe Agata aboard *Sky Princess* in the Pacific.



All set for another adventure!  
Lifeboat Drill aboard *Fairsea* for the Panama Canal

## Life in Vancouver

It was after their 1995 Alaska cruise that Mum started finding gardening too difficult. This was the trigger for their decision to sell their home in Guelph and move somewhere smaller without a

garden. So, they decided to move to Vancouver – in their late 70's! Their third major move. Eventually the house sold and they made the move across the country on July 30, 1996. Their belongings arrived in a massive transport truck the following day having taken about 10 days to reach Vancouver.

1996 was certainly a landmark year for Mum and Dad with many life changing events. For more details and photos on all that happened, see pages 95–98.



Mum with Joyce Eales, her English friend of many years

One person in Guelph Mum would particularly miss, was her long-time friend, Joyce Eales. They had met through GE where both Dad and Joyce's husband, Ron, had worked. Mum and Joyce enjoyed Wednesday afternoon teas together for several decades, taking turns going to each other's home come rain or shine. Gardening was one shared interest. They'd discuss everything under the sun over a cup of tea with scones, biscuits and other treats.

Mum and Dad thoroughly enjoyed their years in Vancouver, a beautiful city with an expansive harbour, mountains and many lovely parks and year-round gardens. It has a much milder climate than the rest of Canada with snow in the city being a rare occurrence which they really appreciated.

Living right downtown made it easy to get around and there were many places of interest to walk to. They had city and mountain views from their corner suite in the Electra building. I would rent a car and take them further afield on weekends so they were able to experience this beautiful area during those years. Having series tickets to the Vancouver Symphony afternoon concerts at the nearby Orpheum Theatre was one highlight of their life at this time.



At Canada Place cruise terminal, hotel and conference centre

Favourite spots around the city to visit were Canada Place to watch the cruise ships sail out, Grouse Mountain, VanDusen Gardens, Queen Elizabeth Park and Stanley Park.

Sports on TV continued to be good entertainment: F1 racing, golf, tennis and baseball.

Their friends Pat and Charlotte Magnolo lived on the top floor of the Electra and Mum and Dad enjoyed outings and get togethers with them. Pat and Charlotte's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary party was held in a ballroom at the Wall Centre Sheraton, across the road from the Electra. Singer Michael Bublé was a family friend of theirs and he sang at this event which took place around 1997, before he became famous.

### Travels from Vancouver

While living in Vancouver there were many trips down to Bellingham, Washington to visit friends and do some cross-border shopping, and of course trips back to Ontario to see family, highlights being the weddings of Grandsons Dennis and Julian in 1997 and 1999.

Travelling abroad continued too with many exciting cruises and they saw many new countries that had long been on their radar. I was fortunate to accompany Mum and Dad on these cruises. I made the arrangements booking air, cruise and hotel and seeing to any visas that were required, then helping them with airport security and pre-cruise stays.

In addition to some short Pacific Northwest cruises and coastal sailings to Los Angeles and San Francisco, there were three outstanding winter/spring journeys:

In January 1998, Dad's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated a couple of months late aboard the *Royal Princess*, on this sailing around Cape Horn, the tip of South America. This realized a life long dream. It is a must for mariners to reach this legendary place. There were many exciting ports including the Falkland Islands along the way. This was a journey of adventure at a time when very few cruise ships sailed this route.



With our taxi driver in Apia, Samoa



The *Royal Princess* at Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, the world's most southerly town

In March, 1999, it was Sydney to Papeete, Tahiti aboard the *Sky Princess*, for 16 days calling at Fiji, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Bora Bora and Moorea, Mum's favourite island. Mum had a nasty fall in the historic Rocks area of Sydney, where we stayed pre-cruise, and she spent a few hours in the hospital with extremely high blood pressure. She had a very black eye but loved every minute of this tropical sailing.

On Mum's 79<sup>th</sup> birthday, May 3, 2000, we boarded *Vision of the Seas* in Honolulu, after spending five days in Waikiki. The cruise took us around the Hawaiian Islands then on to Vancouver, a very leisurely, 11-day sailing which turned out to be Dad's final cruise.



Tendering ashore at Lahaina, Maui



At Pu'uhonua O Hōnaunau National Historical Park on the lava flows of Kona, Hawaii.  
This City of Refuge was a Hawaiian sanctuary for hundreds of years.

For more photos and details on their travels, see pages 92–95.

### **The *Endeavour* Arrives**



The HM Bark *Endeavour* replica arriving in Vancouver, Oct 2, 1999

A major event for Mum in 1999 was the arrival of the *Endeavour* replica since she was a Cook scholar. *Endeavour* was a research ship which sailed with scientists on board to discover the world on Cook's first epic voyage, 1768-71. The replica was built in Western Australia from 1988 to 1993. It sailed a world tour in 1999, docking in Vancouver from October 2 to 10. Mum and Dad were on hand to welcome this incredible vessel and they visited several times, savouring every moment!

The most amazing thing about *Endeavour*, is its small size. How could anyone accomplish what Cook and his crew did on such a tiny ship – a mere 397 tons and 109.3" (33.3m) in length? This *Endeavour* replica's home base is the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney, Australia.

## Dad's Passing and Life After

Dad went into decline in 2000, not able to do as much as in the past and not so interested in outings. He did make it to Honolulu for the cruise around Hawaii and on to Vancouver but he was suffering with leg cramps and resting a lot of the time. He had problems walking on some shore excursions. Both he and Mum were not their usual perky selves on this cruise.



53<sup>rd</sup> anniversary at the Electra, June 7, 1999

Julian and Barbara visited before Christmas but Dad didn't join in our sightseeing. On Christmas Day, he wasn't able to come to Christmas dinner at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver and he was in bed for our little New Year's Eve party at home. He was diagnosed with colorectal cancer in the following weeks and had surgery in February 2001.



Mum with Connor and Stephanie  
at the Holiday Inn, January, 2001



Mum with her first Great Grandchild,  
Connor Milne, in January, 2001

During the months Dad was in hospital, he and Mum were able to meet their Great Grandson, Connor, Dennis and Stephanie's son, as Michael's family came to visit Dad after his operation. Connor was born May 23, 2000, the first of the Great Grandchildren.

After surgery for colorectal cancer, Dad suffered a heart attack. He was then diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma, a blood cancer, heart failure and a stomach ulcer. It was a very difficult and shocking six months as one diagnosis after another came along. It was made harder by the fact there was a nurses' strike during most of the time he was in hospital. At one time he was sent home as the ward he was in had a severe outbreak of a hospital virus. The home care nurse knew he shouldn't be at home. She arranged for him to return to the hospital and soon after he was moved to the Palliative Care unit at St. Paul's Hospital, just across the square from The Electra.

Mum visited Dad every day he was in hospital in 2001, spending most of the day with him. The Doctor told Mum she must eat and drink while at the hospital and she didn't need to go every day but Mum wanted to be by Bill's side. She often didn't even have a cup of tea while there.

Mum was at Dad's side when he passed away on June 27, 2001 after a wonderful life together. They had celebrated their 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary just a few weeks earlier.

After Dad's passing, Mum stayed on at the Electra and made the best of life on her own. I was still living just two floors below so was able to help her with everything and take her for outings. One thing she needed to learn was how to do laundry as Dad had been doing it for many years and she didn't know how to work the machines in the laundry room. One of the convenient things about the Electra design was having a laundry room on every floor with full size washers and dryers.

It was fortunate that I was working from home during these years, since starting my online travel content business in 2000, so I was on hand if she needed any help, anytime.

### **Later Travels, 9-11 and New Great Grandchildren**

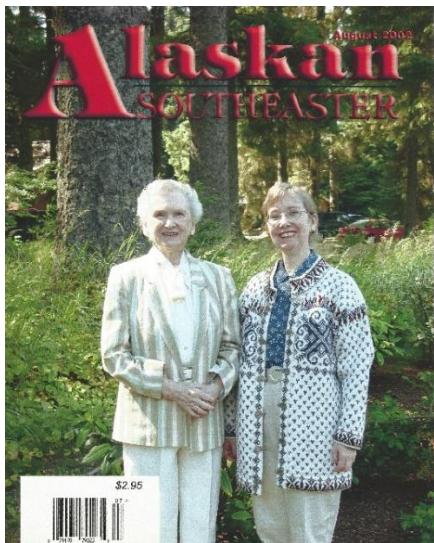
During these years, I travelled with Mum to Ontario, Bellingham WA for short breaks and on several Alaska cruises. Mum accompanied me on two cruises where I was reviewing the ships for various publications; round trip from Vancouver to Alaska aboard Celebrity's *Infinity* in 2001 and San Francisco to Vancouver via Alaska aboard Holland America Line's *Prinsendam* in 2003. I was the Alaska Editor and Ships Editor for several online and print publications so all the Alaska cruises assisted with my work.



*Infinity* in Yakutat Bay, Alaska - Hubbard Glacier in the background

In September 2001, we were aboard the *gts Infinity* in Yakutat Bay, approaching Hubbard Glacier, when the Captain came on the tonoi to announce the 9-11 attacks. It was a peculiar experience hearing about such an enormous tragedy while in the silent, pristine and vast wilderness of Alaska. The ship offered free use of ship's phones for anyone who had family or friends in the attack zones.

One couple were having trouble reaching their son who worked at the Pentagon. All aviation was grounded including the float planes in Alaska. It was eerie sailing into Ketchikan seeing all the planes lined up in silence along the channel. The atmosphere on board was quite tense to the end of the cruise and upon our return, Vancouver had been transformed by the event with ships stuck in the harbour housing passengers who could not get home, planes grounded at the airport, queues of people at airline offices and people stranded with no where to go.



Cover Girls

Reviewing Holland America Line's *Prinsendam* in 2003 was a real treat as this ship launched in 1988 as the *Royal Viking Sun*, the world's top rated cruise ship. It was now sailing Holland America's world and longer cruises. Mum was well aware of this and interested to see what changes Holland America had made on board the ship, as was I. It was a 14-day Alaska sailing round-trip from San Francisco.

We were back in Alaska in 2002 aboard *Vision of the Seas* once again. As usual, in Juneau, we met up with my good friend, the late Dave Fremming and his wife Sharon who lived there. Dave was the Owner/Editor of the *Alaskan Southeaster* magazine. We would have lunch at our favourite seafood restaurant near the ship for some terrific Alaska Halibut, then they would take us to places of interest around Juneau.

On this trip, Dave decided to use a photo of Mum and I on the cover of his magazine, so we became cover girls on the August 2002 edition. Mum was delighted!



Sailing under the Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco



Mum is already reading the menu when I arrive for dinner on my birthday, aboard *Serenade of the Seas*, September, 2004

In September, 2004, Mum's final cruise was to Alaska aboard *Serenade of the Seas*. She did very well on this cruise, not getting sea sick in a storm on the Gulf of Alaska, as I did, and being able to find her way back to the stateroom on this midsize ship. I celebrated my birthday on this cruise.

Her health had been declining and Mum was not able to take another cruise. We had also discussed many times going to Scotland after Dad died but she was never able to commit to making the trip. I don't think she really felt up to a strenuous land journey as she turned 80 the year Dad passed away. Sailing from Vancouver or driving to Bellingham with me was easier for her.

Also, at Easter, 2004, we travelled to Ontario for a family reunion where Mum met her three new Great Grandchildren, born in 2002: Dennis and Stephanie's daughter Jaime on August 8 and Julian and Barbara's twins, Clara (now Logan) and Jillian, born December 2.



l-r Grandson Julian, Barbara, Logan, Eunice, Jillian, Susan  
Meeting the Great Grand twins, Easter 2004



Meeting Great Granddaughter, Jaime,  
with Grandson Dennis, Easter 2004

On July 2, 2005 Mum was back on board a ship again as Grandson Roger married his partner of several years, Crisanta, aboard the *Radiance of the Seas* in Vancouver harbour. Mum actually suffered a mini stroke the Friday evening before the wedding and was in hospital for quite a few hours but she did get home that night. Next morning, she was up promptly, getting ready for the wedding. She wasn't going to miss her Grandson's wedding on a ship, another example of her determination. It was a beautiful ceremony in a very lavish location. They then sailed to Alaska aboard *Radiance* for their honeymoon, with several family members joining them on the cruise.



Mum with Roger and Crisanta  
on their wedding day, July 2, 2005



Roger, Crisanta and daughter Jhen aboard *Radiance of the Seas*.  
Roger formally adopted Jhen during the wedding ceremony

In 2006 around the time of her 85<sup>th</sup> birthday, Mum enjoyed a visit from Julian and Barbara during and after their Alaska cruise from Las Angeles to Alaska, ending in Vancouver:



Mum with Julian, Logan, Barbara and Jillian, May 2006  
with *Vision of the Seas* in the background. The twins are 3.5 years old.

Grandson Peter married Amanda Amaratunga in July, 2006 in Guelph, however, Mum was not well enough to travel to the wedding. Pete and Amanda met while studying at Guelph University. Amanda, a veterinarian, is from Sri Lanka and they were married in a lovely Buddhist ceremony.



Peter and Amanda, August 6, 2006



l-r Roger, Peter and Dennis on Pete's wedding day.

## Life at Haro Park Centre

After two long hospital stays, one in summer 2005 and again in fall, 2006 – when she was in for six weeks with kidney issues and shingles – the doctors decided that Mum should move to a nursing home. After visiting the available properties, I found that Haro Park Centre in downtown Vancouver was the best one. It had a lovely atmosphere, was tastefully decorated and offered her a private room in a central location, not far from where she had been living prior to the hospital stay. There was a wait of a few weeks over Christmas for a place to come available then suddenly the news came. Mum didn't return to her apartment at the Electra. She was moved by ambulance from St. Paul's Hospital to Haro Park Centre on December 29, 2006.



All settled in! Julian visits, February, 2007



Mum in her room at Haro Park, 2008

Here Mum thrived again, enjoying the socializing, dancing, choir, concerts and having her own room which she had missed while in the hospital ward with three other people. Her health improved greatly. They told me a few months later that she was doing so well she really didn't need to be in Haro Park but having moved her there, they let her stay on.

So, despite saying for years that she would rather "jump out a window than move to a home", she was actually better off there and enjoyed it very much. Family visited Haro Park quite often and she loved seeing her grandchildren and great grandchildren during these years. With Roger, Crisanta and Jhen living in Vancouver, they would stop by some Saturdays and we would all go out for lunch at a nearby restaurant or have a celebration in the rooftop lounge of Haro Park.



Dennis and Stephanie visited Mum at Haro Park with Connor and Jaime



Vancouver Lookout lunch with Mum, Crisanta, Roger and Jhen, my birthday party, September, 2008

During her years at Haro Park, I was working full time but I visited twice a week to take flowers for her room and help out with her care. They didn't do the best job of laundry, putting everything into the same load, and they didn't iron which horrified Mum of course. I would rescue her clothes by taking things home to iron, handwash or take to the dry cleaner to meet Mum's standards.



Mum on her 87<sup>th</sup> birthday, May 3, 2008  
making friends with a parrot at the Bloedel Conservatory, Vancouver

Mum loved our many outings for lunch and shopping in the neighbourhood of Haro Park and car trips further afield when I would rent a car on the weekend. For her 87<sup>th</sup> birthday, May 3, 2008, we drove to Queen Elizabeth Park to go for a walk through the Bloedel Conservatory. It is very lush complete with tropical birds. This was one of many outings over those years.

Shoes became a problem. She needed very soft comfortable shoes as her feet aged but Mum being very determined would not listen. She always headed straight for the dressy, high heeled shoes whenever we went to a shoe store. After taking her out or bringing shoes to her many times, she eventually found a pair of quite smart soft shoes that she actually liked and would wear but it had taken a long time to reach that point! There was also a performance over coats. She didn't like any that I had bought for her to try, yet when I decided to keep one for myself, she loved it when she saw me wearing it. Challenging years!

In February 2010, I arrived at Haro Park one Saturday to find Mum sitting in a chair, unable to stand up. I was told she now had kidney failure and there was not much they could do. She was not a candidate for dialysis. They did not expect her to survive the year. Her meds were changed however, and she did manage to keep going longer than expected.

In September, 2010, Mum's niece, Dorothy and husband Dick visited Vancouver from Perth, Western Australia. They were touring North America at the time. Dorothy is the youngest daughter of Mum's sister, Anna. They hadn't met for several decades and Mum thoroughly enjoyed Dorothy's visit in the rooftop lounge at Haro Park.



With her niece, Dorothy from Perth, Australia, 2010

On a November evening in 2010, I received a phone call to say Mum had been taken to St. Paul's hospital Emergency department after falling at Haro Park. I went to the hospital and found she had broken her hip! She had already been admitted for surgery the following day. Mum rallied from this with her usual strong spirit and adapted to life in a wheel chair in the following months.

At Mum's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, May 3, 2011, I had dinner with her at Haro Park and made it special with gifts, cards and balloons. She told me "I have to keep going for as long as I can" such was her indomitable spirit. She lived until July 4, 2011. I was at her bedside when she passed away a few days after suffering a major stroke. We held a quiet memorial service in the chapel at Haro Park attended by a few friends and family members.

Mum certainly made the most of her life and enjoyed everything she did to the hilt despite any adversity. An inspiration to us all.



Eunice Milne on her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday, May 3, 2011



Mum & Dad's 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary Portrait

aboard *Legend of the Seas*, June 7, 1996

This was Mum's favourite photo of her and Dad.



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**Mum's Mother, My Grandmother**

**Susan Keillor**

**Susan Henderson Nicoll**

August 20, 1889, Abbeythune Estate, Forfar – May 29, 1943, Earlston, Berwickshire

Domestic Servant specializing in table settings and serving  
Fundraiser for worthy causes

Married Alexander Marshall Keillor, February 2, 1916, Dundee, Forfar

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I never met my Grandmother as she died before I was born. I was named after her and look a lot like her apparently, except she had bright red hair. I always enjoyed hearing Mum talk about Grandma Susan.



Susan Henderson Nicoll, Christening, October 6, 1889  
Our oldest family photo

Susan Nicoll was born August 20, 1889 at Abbeythune Estate, Parish of St. Vigeaus, County of Forfar, Scotland. Her parents were William and Jane Ann Nicoll. The property is 30 miles northeast of Dundee. Her Father was a Master Gardener so must have been working at this estate. Here are descriptions of Abbeythune from historical references on the county:

Abbeythune is a small property lying near the northeast corner of the parish. The house is a comfortable mansion and the surroundings are pleasing.....This name applies to an elegant two story slated dwelling house, an arable farm, gardens and attached property of Mrs. Scott (Wife of Captain Robert Scott, R.N.). The proprietor has made a special request to have this name written Abbeythune and not Abbethune.<sup>8</sup>

The property gained notoriety when three suffragettes who had been imprisoned, including Alice Paul, recuperated at the Abbeythune Estate.

"A lady who has a big country house sent a motor car for us. She lives in a big sort of park and it is one mile from her front gate to her front door....the name of her house was Abbeythune." (*This must have been around 1909 - 1910.*)<sup>9</sup>

Susan had three brothers and three sisters. Her eldest brother, William Salmond Nicoll, was killed in 1900 at the Siege of Ladysmith during the Boer War in South Africa. When we were living in South Africa, we went to find his grave and think we found it although they had spelled Nicoll with one l, an easy error under the circumstances. William was only 20 years old when he was killed.



Jane Ann and William Nicoll with their family, 1904  
Children L-R: Grandma Susan age 15; Margaret (Montana); Robert (Seattle); Mary; John. Francis in front.

1. **Margaret Nicoll**, born 1879, who emigrated to America where she married William Gauld on March 16, 1907. They owned a ranch at Missoula, Montana and the family had land at Flathead Lake. They had four children: Gertrude, Laura, Harry and Bill (US Air Force WWII). We have Gauld cousins in Montana and Spokane, Washington today.
2. **Mary Nicoll**, born 1884, lived in Edinburgh and married Donald Cameron. Three children, William, Elizabeth and Robert.
3. **Robert Barnett Nicoll**, born 1887, who emigrated to Seattle. We visited him there in 1965. His wife had passed away. He was a very happy person who still got up at 6am every day and kept busy in his senior years. He had a lovely little house he still lived in and seemed to have many friends.

4. **John Barnett Nicoll**, born 1892, lived in Dundee. He married twice. The two children from his first wife were Sidney and Jack who then lived with other family members when their Dad remarried. We visited Uncle Jack and his family in Bermuda, where he worked as an accountant, in 1964. The three children from John's second marriage in Dundee were Jean, Errol and Douglas. Jean was one of Mum's favourite cousins and they kept in touch over the years. I continued to write to Jean and Errol but both have passed away.

5. **Frances Nicoll**, born 1896, lived in Dundee, married to a Mr. Salmond. Two children, George and Mabel.

After working at Abbeythune, Susan's Dad was Head Gardener at West Park, Dundee, the estate of Philanthropist Sir William Henderson. Find out more in the William Nicoll section, pages 57-60. Gardening was also a favourite hobby for many members of our family over the years; a family characteristic.



Susan, top left, with maids and pets at West Park House, Dundee, c1910

Susan also worked at West Park as a table maid before she was married, a job she really enjoyed. Thanks to her experience at West Park, Grandma created beautiful table settings, something which Mum did too. Whether it was a dinner, a tray or an afternoon tea, everything would be beautifully presented and I remember her snipping flowers from the garden for the floral centerpieces. So, this custom started with my Grandma Susan who was also an excellent cook and baker.



Susan, right, doing needlepoint with a friend at Winsley Hurst House, London, c1910

Susan made a trip to London, England before she was married, where she worked at beautiful Winsley Hurst House, a 1714 manor house of the gentry in Woodford Green. This would have been around 1910. Quite an adventure for a single young lady at that time. This beautiful manor house is now called Hurst House.<sup>10</sup>

While living in London, Susan became a church member at a ceremony in glorious St. Paul's Cathedral. It meant a great deal as she and her family were very religious. In 1939 when Mum was in London visiting her sister Anna, she sent a post card of St. Paul's Cathedral to her Mother saying *"I suppose you will recognise this place alright. We haven't been to see it yet but hope to soon. Having a great holiday."*

Susan had a real interest in travelling further than London. Mum recalled how Susan had wanted to emigrate to Western Canada or the United States as her brother and sister had done, however, she stayed in Scotland to care for her Mother who was not well, and never did see Canada or the USA, something which I like to think I have done for her.



Susan married my Grandfather, Alexander Marshall Keillor, on February 2, 1916 in Dundee at age 26. The ceremony was held at her home, North Lodge, West Park Estate with family and friends in attendance. Someone has been cut out of the photo, perhaps for a locket.

Susan & Alec's Wedding, Feb 2, 1916  
Middle row L-R: Alec's Father George Keillor, Susan's Mum Jane Ann Tavendale,  
Susan & Alec, Susan's Dad William Nicoll, possibly a Keillor sister and children

Grandpa was the gas manager at Birnam<sup>11</sup> at the time. He was a single young man. When he was on holiday in Dundee, neighbours told Susan that the visiting gas manager was "looking for a wife." Not sure how they met but they were very happily married until Susan's death in 1943.

Mum was born on May 3, 1921 while Susan and Alec were living at the Gas Works House in Kincardine on Forth, the youngest of the three girls; Anna, Betty and Eunice. It was a difficult birth and Mum was put into a sink right away and ignored so the nurses could attend to Susan who nearly died apparently. For this reason, Susan always had a special fondness for my Mum who was her last child.

They soon moved to Earlston in The Borders where they lived in the Gas Works House. Mum had many happy memories of living in this large, stone house which had a lovely garden. It was dangerous around the gasometers though, as they had an opening around the bottom. The children had to be sure not to go near and fall in.

Mum described her Mother as very happy, friendly and outgoing; a very warm person liked by everyone in the town. Susan was her Father in Law's favourite Daughter in Law. Quite a compliment considering he had nine married sons.

Mum was a ballet dancer and performed in numerous concerts so Susan, was always busy sewing costumes for these performances.



Susan and Alec Keillor at home in Earlston with L-R Eunice, Anna & Betty, 1922

Susan was very religious and the family attended the Presbyterian Church twice on Sundays. The children couldn't play outside on Sunday either. Mum said they couldn't even bounce a ball. There were visits from family on Sundays though. Mum remembered many visits from her Ainslie cousins when Auntie Minnie and Uncle Robert would drive down from Edinburgh with their family for the day.



In the garden beside the gasometer with Alec, Anna and Eunice c.1933

Susan had Rheumatic Fever when Mum was very young so that would have been in the 1920's. She was admitted to a fever hospital. Grandpa had a long trek to visit her. On one visit when he arrived, a thoughtless nurse said to him "she has gone" and his heart sank thinking she had passed away. She had actually been moved to a different hospital. Mum remembers when Susan got home, just how weak she was, and she believed there were lingering effects for the rest of her life.

With everything having to be done manually or cooked from scratch, it was very demanding to run a home in the 1930's. Mum said sometimes she would want a bowl of Scottish porridge late in the evening and her Mum would go through all the work of preparing this dish for her which Mum felt



Susan Keillor ready for her daughter Betty's wedding, c1941

Other examples of her generosity are the family friends she made. One day a man came to the door for water. Mum's sister Betty said "there is a man at the door but he isn't a tramp". No, he was not. He was a theology student from Oxford University, hiking in Scotland, who became a fast friend with Susan and remained friendly with the family throughout his life. His name was Spen Deeks. In 1933 he became a teacher and missionary in Africa, serving in Nigeria for many decades, something continued by his daughter, Elizabeth. In 1991, Elizabeth Deeks received an MBE (Member of the British Empire) from Queen Elizabeth II for her lifetime work in Africa: "For educational and welfare services to the Community in Nigeria".<sup>12</sup>



Witold Gronkowski

Another friend was a Polish soldier who Susan 'adopted'. There were many Polish soldiers in Britain during WWII fighting under British command, having made their way to Britain following the invasion of Poland. Witold Gronkowski<sup>13</sup> was from Zaporze, Lubelskie, Poland and was actually an aesthetician before joining the Army. He visited Earlston whenever he could and became like a son to Susan. Mum got along well with Witold and he suggested she use Nivea cream, which he knew was good from his work as an aesthetician. Mum used Nivea cream for the rest of her life. It no doubt contributed to her beautiful clear complexion which people constantly remarked on, even in later years.

Sadly, it was while Auntie Minnie was visiting Earlston, that Susan went to the market square for groceries on the fateful Saturday morning of May 29, 1943. As she crossed the road she walked behind a parked truck, something Mum said was very unusual as Susan was really careful not to walk behind vehicles. The driver had not honked his horn as was customary when backing up, because there were many noisy military tanks in the road and he didn't think anyone would hear the horn because of the tank noise.

Unfortunately, the truck reversed with no warning and drove over Susan. What was worse, the driver stopped, indicating he knew he had hit something. People were shouting at him to stop but he kept going and drove over her with the front wheels as well. Her injuries were so severe, she died almost immediately and was taken back to Gas Works House.

This tragedy shook Earlston. The story in the local paper reported "a pall of gloom was cast over the village".<sup>14</sup> There was a court case, however, the driver worked for a well-known trucking company and got off with no penalties which was a shock and miscarriage of justice, adding to the tragedy.

It could be said that Grandma Susan was a victim of WWII because the tank noise seems to have played a major role in the event. The high level of steady noise from the tanks may also have been distracting and disorienting for everyone in the square that day.

One of the people who turned up at the house at the time of the tragedy was Susan's adopted Polish soldier, Witold, who came immediately upon hearing the tragic news.

Mum was completely devastated. She was in the WAAF stationed near Belfast, Northern Ireland, at the time. She was in such shock that she left for Earlston without getting any spending money for the journey so she couldn't buy anything to eat or drink en route. Travel was very restricted throughout the war so she secured passage on the ferry and train through the RAF. It took two days for her to get home.

This tragedy was a dreadful shock for Grandpa who was suddenly left alone having lost his wife under extremely tragic circumstances. Grandpa hoped Mum would leave the WAAF and return home but she was unable to as you couldn't just get up and leave the forces during the war. He eventually found a house keeper to look after the home and prepare meals. Her name was Grace Waterston and they married on February 21, 1945.<sup>15</sup>

Grandma Susan was a popular woman, sadly missed by many. She was taken far too soon. Susan was buried in the churchyard of Earlston Parish Church.



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## Mum's Father, My Grandfather

### ALEXANDER (ALEC) MARSHALL KEILLOR

November 16, 1891, Nairn, Nairnshire – July, 21, 1974, Coldstream, Berwickshire

Gas Manager & Engineer

Married Susan Henderson Nicoll, February 2, 1916, Dundee, Forfar (died May 29, 1943)

Married Grace Waterston, February 21, 1945

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The Keillor clan were a bunch of characters. Eccentricity seems to have run through the family. They were also talented and ambitious. Grandpa Keillor was certainly a character. A very entertaining conversationalist with strong opinions. I met him several times on trips to Scotland and stayed at his home in Coldstream, on the border with England, for two weeks in 1968.

Grandpa was born on November 16, 1891, in Nairn, near Inverness, the 10<sup>th</sup> of 12 children. In Coldstream Grandpa had the family's solid wood dining room table from Nairn which sat 14. See a photo and details of the family in 1904 on page 55.



Grandpa in the Black Watch, 1915, age 24

During WWI Grandpa was in the Black Watch with the 1/6th (Perthshire) Battalion Territorial Force that protected the entrance to the Firth of Forth near Edinburgh. Being a gas works manager must have been considered essential work however as he went back to gas managing at Birnam and was married to Susan Nicoll in 1916, during the war. See the wedding photo on page 43.

Grandpa's family had gone into gas works engineering and management, something that was a new field and very important for the progress of Britain in the early 1800's. Grandpa managed several gas works, ending in Coldstream in the late 1940's. The gas was produced from burning coal and used for lighting and heating homes, stoves and ovens. Some of the large, circular gasometers that produced the gas are still seen today around the UK.

His brother Jack emigrated to Canada and was the Gas Manger for Hamilton and later Vancouver where he lived until he passed away in 1955. Several other brothers and his sister, Nell, also emigrated to Canada and the USA as noted on the family photo on page 55.

Grandpa's brother George became engineering manager of Greenock Corporation Gas Department. He was a recognised authority on gas engineering and well respected as an administrator, frequently called upon for his expertise. He served a term as President of the Scottish section of the Gas Engineers' Association. George was appointed Greenock Gas Manager in 1917. A keen golfer, George also served as captain of the Greenock Golf Club.

Grandpa met up with George in Edinburgh at the Gas Engineers Annual Meeting on June 26, 1932 and they talked about Mum going to visit for a holiday. Grandpa came home from the meeting and wrote a letter to George to confirm arrangements. The following morning, a headline in the Glasgow Herald read "Greenock Gas Official's Fatal Mishap. Death of Mr. George Keillor". On his way home to Greenock, George had slipped and fallen between the train and the platform at Glasgow Central Railway Station and died in hospital of his injuries. This was of course shocking and tragic news for the entire family and especially for Grandpa who had just spent the day with his brother.

Grandpa's Father and some of his brothers actually bought the gas works they managed but Grandpa was content to be a Gas Works Manager and engineer. His sister, Nell, used to say that the family 'couldn't do anything with Alec'. They were all very ambitious whereas Grandpa was quite content and down to earth; happy in his garden and more interested in having time for his many hobbies.



Alec, Susan and friends at the garden pond between the two gasometers in Earlston



Alec and wife Susan, 1930

In the smaller villages Grandpa had no help so he did all the work, stoking as well as operating the gasometer. He would even go around the houses in the village to gather the coins in the gas fire meters. People had to put a coin in to get the gas to run the fire. He found some very interesting historic coins in the meters. Grandpa was very good at his job. Friends of Mum's in Earlston remarked that there was always a steady supply of gas while he was gas manager but after he moved to Coldstream, the gas could suddenly stop which was very annoying, especially when the Sunday roast was cooking and the oven stopped working!

Mum remembered her Dad working very hard yet he had time in the evenings and weekends to do things with the family, pursuing his hobbies and attending Masonic meetings. Both Grandpa and his Father were Masons.

When Mum was growing up, the family enjoyed walks in the hills around Coldstream on Sundays, their quiet day. Mum said she was not allowed to play outside on Sundays and they attended church twice. Earlston Parish Church was a Church of Scotland, Presbyterian congregation.



Alex on the bowling green, with his signature cap and pipe, 1947

Grandpa was very good at Lawn Bowling and won numerous tournaments throughout his retirement including the Askew Cup as top bowler in the Coldstream Bowling Club, 1950.

He played the violin, something his siblings also enjoyed. His Father was first violinist with the Edinburgh symphony at one time so must have been very good and encouraged the children.

Grandpa also enjoyed playing golf and would take one of his daughters with him to caddy. He found this game very frustrating according to Mum and was always trying to improve. There was also a clock golf for putting practice in their garden.

Grandpa was an avid Robbie Burns supporter and he could recite some of Burns long poems, something he did late into life. He was often called upon to recite at Burns Suppers. Memorizing poetry was a popular pastime and memory exercise before Television and Tech devices.



Alec Keillor with trophies for his prize onions and lawn bowling with his Yorkshire Terrier, Chico, Coldstream, 1965, age 73



Right into his retirement, Grandpa won numerous awards for his vegetables at the Border Horticultural Society competitions. He mastered a way to make carrots grow very long and won awards for his carrots, beets and onions.

Alec was happily married to Susan Nicoll from the time of their marriage in 1916. Mum remembers them getting along very well together and there was a lot of fun around the home. Sadly, Susan died in 1943 when she was run over by a truck in Earlston's square. A very tragic and shocking event for the family. See the Susan Nicoll section for more details and photos of Alec and Susan. Alec did remarry on February 21, 1945 when he and his housekeeper, Grace Waterston<sup>15</sup>, tied the knot.



Alec Keillor and 2<sup>nd</sup> wife Grace, 1971

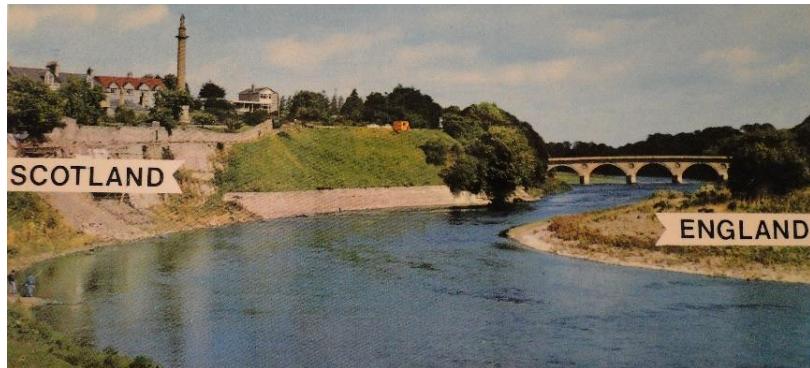
Grandpa told me in 1968 about an interesting event, which appears to have been a near death experience. He had suffered a probable heart attack while working in the garden, and was fading away. He found himself in a beautiful meadow that was so peaceful and beautiful he didn't want to leave. This vision is something common in near death experiences. Grandpa said the experience was so glorious he didn't want to come back and if that was what death was like, he was ready to go.

As for travelling, in 1934, he and his Father attended a gas engineering conference in London. They had time to explore and thoroughly enjoyed the sights of this great city. Outside of this, he took short breaks in Scotland for the annual family holiday, visited family in many places around Scotland

and attended Gas Manager and Gas Engineering meetings. Family vacations were to the seaside or to a farm and in 1938 he took the family to the Empire Exhibition in Glasgow. See pages 11 and 12 for photos and details of family vacations.

Later Grandpa would travel by bus with his second wife, Grace, to Edinburgh, her home town. Grace said he always had to have the window seat on these bus trips. Typical Grandpa! He would take the bus or train but he believed flying was a step too far so he never came to see us in Canada, despite many invitations and offers to pay his passage.

Grandpa became the Gas Manager in Coldstream, where he lived with Grace, at 2 Tweed Road. He retired here and stayed on at the Gas Works Cottage. In Coldstream he enjoyed taking their Yorkshire Terrier, Chico, for walks along the River Tweed, which is the border between England and Scotland. The tributaries are extremely narrow at points like a brook so you can have one foot in England and one foot in Scotland at the same time! The bridge over the river at Coldstream is Grandpa's favourite bridge and also one of mine.



The River Tweed at Coldstream, a postcard by T.W. Dennis & Sons Ltd.

With Coldstream being right on the border with England, it is not surprising that the famous Coldstream Guards regiment is the oldest in the British Army, founded in 1650. This is one of the foot guards' regiments you see outside Buckingham Palace dressed in their red jackets and black busbies. When I visited Coldstream in 1968, the Coldstream Guards came for Civic Week to be awarded the Freedom of Coldstream. There were numerous events and formalities throughout the week and we mingled with the Guards at many of them. It was an exciting time to be there. Grandpa and I went with the Guards to Flodden Field, across the border into England, for the annual ride out to the Battle of Flodden Memorial for commemorative services. This was a tragic battle for Scotland in 1513 with a high loss of life including King James IV. The service was a very solemn occasion. It was interesting to see the field (which is just that) and a lovely memory to have shared the occasion with Grandpa.

Grandpa got on very well with my Dad, his son in law, but there were some interesting differences:

- They both worked in power but Grandpa was in gas and my Dad was in electricity as an electrical engineer who specialized in hydro electric power.
- Grandpa was also a lifelong Conservative whereas Dad was a Labour supporter which also led to some interesting discussions even in later life. When Mum and Dad visited, Mum described it as "after dinner in the evenings. Grandpa would drag Mr. Wilson over the carpet"; that would be Harold Wilson, Labour Prime Minister 1964 to 1970, 1974-1976.

Grandpa died of a heart attack on July 21, 1974 in Coldstream at the age of 82. He was buried beside his wife, Susan, in the churchyard of Earlston Parish Church. His second wife, Grace, stayed on in Coldstream and died in 1989. She was also buried in Earlston.



Alec Keillor, left, and his Dad, George Keillor, with their golf clubs at Comrie gas works with George's granddaughter, Isabel and her maternal uncle, Tam MacLeod sporting a short kilt



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## **Mum's Father's Parents, My Great Grandparents**

### **George Keillor**

December 9, 1853, Inverkeilor, Forfar – January 25, 1947, Coldstream, Berwickshire

### **Betsy Dempster**

September 28, 1854, Arbroath, Forfar – August 17, 1905, Nairn, Nairnshire

Married July 19, 1873, Arbroath, Forfar

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George, Betsy and their families were born and grew up in the county of Forfar, which has been called Angus since 1928. This is the county around Dundee. Betsy was born on September 28, 1854 in Arbroath, a coastal town known for fishing and textiles. She was the daughter of Andrew Dempster, a jute merchant, and Agnes Valentine. It is curious that George and Betsy's marriage certificate states Agnes's last name was Valentine but 'afterwards Bridgeford' which is the name that is given as her maiden name on Betsy's death certificate.

George was born December 9, 1853, in Inverkeilor, the fourth of 10 children. George's father was also called George Keillor (1824, Lunan – 1898, Old Kilpatrick, Dunbartonshire) and he also worked at the gas works, so the family was in the gas industry from the beginning and for many generations. George's mother was Helen Keillor née Willocks (1822, Inverkeilor – 1885, St. Vigean). George and Helen were married on June 6, 1846 in Kirkden.

George and Betsy were married at Betsy's home on 21 Spink Street in Arbroath on July 19, 1873, following banns read at the United Presbyterian Church. They were both 19 at the time. Minister James Harreat presided and the witnesses were William Johnstone and Catherine Keillor.

At the time of their marriage, George was living at 21 Stuart Street in Arbroath. He was a gas inspector and Betsy worked as a spinner in a flax mill, working a spinning machine that spins yarn for the linen industry. Arbroath was a major producer of coarse linens which were made from flax that came from Scotland's Baltic trading partners. Dundee and the surrounding county had become a leader in the textile industry by the time they were married. George and Betsy moved to Nairn around 1880 where George was appointed gas manager. They lived in a large, stone house at 7 Acre Street<sup>16</sup> which Mum believed was built as the gas manager's home.

Great Grandpa George Keillor lived till 1947 so he was well known to Mum. She said he was a very nice man whose retirement plan was to live a month each year with each of his 12 children, although this didn't happen as five of them emigrated to North America. He did travel to North

America on at least one trip for his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1923 – 1924. He visited his family in various places, and also the Ford Motor Company Model T production line which he said was amazing, Ford being the first to use this method of production. George often spoke of how advanced America was Mum recalled.



George in the middle the day after his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday,  
beside his son, Henry.  
Taken Dec 10, 1923 at Henry's home in Waterloo, Iowa



Great Grandpa George Keillor and his son  
Alexander (my Grandpa) ready for a game of golf.  
At Comrie gasworks which George owned c.1938

George was an extremely accomplished man with many careers and interests. He was a gas engineer, inspector and manager, the owner of Comrie gas works. His brothers and sons were also gas managers in Scotland, Canada and the USA, including his son John who was the manager of the Hamilton, Ontario and later the Vancouver, gas works. (John was the uncle we were going to stay with when we moved from South Africa but he passed away before we left Africa.)

A qualified architect, George also carried out a large number of civil engineering and large-scale heating projects including a hydro electric installation for a Perthshire estate, which was mentioned in his obituary. He was also the architect of his daughter Minnie's house in Edinburgh.

George was an excellent musician, playing first violin in the Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra at one point. He counted Scotland's most influential fiddler and composer, Scott Skinner,<sup>17</sup> as one of his friends. He was an avid golfer, like his son (see photo above). He was also a member of the Masonic Lodge as was his son Alexander, my Grandfather. So Great Grandpa George certainly led a very busy and fulfilled life.

Great Grandma Betsy, died suddenly in 1905 at their home in Nairn, just before her 51<sup>st</sup> birthday. She had suffered a stroke (apoplexy) just an hour before and passed away at 9:15am on August 17. This must have been a great shock to George who was then on his own for 42 years. George was visiting Grandpa in Coldstream at the time of his death on Robbie Burns Day, 1947, after a short illness. George was 93. He and Betsy are buried in Nairn Cemetery.



George Keillor & Betsy Dempster with their 12 children, 1904

L to R Back row: Betsy, David, John Bruce (Vancouver), George, Joseph (Aylmer), Minnie, James  
Middle: Alexander (my Grandpa) Nell (Thornhill)

Front: George, Ronald (Greensburg, Indiana), Fred, Grandson (son of George Jnr.), Great Grandma Betsy, and Henry (Waterloo, Iowa)

Five of the children emigrated to North America which I have indicated in the photo description above. In later life, Henry in Iowa and his wife retired to Los Angeles.

Tragically, son George, gas manager at Greenock gas works, was killed at Glasgow railway station on June 26, 1932 when he slipped between the train and the platform. He had spent the day in Edinburgh with his brother Alec, at gas management and engineering meetings and was on his way home. For more details see page 48.

Fred Keillor managed the Comrie gas works. His son, Joseph, died in El Alamein the famous battle of WWII which turned the tide of the war. He is buried in Massicault War Cemetery, Tunisia.

Growing up Mum was close to her cousin Betty Ainslie, daughter of her Auntie Minnie (Williamina). Betty was a very vibrant person, a Scottish nationalist and Gaelic speaker. For more about Betty Ainslie, see page 11.

While living in Canada, Mum was close to her cousin Margie, daughter of Ronald in Greensburg, Indiana, and his wife Mary Zoillner. We first met her and her family when we visited Greensburg in the late 1950's. Margie became an air stewardess after the war following four weeks of training with American Airlines in Chicago. She flew on the DC-6 and Corvair, AA's postwar fleet of 300-mile-an-hour planes. She had to give up flying when she was married as only single women could be stewardesses with most airlines into the 1970's. Margie also held a Bachelor of Social Service degree according to the newspaper clipping in Mum's memorabilia. (There is no date or newspaper name on the clipping.) Margie and her family later lived in Indianapolis.





## **Mum's Mother's Parents, My Great Grandparents**

### **William Nicoll**

June 10, 1851, Dunnichen, Forfar – August 18, 1926, Dundee, Forfar

### **Jane Ann Tavendale**

March 11, 1855, Fordoun, Kincardineshire – February 28, 1919, Dundee, Forfar

Married June 4, 1878 at Fordoun, Kincardineshire

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Great Grandpa and Grandma were married on June 4, 1878 at the Church of Scotland in Fordoun, Kincardineshire, a historic county, today part of Aberdeenshire. Fordoun was the home of the Tavendales. Jane Ann's father, Alexander Tavendale, was born there in 1822. He was a cattleman who died at Kirton, Fordoun on May 5, 1890 and is buried there. Her mother Ann's maiden name was Barnett, born in 1821 in Kincardineshire. Ann and Alexander married in 1843 and Jane Ann was the 6<sup>th</sup> of eight children.

Great Grandma, Jane Ann, worked as a domestic servant before she was married. She died in 1919 before Mum was born. Mum didn't know anything about her Grandma which is strange as she seemed to know every detail of her father's family history. Mum did say that her Mum, Susan Nicoll, stayed at home to look after her mother who had taken ill, which kept Susan in Scotland instead of emigrating to North America with her brother Robert (Seattle) and sister Margaret (Montana).

Jane Ann married my Great Grandfather, William Nicoll who was born in Dunnichen, Forfar, June 4, 1878. William's father was also called William Nicoll, a general merchant who had died prior to the wedding. His mother was Mary Nicoll née Mann.

According to Mum's cousin Errol Nicoll, their grandfather, William Nicoll and his ancestors lived in the area of Letham, Forfarshire which was part of the Dunnichen estate, near Dundee. Here are the origins of the town from The Gazatteer for Scotland:

Letham was planned in 1788 as a textile village designed to enhance the economy of the Dunnichen Estate owned by the improving laird George Dempster (1732 –1818). By 1850 the power looms of nearby towns had killed the cottage weaving industry but it survives today as a commuter settlement which forms the largest village in Angus.<sup>18</sup>

So, things get complicated: It turns out that Letham and Dunnichen are connected. The Parish is called Letham, Dunnichen and Kirkden. They are situated in the county of Forfar which changed its name to Angus in 1928..... Anyway, they are north of Dundee and the River Tay in the county now

called Angus. Coincidentally, this is the same area that my Great Grandfather George Keillor's family were from.



Dunnichen Church  
Photo by Errol Nicoll

The Nicoll family was very religious and attended Dunnichen Church on Dundee Road, Letham. This lovely stone church was built by George Dempster in 1802 and was sold in 2011 for conversion to a family dwelling. The churchyard remains open to the public.



Great Grandpa William Nicoll  
in the greenhouse, West Park House

William Nicoll was a Master Gardener. From his daughter Susan's birth certificate, he worked at Abbeythune Estate, County Forfar, at the time of her birth for she was born on the estate in 1889. Abbeythune is 22 miles northeast of Dundee near Inverkeilor.

Later Grandpa was Head Gardener at West Park, Dundee, the estate of the merchant and philanthropist, Sir William Henderson. The West Park House, or Henderson House as Mum knew it, was originally built in the 1860's by William's father, Alexander Henderson, one of Dundee's wealthy jute barons. There were 17 mansions called 'jute palaces' built in the west end as a result of the textile boom in the mid 1800's.<sup>19</sup>

I was thrilled to learn that Grandpa's gardens at West Park later became the West Park Gardens Conservation Area, today part of the West End Suburbs Conservation Area, so they continue to bring pleasure to many.

William and his family lived in the North Lodge, on the West Park estate. His daughter Susan (my Grandmother) also worked at West Park as a domestic servant specializing in table setting and

serving before her marriage at the North Lodge in 1916. See the photo with William and Jane Ann at Susan's wedding on page 43.



William Nicoll with granddaughter, Eunice in 1924, age 73 & 3 years old

Mum remembered walking hand in hand with her Grandpa in their garden in Earlston when she was a little girl. He was a very gentle man apparently. He died on August 18, 1926, age 75, of the heart valve condition, endocarditis. William passed away at the club house of Caird Park in Dundee, the site of Dundee's first municipal golf course, so he was likely out for a day of golf when he died.

Caird Park is on the estate of Mains Castle, built by the Grahams and completed in 1582. The estate had been donated to the city of Dundee in 1920 by the wealthy mill owner Sir James Caird. The 18-hole golf course was added three years later. "There were sheep still grazing on the fairways but Dundee had its first municipal golf course as well as adjacent facilities for 'all sorts of games, cricket, football, tennis, hockey and children's playground."<sup>20</sup>

Sadly, Jane Ann had died of coal gas poisoning on February 28, 1919 at 5:30am at their North Lodge home at West Park. Grandpa was with her when she died. He was still the gardener at the estate at the time. Jane Ann was 63. The poisoning symptoms had been noticed the previous p.m. A shocking correction to the death record following an investigation into her death ruled it as suicide. Apparently, coal gas was a common method of suicide, although accidental coal gas poisoning was also remarkably common in those days. Many questions are raised by Jane Ann's passing including, could it have been a mental illness that kept her daughter Susan in Scotland to help with her Mother's care? If it was indeed suicide, why would she choose coal gas poisoning when her daughter was married to a gas works manager and lived in a gas works house? This must have been disturbing for Susan whether her mother's death was an accident or a suicide. A very tragic end and another family mystery.

William and Jane Ann are buried in the Western Cemetery in Dundee, a pleasant spot with lovely walks and beautiful views across the River Tay. The cemetery is at 315 Perth Road, next to the West Park complex.

William and Jane Ann had seven children. Their oldest son, William Salmond Nicoll, was killed in the Siege of Ladysmith in the Boer War in 1900 at the age of 20.

Their daughter Margaret emigrated to America where she married William Gauld in 1907, in Missoula, Montana. They owned a ranch. Her son Bill met up with Mum during WWII when he was

stationed in England with the U.S. forces. His family still live in Montana and in Spokane, Washington. This is the family we visited at Flathead Lake, Montana, in 1965.

Son Robert (Bob) emigrated to Seattle and lived there for the remainder of his life. He and his wife didn't have any children. When I met him in 1965, I found he was a very happy and friendly man. He lived in a lovely little house in Seattle and seemed to have many friends. He was still getting up at 6am every day keeping busy with his garden and other hobbies.



Jane Ann and William Nicoll with their family, 1904  
Children L-R: Grandma Susan age 15; Margaret (Montana); Robert (Seattle); Mary; John. Francis in front.

### West Park Then and Now



West Park House  
319 Perth Road, Dundee, DD2 1NN

The beautiful Mansion House was built in the 1860's as a family home for Alexander Henderson, one of the most highly esteemed and successful merchants and manufacturers in the city of Dundee. (One of the *jute barons*) His youngest son, C F Henderson, was renowned throughout the city as a very generous benefactor to the hospital and when he was appointed life governor of University College in 1943, he made another donation – he gifted West Park to the College.<sup>21</sup>

The West Park complex is now part of the West End Suburbs Conservation Area. It offers accommodation to University of Dundee students and to the public during summer holidays. Walking distance to Dundee city centre and the V&A museum, this is a desirable spot when visiting Dundee. An extension has been added to the original West Park House and many new accommodation buildings have been built on the estate.

Henderson House, the main house at West Park, was used as a conference and events centre for 25 years before closing in late 2020. Due to Covid-19 and the cancellation of events and conferences, this announcement was made re. 2021:

"West Park will focus solely on providing high-quality accommodation for 2021. We would like to thank our customers who have held meetings, conferences, celebrations and weddings at our venue over the last 25 years. We thank you for your continued support."<sup>22</sup>

North Lodge West is still standing on the West Park Grounds at 1A West Park Road. It is at the corner of Rosewood Terrace and appears to be made up of several units which have been sold. The coachman, John Wood, lived at 'Westpark North Lodge' according to the Scottish Post Office Directory of 1895-96. It would be interesting to visit West Park and do more research in Dundee to find out if this is the North Lodge William Nicoll's family lived in.

Here's some Henderson history in regards to the purchase of a 1934 Rolls Royce:

Sir William Henderson CB (Kt 1921) took delivery of GRC77 (a 1934 Rolls Royce) at his home "West Park" on Perth Road, Dundee & on the chassis cards it is noted that he ordered his initials to be painted onto the rear doors in red!

William Henderson expanded his father's company's products into Linoleum Floorcloth & Finance; during the late 1920s William Henderson spent two months in Australia visiting politicians & likeminded businessmen. In 1938 there is a newspaper report stating that Sir Henderson sustained an injury to his nose whilst he was being driven in his car along the East Dock Street – perhaps this was GRC77?<sup>23</sup>



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## PART II



### DAD'S FAMILY

**Bill Milne, his Parents & Grandparents**



Flight Sergeant Bill Milne, RAF, 1946



## **My Father**

### **Bill Milne**

#### **William George Milne M.I.E.E. C.Eng**

November 20, 1917, Aberdeen – June 27, 2001, Vancouver, Canada

Professional Electrical Engineer and Chartered Electrical Engineer  
Member of the Institute of Electrical Engineers for 50 years  
Flight Sergeant with the Royal Air Force, WWII  
Lecturer in Maths and Electrical Engineering

Married Eliza Isabella Burgess, October 23, 1940, Aberdeen (died March 9, 1943)

Married Eunice May Dobbie Keillor, June 7, 1946, Edinburgh

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Michael born April 3, 1947, Aberdeen, Scotland  
Married Donna Marie Sobol, March 15, 1968, Fergus, Ontario, Canada

Susan born September 16, 1952, Krugersdorp, South Africa  
Married Paul Francis Egelstaff, January 15, 1972, London, England  
Separated March, 1982. Divorced, 1986

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Dad was a wonderful man, kind, caring and helpful – a rare breed. Mum always said he was selfless which is an unusual trait. Dad was always in the same, calm mood. You always knew how he would come through the door. No moodiness or instability. He always said "never look back, just forward" so he never let past events trouble him. A good positive and progressive attitude.

Something that happened at school which influenced Dad was this: One Friday as the students were leaving, his teacher shouted in a very stern voice, "Milne, I want a word with you on Monday" which made Dad extremely worried and scared all weekend that he was in trouble over something. On Monday, nothing happened. Dad said he never really worried about anything after that.

Dad's favourite actress was the American, Barbara Stanwyck. His favourite colour was blue. He thoroughly enjoyed eating and especially appreciated the variety and quality of food when cruising.

### **Early Life**

Dad was born in Aberdeen, the granite city in northeastern coast of Scotland. It's just a one-hour drive from the Caringorms National Park in the eastern Highlands. Aberdeen is famous for its beautiful granite buildings that sparkle after it rains. It also has one of the best beaches in Scotland; Aberdeen Beach, a 1.86 mile (3 km) stretch of golden sand with an Art Deco style entertainment esplanade. Addresses I have for Dad in Aberdeen include 46 Primrose Hill Drive, 58 Gladstone Place, Woodside and 2 Froghall Terrace.



Union Street, Aberdeen from an original water colour by Brian Gerald  
An Art Colour postcard by Valentine & Sons Ltd.<sup>24</sup>

Dad had three brothers Ed, Jack and Charlie.



l-r Bill, Jack & Edward c.1921

1. **Edward James** (Oct 12, 1915, Aberdeen – Mar 23, 1983, Edinburgh) who became a Trade Union Official and a Labour Party Member of Parliament for Blyth, Northumberland from 1960 to 1974. Ed later taught Politics at The University of Edinburgh. He wrote the book *No Shining Armour* about council politics in Britain. Married Emily in 1940. They had three daughters: Edna, who worked at the new Scottish Parliament, and twins Rita and Kathleen.



Ed, brother Jack, Chris, Emily  
at Jack & Chris's wedding, July 13, 1938, Aberdeen

2. **John Alexander (Jack)** (Nov 12, 1919, Aberdeen – Dec 27, 1993, Adelaide) who was very athletic in his youth. He competed in swimming events, won awards for high diving, was a water polo goal keeper and competed in many athletic events including pommel horse and gymnastics. He married Christine Ming Noble on July 13, 1938, at Foresterhill Cottage in the grounds of Aberdeen Infirmary. Chris's parent lived there as her Dad was the Infirmary's Chief Electrician. During the war Jack worked on ship repairs in Aberdeen Harbour. More on this later. Moving to England in 1945, Jack learned "time and motion study", a business efficiency technique useful in manufacturing. He worked at Copperard Ltd. in Colnbrook, a heating equipment manufacturer, then moved on to DeHavilland Aircraft as Production Manager, before leaving for Australia in 1952. In Adelaide he was Production Manager at a large whitegoods manufacturing company, Pope Industries, for many years. Then he moved to the engineering and manufacturing company, Lightburn and Co. Ltd. as Manufacturing Plant Manager until his retirement in 1985. He was an excellent handyman, doing all the home decorating, painting and any necessary repairs. Jack and Chris had two daughters, Maureen and Kerry, and one son, John, who still live in South Australia.



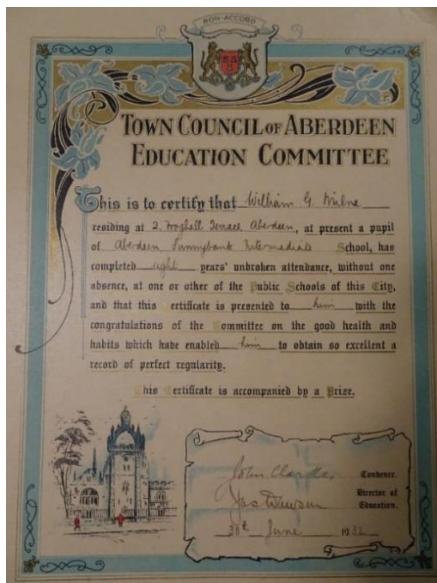
Jack, Chris & baby Kerry, 1958

3. **Charles Forman (Charlie)**, (Mar 4, 1924, Aberdeen – Jan 31, 1983, Birmingham) Charlie was the youngest of the four brothers. He was a signals officer in the Royal Navy during WWII. More on this later. On September 21, 1946, Charlie married Dorothy Potts who had worked with the WRENS (Women's Royal Naval Service) during the war. They settled in Birmingham on October 8<sup>th</sup> that year, staying at first with his brother Ed and wife Em. Charlie started work at Webmore Engineering Company in Kings Norton, Birmingham. He also worked as a bus conductor for the Midland Red bus company whose routes were mainly to outlying towns across the midlands from Birmingham. Charlie was accepted into

the Fire Service on July 25, 1952 after a probationary period and proceeded to rise up the ranks becoming Leading Fireman, February 8, 1957 and Sub-Officer January 8, 1961. He passed his Station Officer exams in October 1961 and was made Station Officer (what we call a fire chief in Canada) in March 1962 based eventually at a new fire station a few miles from Kings Norton. Charlie's son Ken points out: "It was here that he completed his 25+ years in the Service. Notice the names of the ranks in the fire service that mirror those in the Navy. It's no coincidence because many of the country's fire Services were made up of ex-naval personnel after WWII." Charlie and Dorothy had two sons: Kenneth (Ken) now living in Shropshire with his wife Pamela and Robert (Bob) now living in Cheshire.



Bella & Edward Milne, Charlie & Dorothy, Mr & Mrs. Potts  
at Charlie & Dorothy's wedding, September 21, 1946, Sunderland, England



Growing up in Aberdeen, Dad excelled at school frequently achieving marks in the 90's. He also excelled at attendance not missing a day in eight years at Sunnybank Intermediate (1924 – 1932). Dad was very excited that he would be receiving a watch as his prize for this achievement. In those days, you normally only received a watch for your 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. However, in 1932 they switched the prize to something less appealing. A pen I think. Dad was devastated. Fortunately, his Mum and Dad were kind and bought him a watch to commemorate this special accomplishment.

Grandma said Dad was always a very kind boy even doing the dishes at lunch time for her before returning to school!

Dad played the baritone in the band of the Boy's Brigade, a sort of alternative to the Scout movement, based on Christian values. He often spoke of the band and seemed to have really enjoyed it. He also studied violin as a child.

The Boy's Brigade Swedish Drill Team (gymnastics) was another group he joined. Dad enjoyed participating in many competitions with the team.

Dad's upbringing did not include the strict Presbyterian rules that Mum experienced. Dad was surprised that in the 1930's, Mum's family would still not allow the children to play on Sundays.

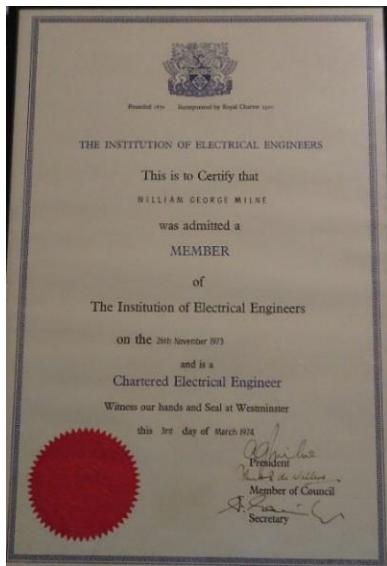
Work as a Power Plant Engineer at Aberdeen's Municipal Hydro began in 1936 for the North Scotland Electrical Board.



Bill, back row right, in the Swedish Drill Team, 1932 age 15

In 1939, Dad had holidays in Edinburgh, Isle of Mann and the Empire Exhibition in Glasgow which from photos, was as impressive as today's Expos with many countries constructing pavilions to create a small, international town. Unfortunately, I didn't hear much about the Exhibition from Dad, or Mum, as it was overshadowed by the beginning of WWII. Dad called 1939 "a very unsettled year".

## Professional Electrical Engineer



Chartered Electrical Engineer Certificate, 1973

Dad undertook his Electrical Engineering certification, equivalent to a B.Sc. Eng, at Robert Gordon's Technical College, Aberdeen, with advanced certification at Witwatersrand Technical, Johannesburg. His training took some time as the war got in the way. He completed his studies with distance learning while working in the field. He became a member of the IEE in 1951 (The Institution of Electrical Engineers based in London). Dad received his Engineering ring at the University of Waterloo, March 26, 1963 in the traditional "Ceremony of the ritual of the Calling of an Engineer". He became a Chartered Electrical Engineer on November 26, 1973. In 2001, the year he passed away, Dad was awarded a special pin and certificate for being a 50-year member of the IEE. His letters were P.Eng. C.Eng. MIEE.

Being a Professional Electrical Engineer and a mathematician, who specialized in small instruments for his degree, Dad was extremely accomplished. He could take anything apart and rebuild it – including the car engine which could be seen in pieces on the front lawn before he put it back together! When I was living at home, we never had to call any mechanics or service men to help out around the house because Dad could do it all. The exceptions were major plumbing problem under the crawl space which required heavy equipment and when we needed a lumber jack to cut down some tall trees behind the house. Apart from that, Dad took care of it.

## **Philosophy and Politics**

Dad grew up to be a social democrat and humanist, Labour Party supporter in Britain and member of the New Democratic Party (NDP) in Canada, campaigning door to door during many elections in the 1960s and 1970's. Mum would also work during these campaigns in the campaign office. As teenagers, Uncle Ed and Dad would heckle the Conservative candidates at meetings during elections. Dad recalled at least one occasion when they threw the candidate right off his game. He couldn't continue the debate.



Eddie Milne after winning the February 1974 election in Blyth

That's Auntie Em beside Uncle Ed.  
From his book, *No Shining Armour*, John Calder, London, 1976

Uncle Ed became a Trade Union official then Labour MP for Blyth, Northumberland from 1960 to 1974. Called a rebel MP, he made claims of corruption and was expelled from the Labour Party in 1974. He sat as an independent MP for eight months after that and later taught politics at The University of Edinburgh.

When I lived in London, 1971-2, I enjoyed having dinner with Uncle Ed many times and have fond memories of our time together and our conversations. He gave Paul and I a fascinating private tour of The Houses of Parliament. I saw him give a speech in the House and later we had dinner in the members dining room. Many MP's stopped by to congratulate him on his speech.

Following his social democratic principles, Dad was not materialistic. He was often heard to say "I already have one" if you pointed out something to him in a shop that would be nice for him to have. He always shopped for quality products and did a lot of research on things like the piano and stereo unit but he was happy having just what he needed. Mum always said he was a man who didn't really want anything, preferring experiences and the arts to material things.

## WWII – West Africa and Norway

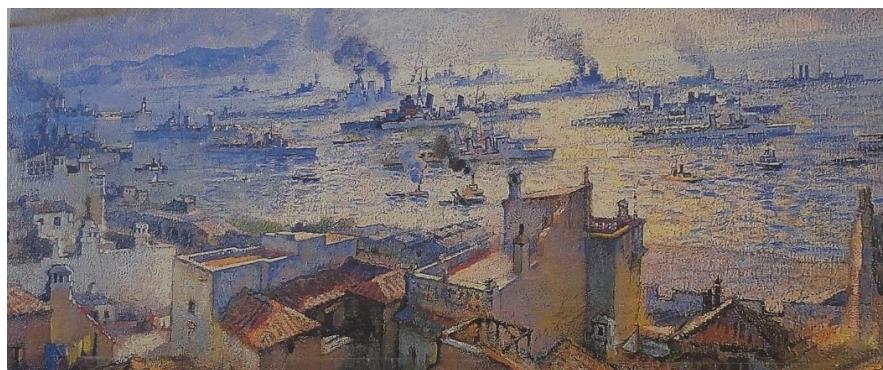
Dad applied to join the Royal Air Force at Padgate after war was declared in September, 1939.<sup>25</sup> He trained older men who couldn't join the forces, on running the power generating station, a reserved occupation. He went for medical and intelligence tests in mid 1940. They explained that thousands were being mobilized so he went home and worked and waited for the call.

Dad was called up by the RAF on December 18, 1940. He was discharged on April 24, 1946. He worked on the electrical systems of aircraft and became a Flight Sergeant. The Sunderland Flying Boat, Wellingtons, Liberators and Mosquitos were planes he worked on. We visited the Royal Air Force Museum at Hendon in 1990 which brought back many memories for Dad. It was exciting to see the aircraft he had worked on.

Early in the war, Dad was at RAF Lossiemouth on Scotland's Northern Coast working on Wellingtons. This station is still in use today. Dad was married to Eliza Isabella Burgess<sup>26</sup> in 1940 though he never told me this. Mum told me when I left home. Maureen in Adelaide tells me she enjoyed visits to Dad and Isabella (Izi) at Lossiemouth and remembers her well. She had pulmonary tuberculosis and Dad married her knowing this. They were only married a short time before she died at Woodend Hospital in Aberdeen on March 9, 1943 at the age of 24. Her brother and sister had TB as well but in a photo of her parents I saw at Maureen's, they looked fit and well! Maureen really liked Auntie Izi but says that Mum and Dad were actually better suited for each other. After Isabella's passing, she was buried at the Grove Cemetery in Aberdeen where Grandma and Grandpa Milne are buried.

Dad then applied for an overseas transfer and was sent to Nigeria from Spring, 1943. It was a very long journey to Nigeria aboard a convoy across the Atlantic to the USA; three weeks there then three weeks back to Gibraltar where they stayed for a week. Dad described his wait in Gibraltar:

Ashore often. Danger of frogmen in the harbour during the war attaching mines to ships. Sergeants invited to join the Gibraltar-stationed Army Sergeants' for a day. Had lunch walked through the Rock to the swimming beach then dinner in the evening. Lots of fruit in Gibraltar. While sitting in Gibraltar harbour, saw the aircraft carrier *Illustrious* and the *Queen Mary*. Convoy assembled and we were on our way to Freetown.



*The Bay of Gibraltar During the Second World War* By Bacereas (?)  
Taken in the Gibraltar Cruise Terminal, 2018

At the staging area near Freetown, Sierra Leone, they received training on life in West Africa before moving on to Ikeja airfield (now the international airport) and 10 months later, Ipapa Coastal Command Station, both near Lagos. Ikeja was a staging post in the jungle on the West African air Reinforcement Route from the Gold Coast to Egypt. Ipapa station was a Sunderland Flying Boat base on Lagos Lagoon. Dad wrote

The base was cleared of jungle so not closed in like Ikeja but just as hot.  
A lot of diseases in the lagoon and creek.



Bill Milne in Nigeria, 1943



Dad (centre) playing the Hawaiian Guitar he made in Nigeria with the guitar trio

No concert groups went out to West Africa so the men made their own entertainment putting on concerts and plays. Dad built himself a Hawaiian guitar and learned to play it while there, participating with a guitar trio. (He later built a second electric Hawaiian Guitar in Guelph.)



"Felani women going to market. I had to take them from behind as they always ran away when they saw my camera, (or maybe it was me!)"



The 8 ft. (2.4m) crocodile caught in the creek near Ipapa Station

Dad's tales and photos of West Africa show it to be extremely primitive at that time, but he loved every minute of this exciting adventure. There was a 14-day leave at Jos, a hill station in central Nigeria, for a break from the extreme heat and humidity around the Lagos Lagoon. Here there were encounters with Ju Ju men and a primitive tribe. Another journey was to Kano, the walled city in the north. The officers were invited to meet the King of Egbaland and his premier at Abeokuta. Dad also

had time for canoeing on the creek and swimming at nearby beaches. A lot of variety during his time off.

Dad survived malaria while he was in Nigeria. This left him a bit weaker than normal so he would suffer from bouts of exhaustion, sleeping for several days. I remember the Doctor would come to the house in Guelph. It would always turn out that Dad was fine, simply exhausted.

In December, 1944, the return to the UK was via Gibraltar where Dad stayed for a few more days before Christmas. Again he found it an exciting place with a lot going on all the time. In his photo album is a picture he took of the Rock Hotel which has a Scottish connection as it was built in 1932 by the Marquess of Bute, Chief of Clan Stewart. This luxury hotel was a magnet for royalty and the rich and famous. During WWII, military officials resided here. Perched on the side of the Rock of Gibraltar, across from the botanical gardens, it has a commanding view of the bay. In September, 2018, I retraced Dad's footsteps in Gibraltar and enjoyed morning tea at this historic hotel.



The Rock Hotel, 1944



The Rock Hotel, 2018 with balconies and extensions



I followed in Dad's footsteps and had tea at the Rock Hotel with a view of the Bay. Notice the arches are in Dad's 1944 photo.



The Rock Hotel Foyer, 2018

Here's Dad's description of his return to Scotland:

Two days after leaving Gibraltar it was Xmas. No convoy as the French coast where the German u boats had operated had been taken over by the allies but had a u boat scare just before entering the Clyde (River at Greenock, Scotland.) Had an encounter with an aircraft carrier and started listing. Troops had to be rearranged and spread out before entering George Lock.

Home on leave (Aberdeen) the main thing that happened was Dad's shop windows were blown out in an air raid. Jack and Chris had a bomb experience too.

After leave, stationed at Leuchars near Dundee, B24 Liberator squadron, coastal command. Bad winter. Was exempt from runway snow clearing as I had just come from West Africa. Kept close to electric heater as much as possible.

Next, Dad applied for commission in the Far East Naval Command, although there were rumblings that the war was going to end soon.<sup>1</sup> A call did come for a Sergeant for overseas duty and Dad was the only one of three applicants who was fit enough for the job. It turned out to be the liberation of Norway, called Operation Doomsday, which took place from May to November, 1945.

When the Germans surrendered in Norway, May 8, 1945, 40,000 resistance fighters mobilized to take back their country and the British immediately went in to assist. Dad was assigned to Sola Airfield at Stavanger. There were booby traps and mines to remove so they had to be careful when entering buildings. The Germans hadn't left yet. Dad spoke with some of them and found they were just wanting to get home, being soldiers, not Nazis. This was a problem for the Germans during the war. German servicemen were serving the Fatherland, so there was a sense of duty despite what the Nazis were doing and the SS and Gestapo atrocities.

Dad mentioned a trip to Kistiansand on a motor cycle, trip on a truck to investigate an infranet station on an island and laying cable to an underground control centre so diesel could be shut down. A truck went missing on the road to Kristiansand one day. (Steep slopes along the fjords.)

Norway was another fascinating time in his life. He loved the Norwegian people who were thrilled and excited to be liberated from the German occupation. They welcomed the British servicemen with open arms, they had such a bad time during the five-year occupation.<sup>27</sup> The resistance was very active in Norway. Dad heard many extraordinary stories of bravery. He was given an enamel medallion of the North Cape, the symbol of the resistance movement, by Peterson from the Norwegian Underground, such was their gratitude for the British liberators helping their cause.

Dad became very friendly with several couples in Stavanger and Sandnes area where he served. He also learned to speak Norwegian and would write to his friends in Norwegian. He took us to meet his friends in 1966 on a trip to Britain and Norway. It was a lovely reunion with lots of celebration, warmth and friendship.

Dad wrote in his diary:

Airfield handed back to the Norwegians in September. Our whole squadron flew back to Britain on 12 Sunderlands. Lancaster in the formation. Flew over Lossiemouth. Landed at Alness north of Inverness.

A remarkable sight! Dad was demobbed (demobilized; left the RAF) at Cardigan, April 24, 1946, paid what he was owed and given one suit to wear for returning to civilian life.

Dad's brothers had also survived WWII. Ed was a conscientious objector. Jack had been discharged from the army very early in the war as he had a serious fall during training and split his kneecap. He was in plaster the full length of his leg for 18 months. He tried to enlist in the air force and navy once he was able to walk again, but they would not accept him as his leg was not healing properly. He was devastated but was sent to work on ships in Aberdeen Harbour needing repairs; very crucial work in wartime.



Auntie Dorothy & Uncle Charlie  
Birmingham airport, 1968

Youngest brother, Charlie, was in the Royal Navy. He undertook signals training and served from 1942 to 1946. Mum remembered that Uncle Charlie was very nervous from his time in Burma due to the psychological war fare of the Japanese. They would intercept radio messages and come on Charlie's radio with threats or imitating British radio officers. He couldn't always be sure who he was in touch with. In 1943 he was part of the invasion of Sicily. His war diary lists many other incidents and close calls which would have

played on his nerves. When I knew him in the 1960's – 70's, there were no indication of any lingering issues. He and Auntie Dorothy were very happy and jovial, Auntie Dorothy being a naturally funny person with a great sense of humour.

### **Meeting Eunice, Marriage and Honeymoon**

It was two days before Christmas, 1945 that Dad and Mum met while stationed at RAF East Moor<sup>1</sup>, near York, England. They were engaged on April 22, 1946 and married on June 7, 1946 in Edinburgh.

Three things that brought them together was their love of cinema and the performing arts, the fact they had both suffered a tragic loss in 1943 (Dad's first wife and Mum's Mother) and their dream of travelling, something which was surely realized during their life together.

Rather than repeat it all here, for photos and details on their meeting, dating, engagement and wedding as well as their life together, see pages 15–18 in Mum's section.



Mum & Dad with Norwegian friends Toni, Otto and Roald beside Høgsfjorden, near Sandnes, Norway

For their honeymoon, they took the *ss Jupiter* to Oslo, Norway from Newcastle in August 1946. There were no scheduled steamship services to book after the war. You had to wait till there was space on a ship so they had to wait till August. The cabin had a curtain instead of a door as there was still a serious threat from sea mines laid during WWII. If the ship hit a mine, doors could become jarred and you would be trapped.

They visited Oslo, Bergen, Sandnes and Stavanger and all Dad's friends he had met the previous year when in Norway with the liberation forces. Mum said it was an amazing experience with parties every night, everyone was so happy to see Dad again. In those days, people were happy to still be alive so celebrations took on added importance and jubilation.

Mum and Dad were great adventurers who made three major moves during their marriage: Scotland to South Africa in 1948, South Africa to Canada 1956, Guelph, Ontario to Vancouver, BC 1996. In addition, they travelled extensively, vacations being the highlight of the year. Notably, while living in Krugersdorp, they made a journey to the Victoria Falls and Kruger National Park by car in 1955 (more on this later), they were invited to Russia during the cold war with an engineering group who visited various facilities while there and travelled to China and Vietnam shortly after each country opened for tourism. For more details and photos on Mum and Dad's early travels, see page 19 and 'Travels from Guelph' in Mum's section pages 22–27.

### **Move to and Life in South Africa – Rhodesian Journey**

Dad's love of West Africa was one reason why he took the job in South Africa after the War. Things were bad in Britain with a shortage of housing and ongoing rationing. They, like so many young people, were living with their parents. It was a chaotic time as the country got back on its feet after Word War II so Dad applied for jobs abroad. He accepted a position in the Municipal Electrical Department in Krugersdorp, South Africa and later took up a teaching position at Witswatersrand Technical College in nearby Randfontein.

On August 24, 1948, Mum, Dad and Michael sailed from Southampton aboard Union Castle Line's *RMMV Winchester Castle* for the crossing to South Africa via Madeira. Mum noticed on boarding,

passengers were relaxing on deck with boxes of chocolates from the ship's stores! They hadn't seen a chocolate box since before the war so this was a great treat and celebration of better days ahead.



The RMMV *Winchester Castle* at anchor off Madeira, August, 1948

In South Africa Dad taught engineering and mathematics at the Witwatersrand Technical College, part of Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg. He loved the lifestyle, Africa and teaching. Africa has a way of getting into your blood and draws you back.

Mum and Dad bought the new house at 82 (later renumbered 94) Piet Joubert Avenue in Monument Township, Krugersdorp, named after a famous Afrikaaner commandant-general in the Boer War. They called the house "Earldeen" combining the names of their two home towns; Earlston and Aberdeen.



'Earldeen', 94 Piet Joubert Avenue, 1949

Earldeen was a brick bungalow with a large, covered stoop (verandah) at the front. The fashion was to have deep red polished stairs up to the stoop in the 1950's and Mum spent a lot of time polishing them she recalled! Many people had servants in South Africa, usually a maid and a cook, but Mum did not. If someone was looking for work, she would give them some light things to do like ironing but she didn't have any permanent servants so did the housework and polishing herself.



The Morris Minor outside our house in Krugersdorp, 1953

Dad rode a bicycle when they first moved to Krugersdorp but soon after they bought a pale-yellow Morris Minor. This iconic English car was a favourite of Dad's. William Morris was a very successful English car manufacturer who later decided to design a car for everyone, not just the well-to-do. After seeing Ford's Model T mass production line, he set about designing and building the Morris Minor the same way.

1.3 million were produced between 1948 and 1972 and 'the Morris' became a British icon. William Morris became one of the wealthiest men in the world and was knighted for his achievements, but he chose to live quite a simple life at his modest home in Oxfordshire. He preferred donating his money to worthy causes; a lifestyle in line with Dad's non-materialistic approach to life, so it was fitting that Dad owned two Morris Minors: One in South Africa and one in Canada.

Our first Morris Minor was used for many trips to Durban, Port Elizabeth, the Drakensburg Mountains and in 1955, a wonderful safari Dad called the 'Rhodesian Journey' through Sothern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) to the Victoria Falls.



Road and low-level bridge through Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), 1955<sup>28</sup>

The route took us to Bulawayo, the Motopos Hills, World's View and the mysterious Zimbabwe Ruins, all the way to the Zambesi River and Victoria Falls, which formed the border with Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia). Roads were unpaved or just two strips of tar. There were low-level bridges that had us driving through rivers at times. The journey was full of adventure and fun. We returned through the entire length of the Kruger National Park.

The Victoria Falls were very natural – no bungee jumping off the bridge in those days – with a 354 ft (108m) drop into the gorge below with no barriers to hold you back and I refused to wear a harness apparently! It was the centenary of missionary and explorer David Livingstone's arrival at the falls in 1855 while working out a railway route to the Cape. In celebration, the town of Livingstone and the falls were busier than usual. The historic Victoria Falls Hotel was full so we slept in the car.

Livingstone marvelled at the beauty of the falls and I did too. My first memories are of this safari.



Mum, Michael and I at Victoria Falls with the smoke that thunders, 1955

I remember holding Mum's hand as we walked through the rainforest created by the mist from the falls. Mum used her parasol as an umbrella so we wouldn't get too wet. There was silence apart from our footsteps and the roar of the falls in the distance. It was easy to understand why the local Makololo tribe called the mist "Mosi-oa-Tunya" – "the smoke that thunders".

Victoria Falls is the world's largest waterfall at a width of 5,604 ft (1,708m) and is listed as a UNESCO world heritage site. The falls are 354 ft (108m) high in the middle, the mist rises over 1,312 ft (400m) and can be seen for 31 miles (50 km) while the roar of the falls can be heard 24.8 miles (40 km) away.<sup>29</sup>



Victoria Falls  
smartwatermagazine.com

In the Kruger National Park we saw a huge variety of wildlife in their natural state as we travelled for about six days from Letaba camp in the north all the way down to Pretoriuskop in the south. We stayed in rondavels, circular mud/sand huts with thatched roofs, apart from one night when we had to sleep in tents. The camp gates were closed at night to keep us in the safer, fenced area.



Suddenly, these two led a herd of hippos into the waterhole

There were very few cars and visitors, especially in the north. We were the only people walking with the armed guide to a waterhole to view hippopotamus. Suddenly an entire herd appeared and jumped in. We had to stop the car for elephant crossing the track. A lion pride was walking beside our car along another dirt road. (In those days the animals didn't associate vehicles with people). Watching elephant and giraffe drink at a river was another lucky stop.

South Africans were surprised that we set out on this grand adventure in the Morris Minor. This type of safari requires a 4x4 Land Rover but we made it successfully. In fact, in Southern Rhodesia we picked up a District Commissioner whose 4-wheel drive vehicle had broken down! Morris Minor to the rescue..... He shared many fascinating tales about his work.

And then we were back home. Krugersdorp is on the gold mining reef which is 5,000 feet (1,524m) above sea level so quite a high altitude. 'The Reef' is famous for its severe thunderstorms. In the spring they happened every afternoon usually around 4 to 5 o'clock just in time for people commuting home from work. The storms are so severe that things happen like being thrown across the room if you use a telephone. There are bright flashes as lightning strikes the corrugated iron roofs. Numerous stories. (When I lived in Johannesburg in 1972-73, we would go to Krugersdorp to visit friends on the weekend. One week the Rhinoceros at the Krugersdorp Game Park was struck by lightning and killed. There were always conversations about the damage the storms had caused that week.)

Because of the high altitude, aircraft manufacturers send their planes to Johannesburg for high altitude as well as high temperature testing. On Sunday March 13, 1955, we drove to Jan Smuts Airport in Johannesburg (now O.R. Tambo International) to see the Bristol Britannia, known as the 'Whispering Giant', the world's largest passenger carrying aircraft at the time. 10,000 people showed up at the airport to catch a glimpse of the aircraft. The 4-engine turboprop airliner had arrived for two weeks of testing with 42 experts on board. It flew from Filton, near Bristol, England, taking just 17 hours and 24 minutes with only one stop at Khartoum! Average speed was 350 mph. The Britannia eventually entered London to New York service in December, 1957 for BOAC, forerunner of British Airways. Later, when I was living in Johannesburg in 1973, the supersonic Concorde was in town for its high-altitude testing and I watched it fly over the city. A remarkable change in just 18 years!



Dad with his camcorder aboard *Fairsea*.  
60<sup>th</sup> birthday Panama Canal cruise, 1977

Dad had started taking photos in West Africa and in South Africa, he began filming our travels, birthday parties, Christmases and around the house. He started with an 8mm camera in Africa and moved on to a Super 8 in Canada. This was followed by a camcorder and finally a Sony digital camcorder. (Interestingly, the Sony digital camcorder had stopped working in 1999 but miraculously, it revived in time for Dad to make a movie of Julian and Barbara's wedding that year. After that, it never worked again!)

Dad was also very good at splicing film, editing and creating the final version complete with creative titles. It was a time-consuming hobby which he really enjoyed. His films gave us many hours of entertainment and provide a historic record today.

### **Apartheid and Decision to Leave**

Unfortunately, the Nationalist government which instigated Apartheid was voted into power while Mum and Dad were on the *Winchester Castle* sailing to South Africa. They saw the country go down hill from the day they arrived and knew they would not be able to stay. How strange they ended up living under a fascist regime and police state after fighting fascism for six years during WWII. Apart from the separation of people by race and nationality and all the tension and hardship that created, Apartheid was seeping into every facet of life. As for jobs, if you could speak Afrikaans, you could be given a job even though the English-speaking person had better credentials and experience. Afrikaans is the language spoken by descendants of the white Boer settlers; Huguenots from Holland, Germany and France who started arriving at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. It felt

like the Boer war between the descendants of the Boers and the British was still going on. (When I lived in Johannesburg, 1972-3, there was still a lot of friction between English and Afrikaans speaking white South Africans, however polite they might appear on the surface. The longer you were there, the more complex you realized the issues of South Africa were.)

With Africans being moved to locations outside of town as their place to live, Mum and Dad ran into a problem with the city council. Willi was an African policeman from Kwa Zulu Natal who had come to Transvaal Province (now Gauteng) to find work. Willi came to our door one day to ask if he could live in the empty building in our back garden. Mum and Dad said yes and Willi became like a member of the family. He helped with the gardening. When he was paid, he would bring Michael and I sweets. His way of life was very different to ours. Mum would offer him food but he always just wanted to eat his own meals in his little kitchen. Once a snake came into the garden and Willi cut its head off and took it away for his dinner. He also turned down offers of furniture and a bed, preferring to sleep on the ground. With Africans not having birth certificates, asking which historic events they could remember helped determine how old they were. Dad estimated Willi was around 50 when he came to live with us.

So, with Africans being moved from the city to locations outside of town, council representatives came around to our house several times saying Willi had to go but Dad just ignored them and nothing happened. Before we left Africa, we were worried what would happen to Willi. In the end, a neighbour on the next street took him in. Willi kept in touch with us by having the family answer our letters for him. He could not write English and we couldn't write Zulu. Apparently, he died while staying with his new family and never did have to move to the location. Willi beat the system!



Willi, Grandma Milne, Michael, me and Willi's friend, 1954

South Africa was becoming a police state where authorities could come into your home without a warrant. There were incidents of literature being planted by one policeman then the other would go into that room and find it. You would be charged for having Communist literature or inciting violence or some other trumped-up charge for which you had no defence because of what was planted in your home. Very scary living in a regime like that. Like Nazi Germany. In fact, we knew Afrikaners (descendants of the white Boer settlers) who were Hitler supporters.

In 1952, Dad's brother Jack wrote saying he wanted to migrate with his family to South Africa. Cousin Kerry told me that my Dad wrote back saying "Don't come". Go to Australia instead. South Africa was unstable with Apartheid and they'd be better off in Australia. Jack did emigrate to Adelaide, South Australia, with his family. They are recorded as "Early Settlers" there, arriving in 1952. They had a wonderful, happy life in Australia Auntie Chris told me in a letter she wrote to me shortly before she died.

Meanwhile, Dad knew South Africa under Apartheid was not a good place to live let alone raise children and planning to leave began. With aging parents in Scotland, Dad was reluctant to follow Jack to remote Australia so decided on Vancouver, Canada instead which Mum had seen in pictures and heard about from a friend. They would stay with Mum's Uncle Jack who had been the Gas Manager for Vancouver. Sadly, this did not happen as Uncle Jack passed away in October 1953. (Mum believed he suffered a heart attack while boarding a ship at Liverpool to sail back to North America. He later died in Vancouver.)

A friend of Uncle Jack's wrote and told Mum and Dad there was more work in Ontario than Vancouver so it would be better to go there. They eventually decided to move to Toronto and stay with Mum's Auntie Nell in Thornhill north of the city to begin with, instead of going to Vancouver.

### **In Transit to Canada**

The house went up for sale in 1955 and sold quickly to people who wanted to move in in two weeks! It was a flurry to prepare to leave but they finished on time. It would be a good two years before we had a permanent home again. First, we moved into a residential hotel for a few months, where we had meals in the dining room. Dad was still working. He could only leave the college at certain times of the year, between terms. I remember looking out the window at the bright pink cars on the road below which were fashionable at the time. We were downtown on the main street of Krugersdorp.

We stayed with friends for a few days before we took the train to Durban to catch the ship to sail to England. Mum had been shopping and bought me two pairs of shoes for the journey. One night there was a break in – something extremely common in South Africa – and in the morning, my two pairs of shoes were out of their boxes sitting on a table! A jacket was taken but that was all. The family dog did bark once during the night so everyone decided that was when the intruder was in the house and he must have fled. Fortunately, Dad had taken Mum's handbag which had a lot of cash in it for our journey, and put it under his pillow for the night, so it was safe.

Following a tearful farewell with friends at Krugersdorp railway station on December 11, 1955, we took the train to Durban for the next leg of our two-year transition. Mum and Dad wanted to return to Britain through the Suez Canal but unfortunately, the Suez Crisis came up so they had to return via the Atlantic, the way they came.



Mum & I at the fancy dress parade aboard *Stirling Castle*  
I'm 'Gorgeous Gussie' Moran, the American tennis player.

On December 15, 1955 we boarded the *RMMV Stirling Castle* in Durban for the three-week voyage to Southampton which included Christmas and New Year at sea. It was an idyllic voyage with perfect weather and many fun activities every day. The only ports of call were Port Elizabeth, Mossel Bay and Cape Town, South Africa, and Las Palmas, Canary Islands.

Arriving in January in England was a shock to the system! So cold and we had just crossed the Equator! Dad immediately went shopping for warm coats and boots for everyone. We stayed in England and Scotland for three months, rented a car and went visiting family and friends Mum and Dad hadn't seen for eight years with the only contact being hand written letters or telegrams, something hard to imagine in this age of instant, high tech communication.

On March 22, 1956, we boarded the *RMS Queen Mary* in Southampton for the crossing to New York. This famous ship was one of the most powerful and fastest to ever sail the North Atlantic run. As a troop ship in WWII, *Queen Mary* had crossed the Atlantic alone instead of with a convoy due to its speed. Dad actually watched the *Queen Mary* sailing past a convoy he was part of during the war. Now he was a passenger on board. The average speed on our crossing was 27.54 knots. Cruise ships usually travel at around 18 knots. The crossing took 4 days, 16 hours and 15 minutes covering 3,091 nautical miles.

We were in Cabin 83 on D Deck with upper and lower berths. The abstract of the crossing reveals there was a moderate gale with rough seas every day with rain and snow on the final day! Most people were sea sick but not Mum and Dad. They were the only ones at a dance one evening and the orchestra conductor asked if they would mind if the band didn't play. I imagine the band members felt sick as well. *Queen Mary* did not have stabilizers until 1958 and there are many tales of furniture, even a piano, being thrown around lounges with the might of North Atlantic storms.<sup>30</sup>

On March 27 we reached New York City and made our way through customs and immigration. Mum observed the officers were very rough and made a lot of people unpack their suitcases on the pier. We spent the day seeing the sights including the Empire State Building. One taxi driver dropped us off at the Automat where all the food was served by vending machines but the machines were asking for dimes, nickels and quarters and having just got off the boat, literally, Mum and Dad had no idea what coins to use. It was a bit of a nightmare Mum remembered.



### **Auntie Nell and Thornhill**

The next leg of the journey was to take the train to Toronto from New York and go to Mum's Auntie Nell's home in Thornhill where we stayed for about six weeks. This was an adventure in itself, Auntie Nell being a real character and a complete snob.

Nellie Willox Keillor was born March 3, 1897 in Nairn, Scotland, the youngest of 12 children, sister of my Grandpa, Alexander Keillor. Nell married Frederick H. Smith on March 24, 1923, a Cambridge University professor from a prominent family, according to Mum. Tragically, he was killed in a motorcycle accident a few months later on June 9, 1923. Their daughter, Elfrieda, was born on December 22, 1923. Nell later emigrated to Canada and led the highlife in Toronto. She joined the Yacht Club and was often partying with her new friends. She married Ralph Roberts in 1931, brother of Tom Roberts, one of Canada's most popular Post Second World War landscape artists.<sup>31</sup>

Nell and Ralph's two storey, Georgian style home was beautifully decorated and furnished, very luxurious with many original paintings on the walls, no doubt some by Tom Roberts. I remember the home was very luxurious however, the way Auntie Nell treated Uncle Ralph, I thought he was the butler! She was also very harsh with my brother Michael and I and Dad had to speak to her about it as we had always been extremely well behaved. Apparently, Auntie Nell had treated her own daughter very badly as well to the point she ran away to Uncle Jack in Vancouver. No wonder Nell had a reputation in the family as not the nicest of our relatives!

Mum said when she was out in Toronto one day with Nell, the tram car stopped suddenly and Nell went over her ankle. Nothing serious but she made a huge thing of it, drawing attention to herself, having an ambulance called and even threatening to sue the transit company.

Dad came down with congestion of the lungs shortly after arriving at Auntie Nell's house in Thornhill. He was very ill for some time but wanted to get a place of our own so pushed himself to soon go out everyday for the long trek to downtown Toronto looking for work. It was a frustrating experience as he kept being turned down because he didn't have Canadian work experience. (Uncle Jack apparently had the same problem in Adelaide, Australia when he immigrated there.) Dad eventually found work with a small engineering firm.

We moved to an apartment in Richmond Hill. It was on the second floor and again I remember looking down at pink cars on the road, as popular in Canada as in South Africa it seemed.



Auntie Nell & Uncle Ralph visiting us in Guelph, 1958  
l-r Susan, Nell, Ralph, Dad

South Africa and on the advice of Uncle Jack's friend, we went to Toronto instead. In the end, Dad often said it was the one time they listened to someone instead of doing what they wanted. Dad was a Professional Electrical Engineer and was extremely capable. He could have found work in Vancouver. We could have avoided the difficult time with Aunty Nell!

### **Life in Guelph – Marketing Engineer, Home and Interests**

Soon after Dad started work at the engineering firm in Toronto, he was offered a Marketing Engineering position at Canadian General Electric's new Transformer Plant in Guelph, Ontario. He would be liaising with clients and designing power transformers to meet their requirements. (These were the massive transformers you see at substations and power plants, not the tiny transformers that come with appliances.) A GE pamphlet from the time explains that "by the early 1950's the

demand for power transformer products in Canada had far outgrown production capacity and expansion of facilities was imperative if the electrical needs of utility and industry were to be met."<sup>32</sup>

GE took us to Guelph for a day to visit the plant and the city. Guelph is just over an hour's drive from Toronto, in southwestern Ontario. The population was 36,000 when we moved there in 1956. Guelph had a lot of character in those days with stone bridges across the Speed River and a Victorian city square with some lovely 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings. It was in an agricultural region and known for its three leading colleges for veterinary, agricultural and home economics studies. They were amalgamated to form Guelph University in 1964 with the home economics college becoming the hotel management school.

Guelph was founded in 1827 by John Galt, who named it after Queen Victoria's family name which led to it being known later as 'The Royal City'. Galt was a Scottish novelist and entrepreneur who had travelled extensively with Lord Byron and published Byron's first biography. Better known for his literary life, Galt became Secretary to the Canada Company in 1826 and began land settlement and development in Ontario, founding Guelph on April 23, 1827. This was the time of the Highland Clearances in Scotland when thousands had to emigrate to the colonies.

Guelph is also the birthplace of Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD, the WWI doctor who wrote the immortal poem, *In Flanders Fields*. His home and peaceful commemorative garden were very close to where we lived and Michael and I, and later Julian, attended John McCrae Elementary School, just along Water Street from where he was born.

On moving to Guelph in 1956, we first rented a house on Shaftesbury Avenue then Mum and Dad bought their split-level house at 35 Cedar Street the following spring. They lived in this house for 39 years. It was a brand-new home with many of the houses in the neighbourhood still being built. This new subdivision was quite near the Speed River and not far from John McCrae's home. There was a swamp and a forested hill at the end of the street where the children would go to play until Cedar street was extended and more houses built. Snapping turtles and frogs lived in the swamp and there was a wonderful curved sleigh run through the forest we all enjoyed in the winter.

I remember the day we moved in asking Dad if we were going to stay there long. I thought we were going to the mountains and the sea, so I mustn't have realized there had been a change of plans. I felt very disappointed when he said this was our home now so we were staying. I always felt I was in the wrong place growing up in Guelph.



Newly built 35 Cedar Street, 1957



35 Cedar Street, 1993, with Mum in the Mazda Miata Dad won

Many of our neighbours were British and Europeans who had emigrated to get away from the difficulties their homelands were facing after WWII. We had Scottish, English, Dutch and German friends along the street. There was a German man who had been in the Luftwaffe during the war. He lived across from Ernest, a Scotsman who had been a Prisoner of War in a German camp for most of the war. Many intriguing story lines but everyone got along very well and all were happy to have survived the war.

So, after two years on the move, we were finally settled in a permanent home.



Christmas card, 1959, at 35 Cedar Street, Guelph

Around the new house, Dad built all the storage units and did all the decorating – wall papering, painting and wood panelling, even bending aluminum strips to create a nicely designed room divider for the lounge. Dad also designed and built a lovely deck at the back of the house which was open underneath for storing garden equipment etc. He would come home from work and start working on his projects – as well as doing the dishes. (Later when he was retired, living in Vancouver in the same building as me, he would pop down and do my dishes while I was working at the computer to help me out. So kind. He could never do enough to help.)



The deck Dad built at the back of 35 Cedar Street with storage underneath; one of his many projects.



Mum and Dad working on the rec room wall unit and painting, 1960

Dad did take breaks from his work around the home to have a cigarette, cup of tea and read a book, reading being a favourite pastime. He would also play his classical music records while he worked so I got used to hearing classical music every day.

Buying a house at that time meant you took on a 25-year mortgage. Unlike today with fluctuating rates and so many mortgage options to choose from, once you signed the papers on the house you were free to simply make the payment and in 25 years you owned your home. With house prices being reasonable, payments were low. To me this was much freer and less stressful way to live than the mayhem we have in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; repeatedly at the bank or mortgage broker renewing short-term mortgages, sorting out a multitude of options while trying to pay off your over priced home.

Financially in the 1950's and 1960's, life was also simpler and less expensive. Housing and rent were more in line with people's income. Debt was virtually unheard of and frowned upon. People paid in cash, or hire-purchase where you rented first then later owned. For us in Canada, credit cards didn't start to be common until the 1970's. I always say, you could live on a shoestring in those days; without a profession or high paid job, you could still live very well. Today, if you don't have a good income, you are stuck as everything has a very high price tag. Exorbitant housing prices and rent have become a crisis situation in many parts of Canada.

Amongst the many things Mum and Dad did after moving to Guelph was join the Figure Skating Club. We all went for lessons and Mum and Dad would go to the weekly couples' social skates as well. They had skated in Scotland and quite enjoyed it. I was invited to skate ice dance competitions however this would have required a great commitment and more time at the rink and Mum wasn't

keen on spending any more time there. I also found the rink too cold to continue to an advanced level. We had just arrived from Africa after all!

There was a skating show each year called 'Rhapsody on Ice' and for two seasons, Dad took on finding the costumes! When I think about it now, it seems like a strange thing for him to have done, completely unrelated to his type of work. It involved phoning around other skating clubs and costume suppliers to find the costumes Guelph needed, and having them shipped. We ended up with our dining room filled with boxes of costumes. I skated in these shows with others from my class.

They still had horse drawn milk trucks in Guelph when we arrived in 1956. While waiting for our Morris Minor to be imported from England, Dad bought a used brown Hillman which was not in the best condition. Dad was able to keep it going, even having wires attached to some part of it which I remember watching him pull as he drove! Soon our cream-colour Morris Minor arrived, like the one we had in South Africa. It went on many trips to the US in those early days. Americans drove massive vehicles in the 50's with huge 'fins' at the back. They didn't know what our tiny Morris Minor was and it attracted a great deal of attention. In 1962 Dad also bought a white Rambler station wagon which was very handy as well as good for camping trips. Now Mum and Dad each had their own car.

Dad loved all types of music paying particular attention to the instrumental parts. He enjoyed classical music, opera and big band most of all. When the Beatles came along, he listened carefully to their music and really appreciated their guitar work.

Classical music and opera were keen interests from the time he was very young; in the days when you had to change records several times to hear an entire symphony. Mozart was his favourite composer. We attended concerts, ballet and opera regularly in Toronto, Stratford and Waterloo when I was growing up. They were a normal part of life often accompanied by a meal out.

Soon after arriving in Canada we attended Russia's renowned Bolshoi Ballet's performance of *Swan Lake* in Toronto. It was the matinée on June 13, 1959. They performed on a stage setup at Maple Leaf Gardens ice hockey arena as Toronto didn't have an opera house or performing arts theatre suitable for ballet at that time. Maya Plisetskaya and Nicolai Fadeyechev danced the lead roles. It was a fabulous performance with an ethereal way of presenting the lake with dancers emerging elegantly from the mist. A truly unforgettable scene. This was my first experience of seeing professional ballet live. A very inspiring experience.



Bill Milne playing the Classical Guitar at home in Guelph, 1978

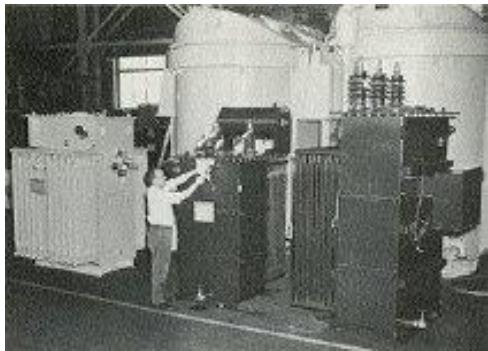
Dad was quite musical himself, having played the baritone and violin as a child. He took up piano after moving to Canada for a few years with weekly evening lessons. As mentioned earlier, he built and played a Hawaiian guitar while in Nigeria and built a second one in Guelph. He took up Classical Guitar in 1978 upon retiring.

An avid reader all his life, Dad also enjoyed reciting poetry with Alfred, Lord Tennyson one of his favourites.

Chess was a special interest and there was always a chess set around the house. In the 1980's Dad had one of the first electronic chess sets that came on the market which was perfect for him as Mum didn't play chess.

### **GE, Computer Department and Teaching Maths**

Dad ended up staying with GE in Guelph until he retired in 1978. We had mainly GE appliances at home and GE family events in the summer and at Christmas were a big part of our lives. Many of our friends also worked at GE.



Part of the power transformer shipment destined for the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Project in Australia.  
It included 16 units of 68,000 Kva, 345,000 volts.  
*GE Pamphlet, Guelph Museums*

One of Dad's projects as a marketing engineer was designing transformers for the Snowy Mountain scheme in Australia which was a significant hydroelectric project built from 1949 to 1972, but when it came time to visit the site, Dad wasn't sent – his managers went instead, which was unfair since they had no hands-on experience of the transformers Dad had designed.

Dad was recognized for his work in 1960, however, when he was named one of the Top Twenty marketing engineers across Canada. Dad was the first person at the Guelph plant to receive this honour. He won a stunning Hamilton Ventura watch, the world's first electric watch in an unusual triangular shape. These high-end watches had a tuning fork in the movement and made a very

pleasing humming sound. A very special watch. Elvis Presley owned one so it became known as the Elvis watch. (These watches have made a comeback in recent years. Mum gave Dad's watch to Michael after Dad passed away.) For award details and a photo of the watch, see Note 32.<sup>33</sup>

In the mid 1960's, Dad was asked to start up the computer department for GE, something that was very new at the time. His new title was Systems Analyst and Programmer and Supervisor of Computer Systems. His ease with Mathematics was a plus for this. (Dad had achieved a mark of 99% in Maths in his first year of Engineering studies, an indication of how gifted he was.) I remember him taking boxes of key punched cards to Toronto where he would use the main frame computer to link to the computer in Montreal. This went on for some time. He was having trouble with his left knee. It would click and go out of place at times making it difficult to walk. During one trip to Toronto his knee went out and it was a real struggle for him to drive back to Guelph with large boxes of keypunched cards. Cortisone injections were called for and they fixed the problem.

It was exciting hearing Dad talk about the future of technology. He would tell us there would be keyboards and monitors in the future and we would get up in the morning, see a red light on the TV and there would be a message from Grandma – Email!!

When GE had an Open House, Dad organized demonstrations of the latest in computer equipment. It was quite fascinating and futuristic, and gave us hope for an exciting future.

Dad was often away on business for GE for a few days at a time, frequently to GE headquarters in Fairfield, Connecticut at that time. There were also many conferences with the IEE which Mum was able to attend. She enjoyed the travel and socializing that went along with these events.

Being a gifted mathematician, Dad for many years also taught Maths at night school to people trying to enter university science and engineering programs. We would sometimes meet his students when we were out in town and they were always very complimentary about how Dad had helped them get ahead. So, he had two jobs for many years. I remember he would always bring me sweets when he returned home from teaching night school. (The Sunday popsicle was the other weekly treat.) Dad stopped the night school teaching a while after he started running the computer department at GE.

The 1960's was a time of crisis and drama for Canada's neighbour, the United States. With three major assassinations (President John F. Kennedy; his brother Bobby Kennedy while campaigning to be President and Martin Luther King, head of the Civil Rights Movement), the ongoing Vietnam War, marches against it and the Civil Rights action, this was an unsettling time. The Cuba Missile Crisis of 1962 was extremely tense. The threat of nuclear missiles landing in North America had people very worried and many were digging out their basements to create shelters. I remember asking Dad if there would be a war and he said he didn't believe so. He was very concerned about the situation in

the U.S. though and in 1968 wondered if we should be leaving Canada to get away from the tension in the States after Bobby Kennedy was assassinated. Dad had a very good job however and by this time he was getting on in years for finding a job in a new place so they didn't move. He also kept being promoted which made it hard to leave GE.

## 1970's Highlights



Dad with Mum's gold Camaro and the white Rambler station wagon on the street in the background.

New vehicles arrived on the scene. The gold, Camaro, 1970 1/2 was one, when they introduced the snazzy new design. This was Mum's car. She loved it and kept it for a long time.

The Rambler was replaced by a Ford Econoline van in 1972 which Dad fitted out for camping complete with a stove, fridge, bed, sitting area and toilet.

Mum and Dad had many wonderful times in the van. It was handy for

picnics, weekend getaways and longer camping trips. The main advantage of it over a tent was the protection from the elements. They appreciated being able to get away comfortably even if it was a wet weekend. They had many trips in the van and would drive to Florida combining a land vacation with a cruise out of Miami or Ft. Lauderdale. On one of these trips however, they were caught in an ice storm in the northern states on the way home and driving became treacherous for a couple of days. After this they chose to fly to their cruise ship but the van was still wonderfully convenient for other getaways.

Mum and Dad believed the camping van and sporty car were the best combination one could own.



The van in action at Apache Campground, Myrtle Beach SC, April, 1975



Mum and Dad with the van at Niagara Falls

The Grandsons arrived in the 1970's! Michael's sons Roger (May 28, 1971) and Dennis (January 27, 1974) were born in England and Peter (February 10, 1977) was born in Guelph. My son Julian arrived on December 5, 1973, also born in Guelph. Mum and Dad took great interest in the boys and spent a lot of time with them, particularly with Julian who lived close by. Dad and Julian had a special bond. When Julian was hospitalized with gastro-enteritis, Dad would go to the hospital every day after work to spend time with him. When Julian had to write an essay on the person who had influenced him the most growing up, he wrote about his Grandpa Bill.



I-r Peter, Roger, Julian, Dennis  
Christmas at 35 Cedar Street, 1984



I-r Dennis, Peter, Dad, Roger, Julian  
Christmas at 35 Cedar Street, 1994

### **First Aneurysm and Retirement**

In 1973 Dad achieved the status of Chartered Engineer with the Institution of Electrical Engineers and was able to use the title C.Eng in addition to M.I.E.E. as a member of the IEE. Just five years later, Dad took early retirement after surgery for an aortic aneurysm which almost burst on April 17, 1978. It was a stressful time. He had not been feeling well and was very down so he saw the doctor and it turned out he had an aneurysm. Thankfully they got it just in time before it would have burst. He was never able to return to full strength after recovering from the operation. He attempted a return to GE but really wasn't up to it any more and officially retired at the end of the year. Dad turned 61 the year he retired.

Dad made the most of his retirement enjoying his more leisurely days and life at home. One new hobby he took up was baking. He developed a really tasty light fruit cake recipe which he made quite often and a delicious haddock with cheese sauce and bread stuffing which he baked in the microwave, amongst a few other items.

Sadly, Dad lost his three best friends around this time. They were all friends he had made in the years of working at GE as they had many shared interests. Jo Norman was a very good friend and his piano teacher (also my first piano teacher). Jo passed away suddenly during an operation. Gordon Sargeant had Parkinsons Disease for many years before passing away. George Jason was our Polish friend who had been a paratrooper with the British forces in WWII. From GE in Guelph,

George moved to Toronto to take up a new position and then retired back to England. George was very artistic and an excellent photographer. George and his wife, Jo, were fond family friends who were certainly missed when they returned to England.<sup>34</sup>

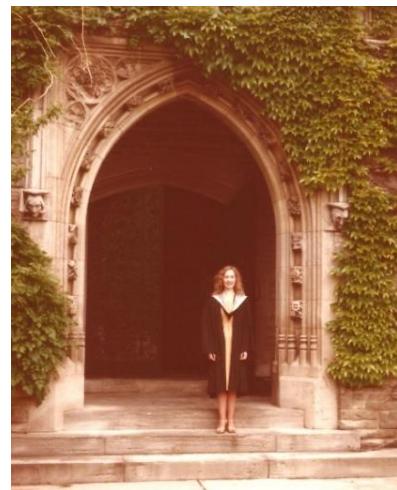
Soon after in 1983, Dad suffered more tragic loss as two of his brothers died just seven and a half weeks apart. We heard that his youngest brother, Charlie, was ill in hospital in Birmingham and the doctors weren't sure what was wrong. Sadly, it turned out to be an aneurysm which they didn't detect in time and Charlie passed away on January 31. This was such a shock to everyone. Then on March 23, 1983 in Edinburgh, his eldest brother, Ed, after running for a bus, died of a heart attack on board. Another tragedy. Ed was just 67 and Charlie, only 58. The shock of these losses took Dad, indeed all of us, some time to adjust to.

So, Dad spent his retirement in Mum's company. They had always done everything together anyway, never having separate social lives as many couples do – apart from Mum's Wednesday afternoon teas with her English friend, Joyce Eales.

On May 28, 1981 Dad and Mum enjoyed my graduation ceremony at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, when I graduated with my Honours Bachelor of Music degree in music history and theory. They were very proud that I graduated Summa cum Laude and made the Dean's Honour List as well as completing Grade 10 in piano from the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto while studying at McMaster. We celebrated with a dinner that evening at the Ancaster Mill restaurant along with a group of my university friends and my husband, Paul.<sup>35</sup>



Mum & Dad Studying my gown.  
Pink is the distinctive colour for music degrees.  
Graduation, May 28, 1981



In the entrance to University Hall,  
McMaster University, founded 1887

In the early 1990's, the Camaro and camping van were replaced by a white Mazda 3 which was very practical for them at this stage of life and easier to maintain. In 1993 Dad completed the annual Mazda service survey then forgot all about it so he was very surprised when he received a phone

call from Mazda Canada asking him a skill testing question! Of course, he got it right and then they announced "Congratulations. You have just won a Miata!" This was a very exciting time. Mazda kept sending additional gifts, like a Mazda jacket and drinking glasses, which arrived at the door each day. Then he and Mum were taken to the auto show in Toronto by the owner of Guelph Mazda to be presented with the keys to the Miata by the President of Mazda Canada, followed by a fabulous dinner. A very special day out!



Dad receives the keys to the Miata from the President of Mazda Canada at the Toronto International Auto Show, 1993

Interestingly, the day the draw took place for the Miata, Mazda had been receiving phone calls from customers anxious to hear if they had won the car. Meanwhile, Dad had forgotten all about the contest and he was the one to win it! The Miata was red, 4 on the floor, convertible. He enjoyed it for a few years then sold it back to Mazda. He had won this a bit too late in life. He found it very difficult to get in and out of the low car and of course it was very small for being practical. I drove it a lot when I was staying with them and found it really fun to drive.

### Travels Continue

During the early years in Canada, the annual holiday was very important. Dad at first only had two weeks vacation which was a shock after teaching in South Africa and having six weeks, but he had a very good job at GE and the vacation time did increase. By 1971 he was able to take six weeks off to visit Australia and New Zealand, during which time he visited his brother Jack and family in Adelaide. Mum did all the planning of the vacations in those early days. After Dad's retirement in 1978 there was more freedom to travel and taking both summer and winter vacations became popular. For more photos and details on these travels, see 'Travels from Guelph' in Mum's section, pages 22-27.

Of course, our travels would always include some kind of engineering installation – the Mackinac Straits Suspension Bridge in the state of Michigan, St. Lawrence Seaway visitor's centre and Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River in Washington State are three that stand out in my memory in

the 50's and 60's. This gave our trips an educational purpose, along with studies in the history of our destinations, which continued throughout Mum and Dad's travels.

In 1974 they were invited to join a group of Professional Engineers for a trip to Russia. Organized by an engineering group in Russia, it included visits to installations of interest. During this trip, their first to Russia, Mum and Dad noticed that they were being followed on a few occasions. Once, in Moscow, they left the hotel after dinner for an evening stroll to see the lights. It was a dark already when they set off. Dad heard footsteps behind them. They deliberately stopped a few times while walking across a bridge over the Moskva River. Each time they stopped, the footsteps behind them would stop. Then when they started walking again, the footsteps would start. They returned to the hotel without incident but were sure the engineering group were being watched while in Russia.<sup>36</sup>

Also, in Moscow, they waited outside the Bolshoi Theatre to see if anyone would offer them tickets to the ballet that evening, *Don Quixote*. A man who was there with his young son did come over with tickets to the show which was fabulous. They enjoyed their conversation with this man during the evening but when they invited him out for a meal after the show, he declined saying it wasn't allowed. They often remembered this stranger's kindness and the time they spent at one of the world's top ballet theatres, a lifetime dream of Mum's and a thrill just being there.

Cruising was their favourite way to travel and they sailed many exciting itineraries over the years. In 1975 they were aboard the Russian cruise ship *Alexandr Pushkin* for a three-week cruise from Montreal. It was the first cruise ship to call at Cuba since the revolution. Dad was voted 'most active passenger' on this sailing.

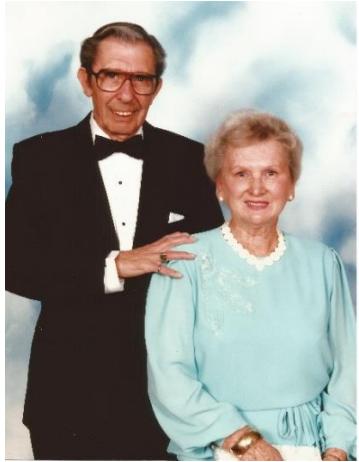
In January, 1988 they were in the Caribbean aboard the beautiful *Sovereign of the Seas*, the world's first 'megaship', for its second sailing. This magnificent vessel featured many 'firsts' on board.



Mum & Dad aboard the Russian cruise ship *Alexandr Pushkin* at Bermuda, summer, 1975



On the beach at Labadee, Haiti during the 2<sup>nd</sup> voyage of the world's first 'megaship', *Sovereign of the Seas*, January, 1988



Ready for the French Liberation Ball  
QE2, 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day cruise, 1994

For their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1996, Mum and Dad sailed aboard the new *Legend of the Seas* to Alaska in a suite with large balcony. They called at Hubbard Glacier during this cruise, North America's largest tidewater glacier. It is 76 miles (122 km) long, 7 miles (11.2 km) wide and 600 feet (183m) tall at its terminal face. This is an extremely impressive glacier in remote, Disenchantment Bay at the end of Yakutat Bay. You are truly in the Alaskan wilderness when you visit this extraordinary place.

One particularly outstanding journey was when they sailed on the famous *QE2* for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day celebrations in Britain and the beaches of Normandy in 1994. Amongst the notables on board were WWII celebrities they were familiar with: Comedian Bob Hope, singer Vera Lynn and journalist Walter Cronkite. They saw and met many dignitaries, the Canadian Prime Minister, Canada's only surviving Victoria Cross winner and many more at ceremonies at the Beaches. They celebrated their 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary while on board.



At Hubbard Glacier, Disenchantment Bay, Alaska



Dad at Cape Horn, the tip of South America, for his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration aboard *Royal Princess*

Cruises often coincided with Christmas, New Year or birthday celebrations. For his 60<sup>th</sup> Dad was on board Sitmar's *Fairsea* for a Panama Canal Cruise. His 80<sup>th</sup> was celebrated aboard the *Royal Princess* sailing from Buenos Aires to Santiago around Cape Horn. We called at many exciting ports of call, including the Falkland Islands, at a time when few cruise ships were sailing this route. A dramatic force 10 gale slowed the ship down to 10 knots. The itinerary had to be adjusted so we wouldn't miss Cape Horn.

## 1996 – 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & Move to Vancouver

In 1995 Mum and Dad realized the house and the garden had become too much for them to look after and they should make a move. Not wanting to put all the effort into a move within Guelph, they decided to move to Vancouver where I had settled in 1994. Their Grandson Roger had also moved to Vancouver that year to join a video games company as lead programmer. They put their house on the market and started making plans. The house was taking time to sell however.

1996 was an extremely eventful year for Mum and Dad. The year started in Asia with a very exciting two-week cruise from Hong Kong to Singapore. It began with a Cathay Pacific flight from Vancouver to Hong Kong with three-nights on board ship before sailing to ports in China, Vietnam (which had just started opening for tourism) and Thailand. This was followed by two weeks exploring Singapore where they stayed with Michael, who was a 747-400 Captain with Singapore Airlines at the time. En route home, they stopped off in Vancouver for a few days before returning to Guelph.

Returning home and changing real estate agents, the house finally sold in May. Preparations for the move began. Dad packed 75 boxes for shipping himself. There were a couple of garage sales and giveaways to the grandchildren to get everything cleared, ready for the move.

June 7, 1996 was their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and they came out to Vancouver to celebrate ahead of the move. The family made sure this was an extra special occasion. Michael and Donna came from Singapore. I organized a party at the lovely Prow restaurant at Canada Place to mark the occasion, complete with celebratory cake. Next day there was a scenic tour to the ship in a Rolls Royce. They sailed to Alaska aboard *Legend of the Seas* in a suite with large balcony.



50<sup>th</sup> anniversary party at the Prow restaurant, Canada Place

Again, the family made special arrangements for many extras throughout the cruise. The 'Royal Occasions' celebrations included a bottle of Moet Chandon on arrival, champagne breakfast in bed, commemorative portrait in a silver frame, fruit basket and flowers in the stateroom and many more little treats during the week. They had a terrific time!



Dad on the balcony in their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary suite, #8538 aboard *Legend of the Seas*

Following the cruise they returned to Guelph to pack for the move on July 30, 1996. On July 3, the neighbours threw a farewell party with many touching cards and speeches along with a splendid buffet dinner.

After 39 years, they left 35 Cedar Street for good flying on July 30 to Vancouver. I remember the following day when the massive moving truck arrived at the back door with all their belongings and some furniture. It had brought them all the way across Canada in about 10 days. Then it was a very busy summer getting them settled in, with lots of shopping!

So, at last they made it to their original destination when they left South Africa. Vancouver has a very mild climate with year-round gardens which they really appreciated, along with the new lifestyle of living downtown in the centre of the action. Interestingly, during their anniversary visit to Vancouver in June, they had looked for a place to live with an agent but couldn't find anything they really liked. Then a two bedroom came up for rent in the Electra building I was living in. Dad said when he walked into the two-bedroom corner unit with mountain view he knew it was the place for him. So, they ended up living just two stories above me on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor which actually turned out to be extremely handy over the years. Theirs was the 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom corner unit with mountain and city views, suite 607.



Mum & Dad at sunset in their new home Suite 607, the Electra



The Electra  
[theelectra.ca](http://theelectra.ca)

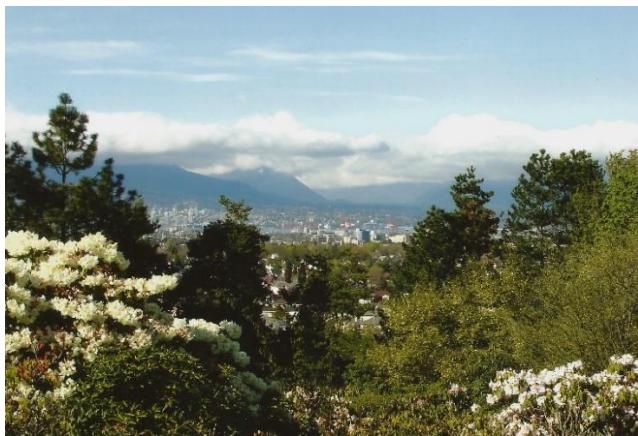


The Electra facing Nelson Street

The Electra is the 21-storey, award-winning BC Electric headquarters, built 1955 – 1957. It was Vancouver's first modern high-rise. Because of the high ceilings on each floor, it is comparable to a standard 30-storey building. Designed by renowned architects, Ronald Thom and Ned Pratt, it is a choice example of West Coast modern architecture recognized as one of the eleven best buildings built after WWII in Canada and one of the first Modernist buildings in the country. Dal Grauer, the BC Electric's President at the time, wanted all employees to be close to a window which resulted in the unusual, narrow, glass building design. BC Electric later changed its name to BC Hydro and the building became the BC Hydro Building.

In the early 1990's it was converted into 242 residential units and 205 commercial units and renamed Electra. The thoughtful attention to the design by Paul Merrick kept the Modernist art work and decor in tact. The building was awarded an "A" merit in the Vancouver Heritage Register in 1995. When the units went up for sale before renovations began, they all sold in three hours; a record for Vancouver. People were not sure exactly what they had bought or where it was in the building but all were happy to own a unit in this prestigious, well designed building.

Dad might have ended up working in the BC Electric building if he had moved to Vancouver in 1957 as originally planned!! This does make one wonder about the spirituality of place in our lives since he ended up living in his probable work space 39 years later.



Looking back to downtown Vancouver from Queen Elizabeth Park

Dad certainly loved his time in beautiful Vancouver and all the outings we had to explore the city and surrounding area. VanDusen Botanical Gardens, Grouse Mountain, Queen Elizabeth Park, Stanley Park and watching cruise ships sail out from Canada Place were some of the favourite outings he enjoyed over those years.

#### Annual events added to the fun:

- The Classic British Car Show in VanDusen Botanical Gardens every May when 200 cars were parked on the lawn surrounded by colourful azaleas and rhododendrons.
- The summer International Fireworks Competition which could be seen for many years from their Electra suite 607 until some new high rises started blocking the view. It was fun watching the huge crowds departing the downtown area and the traffic jams that ensued.
- Series tickets to the Symphony afternoon concerts at the Orpheum Theatre.
- The arrival of the cruise ships for the season starting in late April.

- Christmas Eve community carol sing at the Baptist Church across the road from the Electra.
- Christmas dinner at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver restaurant. The buffet was a splendid display of colourful décor and the meal was complete with a visit from Santa.



Watching ships sail out from Canada Place. The adventure ship, *Spirit of Oceanus*, off to Alaska

### **Second Aneurysm & Life After**

The move was not without its drama. Less than three weeks later, on August 18, 1996, Dad suffered an abdominal aneurysm and was hospitalized for surgery. The following day they couldn't stabilize his blood pressure or stop the bleeding and they had to do a second operation! While in Vancouver General Hospital recovering, he experienced a near death experience. He said that he was in a church and then walked down the long cloisters aisle towards a bright light. But then he remembered Mum was coming at 4pm and he was suddenly transported back to his bed! He commented on this often as it was like being in a real place, not dreamlike. This is a characteristic of near-death experiences, as is walking down a tunnel or walkway towards a bright light.

Dad was something of a medical miracle having survived not one but two aneurysm surgeries; the one that led to his early retirement and the one after moving to Vancouver. When he was in St. Paul's hospital in Vancouver for his final operation for colorectal cancer in 2001, doctors would come to visit him and ask questions about his aneurysm surgeries and recoveries when word got out he was in the hospital.

Dad made a good recovery from his second aneurysm surgery and continued to enjoy life in Vancouver. He also continued to travel overseas. He just took things easier than in the past, often relaxing with a good book and sometimes accepting airport services to help him get to the gate. As mentioned above, he celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on a cruise from Buenos Aires to Santiago around legendary Cape Horn, something he had long wanted to do. Other trips included a 16-day cruise from Sydney to Tahiti; coastal cruises to LA from Vancouver and shopping trips to Bellingham as well as attending Grandsons Dennis and Julian's weddings in Ontario. Dad's final cruise was around Hawaii from Honolulu to Vancouver aboard *Vision of the Seas*, in May, 2000 with a few days' pre-cruise in Honolulu. For photos and more on these later travels see pages 29–30 and 32–34.



Stopping for a picnic on a day trip to Harrison Hot Springs, 1997



Mum and Roger beside Harrison Lake, 1997

Walking became a problem for Dad in these later years though. He couldn't make it up long flights of stairs which affected his sightseeing in China and Brazil. He was very tired on the Hawaii cruise in 2000 and he and Mum slept through the sail out from Lahaina, Maui, which I felt signified a real change in their ability to travel as they used to, because they had always been so active in the past, up for any adventure and always on deck when we sailed. In the fall of 2000, Dad was also no longer interested in outings on the weekends when I would often rent a car, something he had thoroughly enjoyed during his years in Vancouver.



Julian & Barbara visit, December, 2000

Julian and Barbara visited in December and we had a great time but didn't do any big outings with Dad as we usually did. At Christmas he wasn't feeling well and didn't come with Mum and I to the Hotel Vancouver for the lavish buffet we all enjoyed so much every year. New Year was celebrated at home but Dad was in bed and wanted to be quiet so he didn't join in our small celebration with Michael and Donna. Dad soon learned he had colorectal cancer and needed surgery as soon as possible.

The operation was to take place on February 6, but that morning, it was postponed to the following day, February 7, at St. Paul's Hospital, just across the square from The Electra building. After his operation, Dad was able to meet his Great Grandson, Connor, Dennis and Stephanie's son, as Michael's family came to visit in February. Connor was born May 23, 2000, the first of the Great Grandchildren.



l-r- Dennis, Dad, Mum, Great Grandson Connor, Peter

Dad was in hospital for the better part of five months and Mum visited him every day. The Doctor told Mum she must eat and drink while at the hospital and she didn't need to go every day but Mum wanted to be by Bill's side. She often didn't even have a cup of tea while there.

After the surgery for colorectal cancer, Dad suffered a heart attack. He was then diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma, a blood cancer, heart failure and a stomach ulcer. It was a very difficult and shocking six months as one diagnosis after another came along. It was made harder by the fact there was a nurses' strike during most of the time he was in hospital. At one time he was sent home as the ward he was in had such a severe outbreak of a hospital virus. The home care nurse recognized he shouldn't be at home. She arranged for him to return to the hospital and soon after he was moved to the Palliative Care unit.

His beloved Eunice was at his side when he passed away on June 27, 2001. They celebrated their 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary just a few weeks before Dad's passing having enjoyed a truly wonderful life together. The memorial service was held at the Baptist church across the road from The Electra with a few family and friends in attendance. Friends Pat and Charlotte kindly hosted the reception afterwards in their penthouse apartment on the top floor of the Electra. Dad loved the views over downtown Vancouver and the north shore mountains from their home.<sup>37</sup>

Dad's mind was still good but his body completely gave out after a life extremely well lived.



With Dad & Mum aboard *Vision of the Seas*, May, 2000. Dad's final cruise, Honolulu to Vancouver and around the Hawaiian Islands.



## Dad's Notes for Julian's Interview



Julian with his grandparents, Eunice & Bill Milne,  
Wedding day, McLean House, Toronto, June 19, 1999

In 1990, my son Julian interviewed Dad for a Carleton University Journalism project. The meetings were taped on cassettes. These are notes Dad made about his life for these interviews. I have included notes Mum left re Dad's life.

Dad had extremely unusual writing, probably because he really was a genius, so I have done my best to decipher his notes. There will be more on Julian's tapes about these notes which I intend to transfer to digital files. I hope to have this project completed in 2021.

### First Recollections of Aberdeen – WWII and the RAF

Maberly Street, Skene Square then move to Stafford Street.

C1921 First day at George Street School, slate and slate pencil. Wet rag in a tin to clean the slate saves spit and sleeve! Ferrets in coal cellars. Bad dog experience (that left him afraid of dogs). Night of fire (no details).

Move to Bedford Rd. Railway siding playground. Friday market. Kittybrewster School then Sunnybank. Violin lessons. Old Aberdeen. Started card collection. Life Boys. Boys Brigade. Swedish drill team competitions. Brass band (Baritone). Concerts held in halls and parks. Father's shop Park St. Holiday at Stoneywood.

Move to Froghall Terrace. Could see North Sea from upper windows. Could see the German fleet towing their scuttled ships back to Germany. (I remember Dad talking about it but not the details. The German fleet was scuttled at Scapa Flow, Scotland after WWI.) Friend Bill Gauld lived one block down. Granite yards at bottom of the road. Loads of open space for playing. Continued Boys Brigade band etc.

Finished school and got a job with Saddler Hutchinson installing radios and changing batteries. Started going to power station on Wednesdays. Mention of Cheynes and another company building cycle wheels. Then entry into power station training in all departments during college 1935-36.

Move to Primrose Hill Drive, 1937-38. Father opens shop in Dee Street. Brother Ed looks after it.

1939 Holidays in Edinburgh, Isle of Mann, Empire Exhibition in Glasgow. Mid '39 Munich reservists called out from football match. 1939 an unsettled year.

1939 Assistant Engineer Test Room, Power Station. Finished first 3 years of college. Good group at power station. Musical evenings.

Sep 3, 1939 Britain declares war on Germany. For history read the 6 volumes on WWII by Winston Churchill.

Trained older men on generating station. Reserved occupation. Applied to join RAF at Padgate. Called up mid 1940. Went for medical and intelligence tests. Explained that thousands were being mobilized. Had to go home and work and wait for the call which came later in the year.

Went to Morecambe, Yorkshire for fitting, square bashing, injections. 4-6 weeks.

Then stationed at Henlow for Group II O/C Electricians course. Henlow just north of London so got into London many times and saw places I had read about. Got top marks and LAC.

Moved to Hereford near Welsh border for Group II course. Trying to get as many people through as possible so course run in 3 shifts. When on night shift, helped farmer get in his crops. Strong cider! Top marks again.

Put on potential NCO list (Non-commissioned officer).

Posted to 150 Bomber Squadron, RAF Snaith, Yorkshire. Wellingtons. Bremerhaven and Wilhelmshaven. Tragic engine failure on take off.

Only three weeks there then posted to NCO course Hitchin near Henlow, North London. Blood poisoning on foot.

After course, leave (vacation time) then posted to Lossiemouth Operational Training Unit. (OTU), Lossiemouth, Scotland near Aberdeen. Working on instrumentation of planes. (Electrical Engineering Degree had a focus on small instruments.)

Promoted to Corporal 3 weeks later and Sergeant few weeks after that, pay rising every time.

On night flying duty (see cassette tapes for more details). Incidents included lost prop on night fighter, Walrus crash, 90 men and 90 Wellingtons landing with wheels up, intruder downs a Whitley plane at Kinross. Bomb in railway station while walking with Mother.

Mid 1942 was posted to Radar Headquarters, Aberdeen, Station north of Scotland. One month in the Shetlands. Sumburgh airbase (now Shetland's airport.)

Spring 1943, was posted to Radar HQ at Marton, Yorkshire.

21 days leave before going overseas. Spent time at brother Ed's in Aberdeen. Roof bombed. Cable came to report to the Air Ministry. Posted to Morecombe for two weeks fitting out.

Train to Liverpool to join the *Highland Princess* and sail to Gouinck? For convoy assembly. (ships always travelled in convoys across the Atlantic during the war except for the *Queen Mary* which was too fast for a convoy.) Three weeks West to the US to pick up vessels with landing craft. Three weeks East.

50 miles from Gibraltar, our ship left the convoy and headed for Gibraltar. 1 week here waiting for convoy to Freetown, Sierra Leone. Ashore often, danger of frogmen in the harbour during the war attaching mines to ships. Sergeants invited to join the Gibraltar-stationed Army Sergeants' for a day. Had lunch, walked through the Rock to the swimming beach then dinner in the evening. Lots of fruit in Gibraltar. While sitting in Gibraltar harbour, saw the aircraft carrier *Illustrious* and the *Queen Mary*.

Convoy assembled and we were on our way to Freetown.

Freetown was my first site of Africa. After disembarking took train to Hastings transit camp, 1/2 hour journey. One month of indoctrination on West Africa diseases, dress, malaria, various tablets etc. Land crabs huge. Train trips into Freetown. Rain.

Boarded Belgium tramp steamer for trip to Lagos. Cockroaches, mice, sleep on deck, vent funnels break loose in storm.

Disembarked in Lagos and trucks took us to Ikeja staging post, an airstrip in the jungle approx. 20 miles from Lagos. (See cassettes for reasons for the airstrip and flight office description.) Entertainment consisted of concerts so works manage builds a concert hall. I built a Hawaiian guitar to play. Blackouts and standbys. Type of accommodation and mess (dining hall). Ventura crash. I contracted Malaria but survived. After 10 months new Flight Sergeant came and I was transferred to Sunderland Flying Boat squadron on Lagos Lagoon. The base was cleared of jungle so not closed in like Ikeja but just as hot. A lot of diseases in the lagoon and creek.

Took a 16-hour operation flight in the Sunderland for frigate exercise in combined op with Sunderland's.

End of 1944 Eventually relief came out and I had 2 days to pack. Left the witch doctors wand with white hair and other things on the wall of my hut. Boarded the *Johann de Witt* bound for home.

In Freetown I met the son of Bob Elnick from the power station in Aberdeen. He had been in a Sunderland crash in Freetown harbour. He asked if I would go and see his father when I visited the power station and let him know he was ok.

Arrived Gibraltar before Xmas and stayed a few days. Two days after leaving Gibraltar it was Xmas. No convoy as the French coast where the German u boats had operated had been taken over by the allies but had a u boat scare just before entering the Clyde (River at Greenock, Scotland.) Had an encounter with an aircraft carrier and started listing. Troops had to be rearranged and spread out before entering George Lock.

Home on leave, the main thing that happened was Dad's shop windows were blown out in an air raid. Jack and Chris had a bomb experience too.



Shops damaged by high explosive bombing raid, 1940  
[doriccolumns.wordpress.com/ww2-1939-45](http://doriccolumns.wordpress.com/ww2-1939-45)



Building a bomb shelter, Robert Gordon College  
[doriccolumns.wordpress.com/ww2-1939-45](http://doriccolumns.wordpress.com/ww2-1939-45)

After leave, stationed at Leuchars near Dundee, B24 Liberator squadron, coastal command. Bad winter. Was exempt from runway snow clearing as I had just come from West Africa. Kept close to electric heater as much as possible.

Applied for commission in Far East Naval Command. Six years in RAF and West Africa was enough but a feeling abounded that the war would soon end. A call did come for a Sergeant for overseas duty. I was the only one of three who was fit enough. (Turned out to be the liberation of Norway.)

Surrender of Norway, British went in immediately (with Operation Doomsday) at Sola Airfield, Stavanger. Still booby traps and mines to remove. Met Tony and Otto and other friends. Also, Peterson from the Norwegian Underground who gave me the North Cape medallion.

Duties in Sola included meeting German officers, trip to Kirsiansand on motor cycle, trip on truck with group to investigate infranet station on island. Laid cable to underground control centre so diesel could be shut down. Truck went missing on road to Kristiansand. (Steep slopes along the fjords.)

Airfield handed back to the Norwegians in September. Our whole squadron flew back to Britain on 12 Sunderlands. Lancaster in the formation. Flew over Lossiemouth. Landed at Alness north of Inverness.

Squadron taken to near Southampton, given leave passes and I was on my way back to Aberdeen. 36 hours by train. On leave stayed between Ed & Em's, Mum and Dad's at Primrose Hill Drive and Birmingham. Ed's house had been bombed and there was a tarpaulin over a hole in the roof.

Posted to Charterhall but on reporting found the squadron had moved to East Moor near York (Mosquitos). Wellington leaving for York but no parachutes available. Promoted to Flight Sergeant on reaching East Moor.

Met Eunice at East Moor Dec 23 1945.

April 24, 1946, demobbed at Cardigan. R101 Hanger.

### **WWII Summary of Dad's Movements**

1939	Outbreak of War. Dad signed up with the Royal Air Force (RAF) soon after.
1939	Morceambe, Yorkshire for fitting, square bashing, injections. 4-6 weeks.
1940	Training 6 months, London (Henlow). Group II O/C Electricians course and Hereford Group I. Got top marks and LAC.
1941	Operational Training Unit (OTU) made Sergeant, RAF Lossiemouth, Wellingtons
Mid 1942	Radar unit, Aberdeen, North Scotland and Shetland Islands Sumburgh airbase, then Marton, Yorkshire, East Coast ground radar
Mid 1943	Posted to West Africa (Nigeria) Ikeja air strip after 10 months new Flight Sergeant came, transferred to Sunderland Flying Boat squadron on Lagos Lagoon. The base was cleared of jungle so not closed in like Ikeja but just as hot. A lot of diseases in the lagoon and creek.
End 1944	Back to Britain, posted to RAF Leuchars, near Dundee. Liberator squadron, Coastal Command.
May 1945	On surrender of Germans in Norway, flew into Stavanger, Norway Sola airfield.
Oct 1945	Squadron flew back to Scotland (12 Sunderlands and a Liberator) quite a sight! Posted to East Moor near York. Mosquito squadron (operational Training Unit)
Dec 1945	Met Eunice at East Moor.
Apr 1946	Demobbed at Cardigan (R101 Squadron Horigen). Engaged to Eunice.



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**Dad's Mother, My Grandmother**  
**ISABELLA (Bella) FOREST HILL STEWART**

October 31, 1895, Aberdeen – September 5, 1980, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire  
Married Edward James Milne, June 25, 1915, Aberdeen

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Grandma was named after her Paternal Grandmother and was called Bella. Grandma was very short, about 4'10". She had a happy disposition and always enjoyed a laugh. She seemed to also enjoy good health.

Grandma Milne was one of nine children. Here they are in 1976 in Aberdeen, left to right, oldest to youngest.



L to R: Sarah, Alec, Bella (my Grandma), Johnnie, Dod, Bob, Jim, Mary and Lizzie

Grandma worked at a restaurant after high school where she met her future husband, Edward James Milne. Eddie was a barman at the time. They married at her family home, 53 Spring Garden, Aberdeen on June 25, 1915, the year they both turned 20.



Edward and Bella with sons  
William, Jack and Edward, 1919

Bella and Edward had four sons: Edward, William (Bill, my Dad), John (Jack) and Charles (Charlie).

Maureen, Kerry and I agree that the four sons were very special people. Accomplished, kind, caring and fun to be around, they were a rare breed we call "Milne Men". Bella and Edward certainly did a terrific job raising their boys to be wonderful husbands and fathers.

All four boys survived WWII which must have been a relief for Grandma and Grandpa. For more on the boys' lives and work during WWII, see pages 63–72 in Dad's section.

Of the homes they had in Aberdeen, 46 Primrose Hill Drive one of the loveliest, a modern bungalow in the Hilton area of Aberdeen.



Isabella Milne  
Passport Photo 1935

Grandma and Grandpa made a trip to Belgium and France in 1935 to see the new war memorials and the places Edward had seen during WWI which must have been a moving experience.

In 1946 they attended Mum and Dad's wedding in Edinburgh and Uncle Charlie and Auntie Dorothy's wedding in Sunderland. For photos see pages 112 and 65 respectively.

Grandma was very house proud. Mum and Dad lived with her and Grandpa after they were married after the war as there was a housing shortage. Mum said Grandma washed the draperies regularly and was always keeping the place in immaculate condition. Dad remembered his Mum always stopping in the afternoon and putting her apron over her head to for a much-needed rest or siesta from her daily routine when he was growing up.

Grandma was also very demanding and ruled the home with an iron fist, which would probably be necessary raising four sons, however, she did have a reputation for being a bit of a tyrant who had to have her own way, so she could be difficult at times. She wasn't very popular with some family members because of this. Mum and Dad got along very well with her though and I never really saw her tyrannical side.

### **A Year in South Africa**

After Grandpa died in 1953, Grandma became a world traveller! On August 6, 1953, she sailed from Southampton aboard the *RMMV Stirling Castle* to visit us in South Africa for 10 months. She looked after my brother and I while Mum had an operation for an ovarian cyst. Mum said Grandma always had a yearning to be in Aberdeen though, her home town. After many months of staying with us and taking a trip to Durban, suddenly she decided she must return to Aberdeen. It was not possible however, as there was a waiting list for space on ships sailing from South Africa to the UK in those days. She had to be patient. Space was found for her within a few months on the *mv Dunnottar Castle* so she returned to Scotland in June 1954. On a post card written on board the ship she wrote

*"Having a fine voyage now. Saw a picture last night. Susan will still be looking for Grandma! Hope you are fine. Miss you all."*



Grandma Milne, Mum and I  
at Howick Falls, KwaZulu Natal, 1954

## Visits to Canada

The first time I remember meeting Grandma, was in 1961 when she came out for six weeks to Canada. She brought me a beautiful Koala which I have in my bedroom to this day. She was very neat and always well dressed, sitting with her white gloves and hand bag ready for any outings we had planned. Grandma was also very helpful around the house and was always happy and in a good mood. We enjoyed her good sense of humour.

We took Grandma to many places including Niagara Falls, where they wouldn't let her cross the border into the United States because she had South Africa stamped in her passport. Ottawa was another good trip and of course the usual Toronto outing including the 34-storey Bank of Commerce Head Office, the tallest building in the British Empire at the time.<sup>7</sup>

When Grandma left, we saw her off at the observation level of the old Malton airport in Toronto, waving to everyone as they walked to their Boeing 707. It was sad for me to see her go as we had no relatives around apart from the four of us in the immediate family and Michael was never a real brother to me, having always disliked and shunned me. (He kept to himself and was more like a boarder in the house than a family member.)

Grandma returned in 1967 for another 6-week trip and again she was fit and ready to go our many outings around Ontario and visits with our friends she had met in 1961.

## The Doric Dialect

Grandma spoke the old Scots dialect called Doric which is spoken in Aberdeenshire. Doric was incomprehensible to me in 1961 and I really could not understand what Grandma was saying most

of the time. My Dad spoke it too and often included a lot of Doric words in conversation. It has many similarities to Dutch, thanks to the Flemish immigrants who influenced the language. Robert Gordon University has produced a Doric Dictionary which explains Doric well. See

[https://d3lmsxl5aor5x.cloudfront.net/library/document/RGU\\_Doric\\_Dictionary.pdf](https://d3lmsxl5aor5x.cloudfront.net/library/document/RGU_Doric_Dictionary.pdf)

It also points out that Doric words can vary from town to town. Here are a few of the words I learned from Dad and Grandma to give you an idea of Doric:

Fay ya gaan – Where are you going?	Nay – no	Twa – two
Fit – what	Deed – died	Neeps & Tatties – Turnips & Potatoes
Coos – cows	Heed – head	Clouds – clouds
Ken – know	Doon – down	Sooth – South
Ticht – tight	Lang – long	Auld – old
Tatties – potatoes	Mare – more	Loon – young man

While Grandma was with us in South Africa, she befriended our neighbour, Mrs. Scheffel, who was Dutch. They could converse very well because Doric is so much like Dutch. Mum said they would have long conversations no one else could really understand! For more on the Flemish migrations to Scotland which influenced Doric, see page 135.

## A Year in Australia



Grandma (middle) en route to Australia aboard *ss Iberia*



Grandma on deck with new friends, 1962

In 1962 Grandma spent a year in Adelaide with her son, Jack, and family. She sailed aboard the *ss Iberia* on a six-week voyage to reach Australia. She often mentioned what a wonderful time she had on this journey. Grandma found Australia's active, outdoor lifestyle was "for young people" and returned alone to Aberdeen, though she didn't have to. My cousin Kerry has this memory of Grandma in Australia: "I don't have many memories of Grandma Milne. I was only four at the time, nearly five when she left. The two clearest are that Grandma had a birthmark on her right hand & I had one in exactly the same place. Grandma would do something with her hand that made it look like it flew off! She tried to teach me how but I couldn't get it. I also remember that when I would give her a hug, she called me two tonne Tessie because my hugs were so tight. Not a lot to remember but I was so young I did miss her when she went but my Mum and Dad seemed very happy and gradually, I forgot about her but I did try to do the butterfly off my hand and was never successful. I also thought I was lucky to have two Grandmas. I didn't realise that most children have two!"

Grandma returned to Aberdeen around June, 1963.

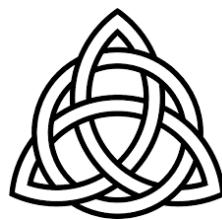
## **Back in Aberdeen**

When I visited Grandma in Aberdeen in 1968 during my two-month stay in Britain, Grandma was living alone in a flat. There were no elevators so she had to climb a flight of stairs. Such a change from the beautiful homes she had lived in before but the flat was smaller and easier to maintain. She seemed happy enough but her memory was going and she had become quite forgetful.

I did a lot of outings on my own or with friends that summer as she was not up to all the walking. Dad's friends would come and pick us up and take us for a drive along Dee side or elsewhere and Grandma loved those outings. Uncle Charlie and cousin Ken came up from Birmingham during my stay so Grandma had lots of company. It was great for me to meet them and spend time together around Aberdeen.

Grandma didn't get out much in later life. She did enjoy reading novels and watching TV and was still cooking and keeping her place very clean and tidy.

I visited again with Mum and Dad and my husband Paul in 1971. Dad felt Grandma should not be living alone anymore. She had been suffering from hardening of the arteries, or arteriosclerosis, which brings on dementia. He wrote to his brothers Ed and Charlie. Shortly after they moved Grandma to a lovely care home, the House of Daviot, in a manor house at Inverurie where she spent the remainder of her life. Grandma died on September 5, 1980 and was buried in the Grove Cemetery in Aberdeen beside her beloved husband, Edward.



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## **Dad's Father, My Grandfather**

### **EDWARD JAMES MILNE**

December 12, 1895, Aberdeen – March 16, 1953, Musselburgh, East Lothian

Gordon Highlander in WWI  
Master Grocer & Food Importer, Owner of three shops

Married Isabella Forest Hill Stewart, June 25, 1915, Aberdeen

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I never met my Grandpa as he died in 1953 at age 57 from complications due to his injuries from the Battle of the Somme in 1916. He was the 5<sup>th</sup> of 11 children: Albert, Harry, Charlie, Jack, Edward James (Grandpa), Madge, Jean, Bella, Rose, Alice and Mary. The family lived at 35 Hartington Road at the time Grandpa was born. Later addresses are 9 Market Street, Stoneywood, Aberdeen in the 1901 census and Summerhill Cottage, Rosewell Road, Aberdeen in 1911.

Edward met Bella while working at a restaurant where he was the barman. They married on June 25, 1915 and lived at 53 Spring Garden, Aberdeen. They had four sons, Edward, William (Bill), John (Jack) and Charles (Charlie).

Grandpa joined the Gordon Highlanders in WWI, one of the famous Scottish Highland regiments, serving with the 4<sup>th</sup>, 6th and 7th battalions. They were in action at the Battle of the Somme in Northern France, 1916, capturing Beaumont-Hamel and taking more than 2,000 prisoners. He was just 21 when he suffered the blast which put shrapnel into his right arm making it very difficult to use. He had multiple operations to remove pieces of shrapnel over the following years.



Edward & Bella Milne with sons  
Edward & William, 1918

Dad said his father didn't speak about the war much and didn't seem to be badly affected by it mentally as many were. Grandpa did say how awful it was to live in the trenches with the worst thing being the rats.

After partially recovering from his injury, he was returned to the front to be a batman for one of the commanding officers. It was common practice to return injured soldiers to the front once they were able to travel which must have been very difficult to endure.

Cousin Maureen in Adelaide sent me this description of Grandpa Milne which shows how badly he was injured at the Somme:

"Granda Milne spoke very little about the War, but I do remember all the purple marks on his neck and arms, where he had the shrapnel in his body. They removed some each time it travelled to a part where they could operate. He also had quite blue lips, caused by the gas he was exposed to in the trenches, plus such a very bad cough, also caused by this. He was such a lovely man, and he would let John (*her brother*) play his records, all the songs from WW1, and they would sit together and listen to them. He could not straighten his arm, as his elbow had been shattered. They repaired it as best they could in those days, using pig skin for a skin graft, only to have put it on "inside out" which caused him a lot of irritation. He also had foot rot from the water in the trenches, and had to wear leather boots that were specially made for him. They were lovely soft looking boots, not at all the heavy type worn by him during the war. Apparently, he was caught by his kilt on the barbed wire, during a battle, and this is how he was riddled with shrapnel. This is one of the reasons they stopped the Highlanders wearing kilts during battle, and they started wearing the trews (trousers). Grandma Milne's brother was a stretcher bearer during this battle. He was sent out to find the wounded and found and brought Granda back to the hospital. How great was that? All those wounded soldiers, and he found his brother-in-law!"

After WWI the government training program prepared Grandpa to be a tailor but this was difficult with his injured arm so he bought a grocer's shop on Park Street and became a Master Grocer, importing fruit and vegetables.

The shop also sold sweets and they made their own tablet and fudge which was managed by Dad's Auntie Lizzie, Grandma's youngest sister. It was a huge success and Grandpa later added a second shop on George Street and a third on Dee Street; his own grocery chain!



Edward James Milne, 1935  
Passport Photo

Grandma and Grandpa had a holiday in Belgium and Northern France in 1935. It must have been an extremely emotional experience to see the new war memorials and the places where battles had taken place.

During WWII The George Street shop was damaged during a bombing raid. The windows blew out and there was an unexploded bomb in the roof. Uncle Jack and family who lived above the shop had to be evacuated. Maureen remembers walking to her Granda's home that night with her lips burning from the gunpowder

in the air. The windows were also blown out of Grandpa's house during another air raid. Uncle Ed and Auntie Em had to put a tarpaulin over roof damage to their home from yet another air raid. Aberdeen was bombed 34 times during WWII, more than any other city in Scotland.

Business was excellent and Grandpa did very well, however, the four sons could see what a lot of hard work it was to run them and none of them wanted to continue the businesses. In 1942 at age 46, Grandpa was forced to sell the shops and retire early due to his poor health.

Grandpa also suffered with digestive problems and was hospitalized with bowel obstruction several times. Dad said coughing could bring this on, no doubt related to his war wounds.

Grandpa and Grandma had moved to a modern bungalow at 46 Primrose Hill Drive in Aberdeen which was said to be a particularly lovely home.



Edward Milne, Grace Keillor, Bella Milne, Alex Keillor  
at Mum and Dad's wedding, June 7, 1946

Grandpa and Grandma attended two of their son's weddings in 1946. Mum and Dad's wedding in Edinburgh took place on June 7, 1946. Mum's Dad and Step Mum, Alec & Grace Keillor, were also in attendance. Grandma and Grandpa Milne went back to Coldstream with Alec and Grace for a holiday after the wedding. They also attended son Charlie's wedding to Dorothy Potts in Sunderland in September, 1946. For a wedding party photo, see page 65.

Mum and Dad lived at 46 Primrose Hill Drive with Dad's parents after they were married, due to post war housing shortages which gave people no options for setting up their own home. Grandpa was very fond of Michael who was born in 1947, however, with housing shortages and food rationing continuing, Mum and Dad decided to move to South Africa for a better life. They also wanted to travel. It must have been sad for Grandpa to see them leave and he never saw them again.

In 1952 Grandpa was moved to Edenhall Hospital in Musselburgh near Edinburgh. This was a hospital built in 1915 for WWI casualties, later expanded by the Red Cross. It became a convalescent hospital for veterans.

Grandpa was bedridden for some time prior to his death. He was suffering with chronic bronchitis and emphysema. Grandma moved in with her eldest son Ed in Falkirk so she could visit Grandpa everyday at Edenhall. Grandpa died on March 16, 1953 of congenital heart failure. He was 57. Grandpa was buried at Grove Cemetery, Aberdeen. He had made the most of a challenging life ever since 1916 and the Battle of the Somme; a very brave man.





## **Dad's Father's Parents, My Great Grandparents**

### **George Milne**

October 20, 1867, Premnay, Aberdeenshire – July 14, 1941, Aberdeen

### **Ann (Annie) Dean Forman**

November 30, 1869, Longhill, Lonmay, Aberdeenshire – May 2, 1952, Aberdeen

Married January 16, 1891, Shiprow, Aberdeen

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George and Annie are a bit of a family mystery. There are no photos of them and they did not attend family gatherings. Maureen says her Dad didn't talk about them and mine said very little, so we have virtually no information about them apart from what's in official records. There appears to have been some kind of rift in the family no one spoke about.

Both George and Annie were from farming families near Old Deer Aberdeenshire. Annie's parents were George Forman, an agricultural labourer, and Magdalena Forman, née S. Parley, who were married on July 22, 1865. Ann Dean was born at Long Hill, in Lonmay, Aberdeenshire on November 30, 1869. Her father had already passed away by the time she married George Milne in 1891.

George Milne's parents were George Milne, a farm servant, and Margaret Beattie, married December 13, 1866 at Leslie, Aberdeenshire. George junior was born at Clayford, a farmstead in Premnay, Aberdeenshire, on October 20, 1867.

George and Annie were married on January 16, 1891 at the Café Buildings in Shiprow, the area that connects the harbour to Castlegate, the heart of Aberdeen. Banns had been read at the Free Church of Scotland and they were married by the minister of Rutherford Free Church. George was 23 and Annie, 21. George was living at 64 St. Nicholas Street in Aberdeen and Annie gave her address as Long Hill.

George was a meal miller and Annie, a domestic servant, at the time of their marriage. George later worked at the gas works. They lived at 38 Albert Street North in Old Machar, Aberdeen and later at 9 Market Street, Stoneywood, Aberdeen (1901 census). Their address was 37 Greenburn Drive, Bankhead near the River Don, at the time of George's death in 1941 and Annie's death in 1952.

Dad said that his Grandma went to the cinema every Wednesday afternoon right into her very old age. Cousin Maureen tells me there was a Stewart family tea every Wednesday, so the Grandma who enjoyed the cinema regularly was Annie Milne.

George died of pancreatic cancer, at home on July 14, 1941, age 73. His son, my Grandpa Edward, reported the death. I wonder why Edward would do something so important for the family when it seems they had nothing to do with him during his married life?

Annie died from shock following a fall at home, 37 Greenburn Drive, Bankhead, Aberdeen on May 2, 1952, at 10.10pm, age 82. Her death certificate indicates she also had arteriosclerosis and pneumonia. Her son Albert registered the death.

George and Annie had 11 children: Albert, Harry, Charlie, Jack, Edward James (my Grandpa), Madge, Jean, Bella, Rose, Alice and Mary. Apart from the two who emigrated and Madge who was sick, they all attended their brother Edward's 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 1940.

The second oldest son, Harry, emigrated to Kisbey, Saskatchewan in 1910 where he bought a farm. Harry married Christina and they had a daughter Margaret and a son, George. Margaret married James (Jim) McKellar and they had five children. George married Yvonne in 1954 and they had four children including twins. We visited them all in 1967 when we drove across Canada with my Auntie Anna and Uncle John. It was very interesting to meet them and learn about Prairie life. Harry passed away at 80 years of age in 1973.

Son Jack emigrated to Toronto and worked for the Post Office. We visited him and his wife a couple of times at their apartment in Toronto when we first moved to Canada but I believe he died soon after and we only saw his wife a couple of times after that.

Cousin Maureen says the only member of Grandpa's family she knew in Aberdeen was his sister Madge. She was single and lived in Aberdeen. "Madge did the most beautiful embroidery. She made a cover for the back of Grandma Milne's sofa. It was of Windsor Castle and surrounds. So much work and detail." Madge later died of tuberculosis.

Dad mentioned his Auntie Jean occasionally. I believe they had often visited and he spent some summer vacation time with her.



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## **Dad's Mother's Parents, My Great Grandparents**

### **William (Bill) Ferguson Stewart**

March 19, 1871, Whitestone Hill, Aberdeenshire – August 25, 1961, Aberdeen

### **Margaret Ann McKenzie**

November 13, 1872, Aberdeen – September 8, 1957, Aberdeen

Married December 25, 1891, St. Macher's, Aberdeen

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Bill and Margaret Stewart, Christmas 1916  
Their 25<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary portrait, age 45 & 44

This is an unusual photo for the time as they are looking happy. In most early photos, the flash was so bright, and people had to hold their pose for so long, they looked dazed or frightened!

Dad remembered that Bill Stewart's parents, his great grandparents, owned a boarding house in Edinburgh at one time. They were Alexander Stewart and Isabella Forest Hill who married on November 24, 1860. At the time of Bill Stewart's birth, March 19, 1871, Alexander was a crofter, a farmer with a small holding of around 10 to 20 acres. Later, he was a railway worker at the time of Bill's marriage to Margaret. I wonder if these moves and changes in occupation might signify that his family were unsettled crofters, moved to the coast during the Highland Clearances?

Margaret's two Grandfathers were John McKenzie, a gamekeeper, and Andrew Fraser, a general labourer. Her parents were Robert McKenzie, a blacksmith, and Margaret Fraser who worked at a

flour mill. Robert and Margaret were married on November 8, 1872 at 11 Sugarhouse Lane, Aberdeen. Robert was 22 and Margaret 19 at the time. Their banns had been read at the Free Church of Scotland. Baby Margaret was born at the same address on November 13, 1872.

Bill and Margaret were married on Christmas day in 1891, at St. Machar's Place, a magnificent Church of Scotland Cathedral in Old Aberdeen. Margaret was a domestic servant at the time they married and Bill worked at the docks in Aberdeen. His address was 83 Union Street.

Bill and Margaret then lived at 55 Spring Garden in Aberdeen. Dad said there were big family get togethers there as his Grandparents lived a long time and there were a lot of family members in Aberdeen. Fish and chips on Saturday nights were popular. Their grandson, John (Alexander's son) would pick them up from their daughter, Sarah's fish and chip shop in Orchard Street. Cousin Maureen said there was also a family gathering for tea every Wednesday afternoon. (These family gatherings are something Maureen has continued at her home in Adelaide, South Australia, where her children, Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren gather on Wednesdays for dinner.)

Bill and his son Alexander had a close call during the War. They often met at McBride's Bar on Loch Street after work. On February 5, 1941, 2 high explosive bombs & one incendiary bomb fell on Loch Street, destroying McBride's Bar & 89 Loch Street. Alexander had been home late from work so luckily, they hadn't gone to the pub that night. Aberdeen was bombed 34 times during WWII, the greatest number of air raids on a city in Scotland. See photos on page 103.



Grandpa & Grandma Milne with baby Michael and Grandma's Mum and Dad, Margaret & Bill Stewart, Three generations at 46 Primrose Hill Drive, Aberdeen, 1947

Cousin Maureen says Margaret was a midwife for many years and had helped bring her into the world. Also, Bill Stewart had visited Maureen's family in London after they moved there around 1950.

Margaret passed away on September 8, 1957, at their home at Spring Garden. She was 84. Cause of death was stated as three heart valve issues: chronic valvular disease of the heart, mitral stenosis and aortic incompetence as well as arteriosclerosis and myocardial degeneration.

Bill passed away in the afternoon of August 25, 1961, also at 55 Spring Garden. He was 90 years old. Cause of death was arteriosclerosis and coronary thrombosis. His son Alexander reported the death.

Margaret was a determined woman who was very strict with her children, as was common in those days. Bill and Margaret had nine children. Here they are in 1976 in Aberdeen.



L to R: Sarah, Alec, Bella (my Grandma), Johnnie, Dod, Bob, Jim, Mary and Lizzie



Auntie Lizzie (left) in the recreation room at 35 Cedar Street, Guelph with Kay Sutherland, a longtime family friend. Kay's husband Alec was a brilliant cabinet maker. He made the marquetry picture on the wall above.

Lizzie, the youngest, emigrated to Toronto with her husband, John (Jack) Lawson after WWII. We often visited them and their children. Like Grandma, Lizzie had a happy, friendly disposition. She had three sons, Jack, Edward and Bill, who later lived in the Whitby area and Georgetown. We were very friendly with them for many years but Bill and Jack have passed away and I haven't heard from Edward for several years. I still hear from Bill's wife Maureen each year at Christmas.



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## PART III



### Our Family Clans and Tartans & New Scottish Ties



A Clan MacLeod member by R.R. McIan  
from *The Clans of the Scottish Highlands*, 1845

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## Our Family's Official Clans and Tartans

The traditional highland custom was to wear the tartans of your Grandmother's clans as well as the tartan association with your last name. Following this custom, we can officially wear **Stewart** and **McKenzie** on my Dad's side and **MacLeod of Lewis** on my Mother's side, as her mother was a Nicoll, part of the clan MacLeod of Lewis from the Outer Hebrides, the western isles of Scotland. (There is a Nicol tartan, but the Nicoll's with the double II are part of clan MacLeod of Lewis.)

*All tartan images are from The Scottish Register of Tartans and are subject to Crown copyright.*

### Clan Stewart



The Palace of Holyrood House, Edinburgh  
Seat of Scottish Royalty  
[changing-guard.com](http://changing-guard.com)

The Stewart roots are Norman. They acquired estates in England following the Norman conquest in 1066 and settled in Scotland during the reign of King David I (1124-53). The name Stewart comes from high steward, the hereditary post which the family held from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The Stewarts rose to become the Royal Family of Scotland and later, England and Great Britain.

Mary Queen of Scots adopted the French spelling of Stuart as she was educated in France, her mother's homeland, so we see two spellings of the clan name.

The Palace of Holyrood House sits at the end of the Royal Mile in Edinburgh. In 1501 James IV built the palace for himself and his bride, Margaret Tudor, the sister of Henry VIII. It has seen many renovations and additions since that time. It remains the official residence of The Queen in Scotland and is open to the public.

Individual branches of the clan have their own chief, currently Andrew Francis Stewart, 17th of Appin and Crichton-Stuart; and John Colum, 7th Marquess of the County of Bute.

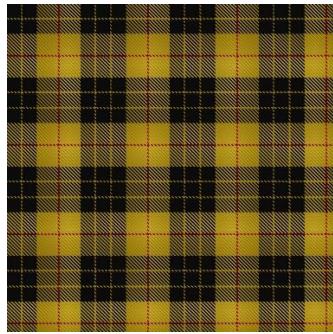


Royal Stewart Tartan #1370 in *The Scottish Register of Tartans*, registered in 1800 but in use long before.

## Clan MacLeod



Dunvegan Castle  
[scotsclans.com](http://scotsclans.com)



MacLeod of Lewis Tartan, or  
MacLeod Dress, #1272, registered in 1842

This large clan, from the western isles, comes from ancient Viking stock as men of Viking descent ruled the islands from Shetland in the north as far south as the Isle of Man for centuries. They were kings in their own right answering to the King of Norway rather than the King of Scotland.

The MacLeod clan takes its name from the Viking, Leod, believed to be a younger son of Óláfr Guðrøðarson known as Olaf the Black, King of Man and the Isles (d.1237). Leod's sons Tormod and Torquil founded the principal branches of the MacLeod family on the islands of Skye and Lewis respectively. There are MacLeods on many other islands and lands including Sutherland, Totternish, Gairloch, Raasay and Glenelg where they frequently held land titles and Baronies.

The MacLeods remained largely independent of the Scottish struggles of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, although the MacLeod's of Dunvegan did support Robert the Bruce in the early Wars of Independence.

They did not support the Jacobite cause believing that Prince Charles Edward Stuart lacked the necessary resources and men to succeed against the English. The clan had already lost over 500 men at the Battle of Worcester in 1651, where the Stuart supporters were defeated by Oliver Cromwell's army.

The Nicoll family with the two l's is traditionally part of Clan MacLeod of Lewis. The MacLeod lands on Lewis were lost to the Mackenzie's in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries so the MacLeods moved to other parts of the Hebrides including Raasay, an island between the Isle of Skye and the mainland.

Dunvegan Castle on the Isle of Skye became the ancestral home of the MacLeods when Leod married the heiress of MacRaild on Skye around 1220. Today it is the home of the Clan chief, Hugh Magnus MacLeod of MacLeod (born 1973), who represents the Associated Clan MacLeod Societies in the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs.

## Clan McKenzie



Eilean Donan Castle  
[eileandonacastle.com](http://eileandonacastle.com)

This clan has Celtic origins with its name deriving from Mac Coinneach (Son of Kenneth). Spellings include MacKenzie, Mackenzie, McKenzie and McKenzie, the spelling used by my Great Grandmother, Margaret McKenzie's family.

Eilean Donan castle was built in 1220, standing guard over the lands of Kintail and Ross-shire, by 1267 the McKenzie chiefs were ensconced at scenic Eilean Donan (the island of Donan) where three sea lochs meet; Loch Duich, Loch Long and Loch Alsh. In 1719 the Jacobites got hold of the castle and 46 of their Spanish supporters were holding gunpowder there. They were overwhelmed by government troops who bombarded the castle which remained partly destroyed for 200 years. Lt Colonel John MacRae-Gilstrap bought the island in 1911. The castle was restored to its former glory with work completed in 1932. It remains the home of the MacRae family. This famous castle has been featured in many films and TV series including *Highlander*, *007* and *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*.



Mackenzie Tartan, or Mackenzie Ancient Dress, #267, registered in 1778

The McKenzies supported the Scottish kings and queens. Five hundred McKenzies fought with Robert the Bruce during the Wars of Scottish Independence and at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314 where the English were defeated. The clan suffered heavy losses at the Battle of Flodden Field in 1513. There were many clashes between the McKenzies and the neighbouring MacDonalds and in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, McKenzies invaded the Isle of Lewis, with the backing of the monarchy and government, taking it from the MacLeods. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century many McKenzies supported the Jacobite cause although, as was common, there were clan members on both sides at Culloden.

In Canada, Sir Alexander Mackenzie (1764–1820) was the noted explorer. The Mackenzie River is named after him. Two Mackenzie's have been prime ministers of Canada: Alexander Mackenzie (1822–92) was Canada's second Prime Minister (1873–1878) and William Lyon Mackenzie King, the 10<sup>th</sup>, (1921–1926, 1926–1930 and 1935–48).



Castle Leod  
[www.castleleod.org.uk](http://www.castleleod.org.uk)

The seat of Clan McKenzie since well before 1500 is Castle Leod at Strathpeffer, Ross-shire, one of the original McKenzie strongholds. This ancient Tower House has a Viking name. It is thought to have originally been a wooden fort built by Pictish tribesmen and later taken over by Viking invaders. In 1605 the tower was remodelled into a comfortable home by Sir Rory Mackenzie for his new wife, Dame Margaret MacLeod of Lewis, member of another clan we are related to.

The current chief of the clan is John Ruaridh Grant Mackenzie, 5th Earl of Cromartie, who resides at Castle Leod making the McKenzies one of the earliest line of families still living in the same place.<sup>38</sup>





## **Milne and Clan Gordon**

### **History and Tartans**

You will find many entries offering various possibilities for the origin of the name Milne. Most relate Milne to "miller" or "near a mill". Milne is a very common surname in Aberdeenshire where it was recorded as early as 1380.

The Milnes are not one of the ancient clans of Scotland. They did put themselves under the protection of clan Gordon, making them a "sept" of the clan. Like the Stewarts, the Gordon ancestors crossed from Normandy to Britain at the time of the Norman conquest by William the Conqueror in 1066.

Normans later settled in Berwickshire, in the Borders (along the border of England and Scotland). During the Wars of Scottish Independence in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Gordons supported William Wallace in the cause of independence from the English so their power increased and the Gordons later became the Earls of Aberdeen.

One Lord Aberdeen became Governor General of Canada: John Campbell Hamilton-Gordon, 1st Marquess of Aberdeen and Temair, Earl of Aberdeen from 1870 to 1916. He became the Governor General of Canada from 1893 to 1898. He and Lady Aberdeen had two homes and farms in the Okanagan Valley including one in Kelowna. They promoted migration to the Okanagan Valley and established the first commercial fruit growing operation here, supplying fruit to Canadian Pacific hotels and ships. (Their Kelowna home, built in colonial bungalow style, is a restaurant today.)

There are many uses of the name Gordon in Aberdeen. It is home to the famous Scottish military regiment, the Gordon Highlanders. My Grandpa, Edward Milne, was a Gordon Highlander in WWI. The regiment's history is well illustrated at the Gordon Highlanders Museum in Aberdeen. My Dad studied for his Electrical Engineering degree at Robert Gordon College, (today it is a university with some space age architecture) another example of the Gordons being important in the city.

Here's a convincing theory which ties in the name Milne, with clan Gordon having originated in Normandy: The name de Molendino (of the mill) was used in Aberdeenshire in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and quickly evolved into Myln. De Molendino is a Latinized form of de Molyneux which originates from the Norman family near Rouen, France. A family of this name came to England with William the Conqueror in 1066. For more on this theory, visit Electric Scotland.

<https://electricscotland.com/webclans/m/milne2.html>

It had been handed down from our previous generations that the Milne ancestors arrived in the UK from Flanders with King William III and Mary of Orange in 1689, however, Flemish immigrants came to Scotland from Flanders over a 600-year period, between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, starting with an influx at the time of William the Conqueror and the Norman invasion, 1066. At that time, Flanders covered much of what is now north-western France, western Belgium and most of the province of Zeeland in the Netherlands.

Many Flemish families settled in Aberdeenshire where they contributed to the modernization of Scotland through their skills in agriculture, engineering, architecture and weaving. They influenced the local Doric language, which has many similarities to Flemish. This is why my Grandmother who spoke Doric, could understand our Dutch neighbor, Mrs. Scheffel, when Grandma visited South Africa. The Scottish scone is said to come from the Flemish word schoon for example.

So there may well a connection between the Milnes and these Flemish settlers over the centuries.

Some of the Milnes in our family have jet black hair. Dad said it was believed that Scots who have black hair are descended from the Spanish who were ship wrecked on Scottish shores after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. The Armada was a Spanish attempt to invade England, and they were backed by many in Ireland and Scotland. Ships were driven north by bad weather after the battle and were wrecked on Irish and Scottish shores. Although the sailors were supposed to be captured, folk lore has it that many escaped and their descendants have black hair. There are many tales of what happened to the Armada ships which make fascinating reading. Dad did have black hair and a dark complexion that suntanned easily, more Spanish than the typical Scottish pale and freckled skin that burns easily. Cousin Kerry also has jet black hair.

### **Milne and Gordon Tartans**



**Gordon Dress Tartan (original)**, #1782  
registered in 1906



**Gordon Clan**, worn by the  
Gordon Highlander Regiment, #223  
registered in 1793



**Milne Dress Green Tartan** #3196,  
registered in 2007  
*This is the only modern Milne Tartan  
registered as a Clan/Family tartan. It is  
popular with highland dancers.*



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## Keillor History and Modern Tartan

Keillor is an ancient Scottish name, first found in Angus (Gaelic: Aonghas) part of the Tayside region, north of Dundee. (The area was formerly known as Forfar until 1928.) The Keillors apparently held a family seat at the settlement of Keillor in this area from very ancient times, perhaps even well before the Norman Conquest of 1066. Further investigation is needed to learn why the family did not form an official clan.

The Keillor name derives from the Scottish Gaelic word "gu leòr" meaning sufficient, enough or plenty. Although originally Scottish, Keillor was also used in Northern England, notably in Yorkshire.

Inverkeilor is a town in eastern Angus. The settlement of Keillor and Keillor Hill are in Perth and Kinross, the neighbouring county to Angus.

Mum was not aware of any clan connection on her Dad's side and in reliable listings of Scottish names Keillor is not included as part of a clan. (Some shopping and tourist websites do connect Keillor to various clans but this information is not reliable.)

My cousin Leigh in Queensland, Australia, believes the Keillors at Inverkeilor, were connected to the Campbell clan, one of the most powerful and infamous clans in Scotland. Many of the Keillors on her side of the family have Campbell as their middle name. Also, our Great Grandfathers' brother's mother-in-law was a Campbell. Many clan associations began with inter-clan marriage.

My Great Grandfather, George Keillor, was born in Inverkeilor in 1853. Leigh's Great Grandfather, John Campbell Keillor, was his youngest brother, born in 1861. John migrated to Australia and on May 12, 1886, married Emily Sampson of Chester, England, who had migrated to Australia with her family. John and Emily's descendants still live in Queensland, Australia. Leigh and I met online when I was researching the Keillor family for Mum 21 years ago in 2000. Leigh is a keen genealogist. It has been a real pleasure visiting Leigh and her family on my visits to Queensland and being in touch with her over the years.



**Keilar Tartan**, #10853, registered in 2013.

The closest tartan by name to Keillor, is the modern gold and green Keilar tartan, added to *The Scottish Register of Tartans* very recently, in 2013. The designer is a Scot whose family migrated to Australia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and changed the spelling of their name to Keilar. They have used the green and gold national colours of Australia for this tartan.

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## McGregor-Milne Family Tie and A Wedding at McLean House



Dennis Milne and Stephanie McGregor

Dennis and Stephanie both enjoyed sports and had met at a Motocross track where Dennis and Steph's brother were competing.

All the men in the party looked splendid in their formal kilted outfits. For their honeymoon cruise in the Caribbean, Dennis took the kilt with him for formal nights. He was a star on board with many women asking to have their photo taken with him.

Clan McGregor, MacGregor or Gregor, is one of Scotland's oldest clans, said to be descended from King Kenneth MacAlpin, the first king of Alba who formed the union between Picts and Scots. The most famous MacGregor is Rob Roy, the charismatic and legendary outlaw who became a folk hero.

On May 24, 1997, my nephew Dennis Milne married Stephanie McGregor at St. Helen's Church in Vineland, Ontario. The church sits in a vineyard creating a peaceful and beautiful setting for the wedding. Dennis and Steph's marriage gives us a link to Clan McGregor. Dennis and Steph are very proud of their Scottish heritage and chose a Scottish wedding for their special day.



Dennis's brothers Roger(left) and Peter with my son Julian at Dennis wedding



MacGregor Clan Tartan  
#3376 registered 1800

**Registration Notes:** This MacGregor tartan dates to the turn of the 18th-19th centuries. Writing in 2006, Sir Malcom MacGregor of MacGregor, Chief of Clan MacGregor wrote. "The exact origins are unknown, but it can be seen in the Cockburn Collection of the same period as the Highland Society of London sample of the Red and Black. It is not known if it was sealed in the same way as the Red and Black. Sir William Cockburn was a fellow member of the Society with Sir John MacGregor Murray."

"Wilsons of Bannockburn listed this tartan as MacGregor Murray so there may well have been a personal association with it on the part of my g-g-g-g grandfather. This tartan was worn by his only son, my g-g-g-grandfather as commander of the MacGregor Bodyguard during the King's visit to Edinburgh in 1822." The tartan appeared in every subsequent collection and book on clan tartans.

Then, on June 19, 1999, my son, Julian married Barbara Elizabeth Warner of Toronto. They had met while studying at Carleton University in Ottawa. Although they didn't choose a Scottish wedding, they were married at a Scottish house: McLean House, Sunnybrook Estates, Toronto, in a lovely garden ceremony with the reception held in the beautiful dining room. McLean House is one of Ontario's most splendid Georgian-style mansions.



Julian Egelstaff and Barbara Warner in McLean House



McLean House

Originally called Bay View, the house was built in 1928 by James Stanley McLean, philanthropist, and President and founder of Canada Packers meat company. McLean commissioned architects George Moorhouse and King Associates to design a country retreat for his family on 50 rolling acres. The stunning gardens were landscaped by Gordon Culham, a landscape architect who worked in the tradition of formal English country style.

McLean's ancestors were members of the ancient Clan MacLean whose ancestral seat is Duart Castle on the Isle of Mull. He was born in Durham, Ontario in 1876 and was a graduate of the University of Toronto. James McLean became one of Canada's richest and most powerful men.

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## Dunans – Logan's Castle and Clan Fletcher



Jill and Logan  
at Thanksgiving, 2020

Our family connections to Scotland expanded at Christmas 2019 when my Granddaughter, Jillian, purchased a Dunans Castle Laird Package as a Christmas present for her brother, Logan. The package gives Logan the right to use the decorative title, Laird of Dunans, and he is entitled to wear the Dunans Rising tartan.

The Laird package is part of a fund-raising scheme for the restoration and conservation of Dunans Castle, home of the Fletcher Clan of Dunans. The castle was badly damaged by fire in January, 2001, while operating as a five-star hotel.

Advertised as the perfect hotel for complete privacy, "the perfect location for a discreet retreat or top management meeting facility", it was considered by Madonna for her marriage to Guy Ritchie in 2000. Unfortunately, the owner at the time, Lord Mar, did not take the inquiry seriously and failed to respond to Madonna's request for a quote. (Madonna and Guy were later married in December, 2000, at Skibo Castle at an estimated cost of 2.5 million pounds.)



Dunans Castle  
[scottishlaird.co.uk](http://scottishlaird.co.uk)

The fire had started in the attic but the insurance company would not pay as they claimed the owners had ignored warnings about the unsafe condition of the castle's fireplaces. The castle was subsequently sold to the present owners, the Dixon-Spain's, who restored part of it to a family home and working house. In 2014 they launched an ambitious Conservation Plan for the main building and the bridge, with design concepts released in 2016.

Dunans Castle sits on land originally home to the Lamont Clan. It is situated on the Cowal Peninsula, in the western Highlands, near Glendaruel, about a 1.5-hour drive from Glasgow. There are records of dwellings on this site from 1590.

The name "Fletcher" comes from the Old French word, *flechier*; "maker of arrows". Originally fletchers followed and settled on the lands of the clans who employed them. Prior to 1700, the clan name was MacInleister which was then anglicised to Fletcher. The Fletchers claim descent from Kenneth MacAlpin, the first king of the union of Picts and Scots, 843. The clan is quite widespread in Scotland with different branches occupying several locations.

A bond of friendship existed between the Fletchers and the MacGregor Clan, a MacInleister having saved the life of the famous Scottish outlaw turned folk hero, Rob Roy MacGregor.

There was also a connection with the Stewarts of Appin, revealed in a stone crest at Dunans Castle. The Fletchers had intervened to retrieve Stewart cattle stolen by the MacDonald clan resulting in the Stewarts pledging protection to the Fletchers in the future.



Stewart of Appin & Fletcher  
Friendship plaque at Dunans  
[wikipedia.com](https://en.wikipedia.org)

The Fletchers were Jacobite supporters, however during the risings of 1745, they may have fought on both sides to avoid forfeiture of their land by the victors. This was not an uncommon practice as clans wanted to keep their land and homes so hedged their bets.

Sometime between 1715 and 1745, Archibald Fletcher, 9<sup>th</sup> Chief of the Fletcher clan, arrived at Dunans and started building his new home. His former castle, Achallader Castle, had been taken over by the Campbells through treachery and betrayal.

From 1864 the manor house was extended by architect Andrew Kerr into one of the finest examples of a Franco-Baronial castle in Scotland and the only significant example of this style in the west of Scotland. The new addition included four main apartments and 6 bedrooms.



Outstanding architectural points on the estate include the Chapel, the 'Grade C' listed Fletcher of Dunans Mausoleum, a rarity in Scotland, and the 'A' listed bridge, commissioned in honour of the Battle of Waterloo, designed by renowned Scottish civil engineer, Thomas Telford, in 1815.

Dunans Bridge and the Castle before the fire  
[scotclans.com](https://scotclans.com)

The Fletchers continued to live here until 1997, when the family sold the castle out of the Fletcher line following the death of Colonel Archibald Ian Douglas Fletcher of Dunans, OBE, Lord Lieutenant for Argyll and Bute. The Colonel had served with the Scots Guards and the BBC reports he was said to have been an inspiration for Ian Fleming's James Bond. Given Ian Fleming's own history, this indicates that the Colonel's WWII exploits included espionage, along with being in command.

There's a lot going on at Dunans, although all events and tours are currently on hold due to Covid-19. Normally, all types of celebrations – weddings, proposals, anniversaries, renewal of vows, retirements – can be held at the castle. For accommodation while the castle hotel is being restored, glamping with overnight stays in a shepherd's hut or the Laird's Retreat cottage are available. Water activities include fly-fishing, wild swimming and canoeing while estate tours, clay pigeon shooting, guided local walks, bike hire, pony trekking and more make up the land activities.

A page of tartans related to the Fletcher clan and those who have lived in the castle can be found here: <https://scottishlaird.co.uk/pages/other-tartans>. These include Rob Roy MacGregor Ancient, Stewart of Appin, MacDonald Modern and many more.



**Fletcher of Dunans**  
Clan/Family Tartan, #272  
registered in 1880



**Dunans Rising**  
Corporate Tartan #10821  
registered in 2013

Restriction: The wearing of this tartan is restricted to those who have aided the restoration of Dunans Castle.



**Fletcher of Dunans Modern**  
Not registered  
Posted on the Dunans Castle website, it looks like a hunting tartan.



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## PART IV



### Eachraidh aithghearr na h-Alba

#### A Brief History of Scotland, Highland Dress & Tartan



Bowhill House near Selkirk in The Borders  
Home of the Duke of Buccleuch, Chief of Clan Scott<sup>39</sup>  
*bowhillhouse.co.uk*

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## Eachraidi aithghearr na h-Alba

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

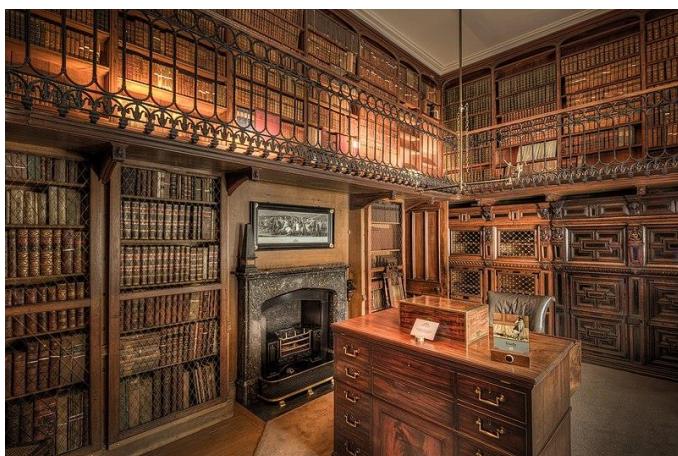
#### **The Land in the North and Its Ancient History**

Scotland's history is largely a story of migrations, invasions, clan feuds, intrigue and battles for independence; of invention, determination and survival. The Scottish have proved to be fierce on the battlefield, fiercely independent and fiercely proud of their heritage and culture. It's a complicated history coupled with folklore and legend which often make factual accounts of historic events difficult to confirm.

This land north of England is a captivating country of rolling hills in the south and higher mountains in the north with glens, lochs and rugged coastlines adding to the atmospheric beauty. From the mists, castles, manor houses and abbeys rise, many as romantic ruins. All are enduring witnesses to history.

The Lowlands in the northeast and south are more densely populated with all the major cities situated here: Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow and Edinburgh. The land is more fertile and not as steep as the Highlands.

The Borders south of Edinburgh, along the border with England, are particularly picturesque with hills, rivers and forests. The ruins of four abbeys add a touch of magic. The ruins of Trimontium Roman Fort are found at Newstead near Melrose.



Sir Walter Scott's Study  
at Abbotsford House<sup>40</sup>

Writer Sir Walter Scott's magnificent baronial manor, Abbotsford House, sits on the banks of the River Tweed near Melrose. The three Eildon Hills further south were his favourite view. Mum's family called them Anna, Betty and Eunice after the three girls.

The Highlands comprise one third of Scotland, covering the north and northwest. This includes the islands of the Hebrides, Orkney and Shetland which are wild, natural and sparsely populated. The entire Highlands region is largely an untamed wilderness, often called Scotland's 'Wild Heart'. Here nature thrives undisturbed. Ben Nevis, near Fort William is the highest peak in the UK at 4,413 ft (1,345m) above sea level. The Nevis range is a popular destination for skiing while all of Scotland offers wonderful, unspoiled hiking trails. Inverness, with only 46,000 residents in 2020, is considered the capital of the Highlands.



Skara Brae  
[orkneyjar.com](http://orkneyjar.com)

Across the Pentland Firth, Britain's most dangerous stretch of water, lies the Orkney archipelago. The archaeological sites on these islands are some of the most significant in the world dating back to 5,000 BC. Signs of farming and stone construction date from 3,500 BC.

The Skara Brae site is magical. Here, the earliest organized Neolithic homes are on display. Orkney's very early stone circles predate Stonehenge. It is believed that the mysterious stone circles found across Britain originated here. The trend moved south from Orkney.

When the Romans invaded in 82 AD, they were confronted by naked men, painted blue, who tormented them with guerilla style warfare. These were the Picts, the aboriginal people of Scotland. Body painting and tattoos were part of their culture. The Picts continually harassed the Romans until 122 AD when the Romans decided Caledonia wasn't worth the trouble. They retreated to the north of England to build Hadrian's wall. This was the northern border of Rome's civilized empire – constructed to keep the "barbarians" out. The wall stretched from the River Tyne in the east to the Solway Firth in the west, with forts and watch towers dotted along the entire length. Parts of it still stand today. The "barbarians" continued to attack the Romans by making raids on Hadrian's Wall.

The Romans made a second attempt at taking Caledonia. They moved north and around 142 AD built the Antonine Wall between the Forth and Clyde rivers. It was built of turf rather than stone and had forts to accommodate the 6,000 to 7,000 men stationed here. In 158 AD it was abandoned and again Hadrian's Wall became the border of the Roman Empire. The Romans were never able to completely subdue Caledonia or make it a lasting part of their empire.

Caledonia was the Roman name for the land north of the Forth and Clyde rivers. When King Kenneth MacAlpin was crowned King of the Picts and Scots in 843 AD this region was called Alba and in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the name Scotland came into use.

The Picts and the Scots were the dominant tribes of early Scotland. The Scots were Celts who migrated into Scotland from Ireland in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Since Ireland was free from Roman invasion,

the Celtic culture had continued to flourish and they brought these customs and the Gaelic language with them to Scotland. The origin of the Picts is still unknown despite several theories.

The Vikings arrived in 793 AD, at first raiding monasteries in Scotland and England for their treasures. Trading and colonization began later with Viking bases established on the islands from Shetland all the way south to the Isle of Man. Orkney and Shetland were under Norwegian sovereignty until 1468 when they were returned to Scotland. Vikings on the western islands were also loyal to the King of Norway. Overtime, those who settled formed clans: MacLeod, Gunn, MacDonald, MacQueen and MacAulay are clans of Norse origin.

### **The Rise of the Clans**

The formation and rise of the clans from around 1,100 is particularly important, especially in the Highlands. The name Clan comes from "Clann", Gaelic for family, and it was a family loyalty that clan members shared. Each clan was a group of people, occupying a certain location and sharing a common ancestor.



The Nevis Range, Home of Clan Cameron  
James Orpwood, [wildernessscotland.com](http://wildernessscotland.com)

It was a system where identity was tied up with land. The clan Chief acted as king, protector and judge in the clan system. Chiefs were very influential throughout Scottish history, even making or breaking royalty. Clan members were first loyal to their Chief, ahead of the king. The support of clans was crucial for the success of members of the ruling class and any battles they were involved in. Clans could also be ruthless with violent struggles for dominance taking place for centuries.

By 1200, the Feudal System was fully integrated in Lowland Scotland with its reorganization of trade, establishment of towns and markets and its streamlining of authority, however, it was never fully implemented in the Highlands, a critical difference between the two regions. In the Highlands, a two-tier system emerged: The aristocratic feudal structure layered against the clan system.

There's a lot going on during these early centuries, and yes, Macbeth was a king of Scotland. Shakespeare didn't always get his history and geography right but Macbeth was king from 1040 to 1057 and Scone (pronounced Scoon) was the place where Scottish kings were crowned.

## Social Advancement and Language



St. Andrew's University, founded 1413  
[st-andrews.ac.uk](http://st-andrews.ac.uk)

Scotland also progressed socially and already had three universities by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century: St. Andrews, 1413; Glasgow, 1451 and Aberdeen, 1495. Under the Renaissance King James IV (ruled 1488 – 1513), many advances were made. Flemish migrants helped to modernize Scotland through their skills in agriculture, engineering, architecture and weaving, arriving in three waves between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In 1507 – 1508, James IV introduced printing to Scotland with the first printing press established in Edinburgh, his capital city thanks to the construction of the Palace of Holyrood House. Scotland became the most literate country in Europe by the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. There were schools and libraries in every town and people of all classes could read and write. The well-organized education system became the envy of the world.

The education movement had started out as a religious idea. People needed to be literate so they could read the bible. The resulting, superior education system created leaders in all fields and inventors of many things we take for granted today especially in medicine and engineering; the steam engine, the telephone, the bicycle, penicillin and insulin to name a few. Books like *How the Scots Invented the Modern World* by Arthur Herman and *Great Scots! How the Scots Created Canada* by Matthew Shaw explain just how innovative the Scots were.

James IV was also the last king to speak Gaelic, as he made Scots the national language. Gaelic did continue to be spoken, particularly in the Highlands, but Scots was now the official language of Scotland. Robbie Burns, Scotland's National Bard, wrote most of his remarkable works in Scots in the 18<sup>th</sup> century giving them a special sound and metre when spoken aloud. At that time, English had started taking over. Sir Walter Scott (1771 – 1832) wrote his works in English which made them more accessible to the educated in Europe. Scott became extremely popular.



The River Tweed at Coldstream  
Scotland on the left and England on the right<sup>41</sup>

## The Scottish Border

At the time of Alba, the border with Northumbria ran from the Firth of Clyde to the Firth of Forth, roughly between Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Scotland's border with England was finally fixed on September 25, 1247 by the Treaty of York. It runs much further south, from the Solway Firth in the west to the mouth of the River Tweed in the east.

## **Scottish – English Battles**

English kings did not respect the border or the fact that a proud people capable of ruling themselves lived to the north. English forces frequently crossed into Scotland to take over land and exert the power of English kings. Ongoing struggles with the English are therefore a major theme in Scottish history. Here are four of the most significant battles against the English:

### **Stirling Bridge – September 11, 1297 – William Wallace**

This was a successful battle in The First War of Scottish Independence. King Edward I of England (also known as Edward Longshanks and the Hammerer of the Scots) was determined to extend his domination in Scotland, Wales and France. Having crushed Wales, inflicted taxes and conscripted Welshmen to fight in his wars, Edward turned to Scotland intending to do the same.

His forces invaded Scotland in 1296 and soon the castles of Edinburgh, Perth, Roxburgh and Stirling were in English hands. Edward thought Scotland was taken care of, but he underestimated the Scots. Bloody Skirmishes began with William Wallace rising to become a popular leader in the fight against the English. Wallace brought ordinary people together, united for a cause, and taught them how to fight. Andrew Murray and his band of rebels had also been inflicting blows on the English. Wallace and Murray became wanted men and Edward decided to send more forces to support the garrison at Stirling Castle. The two rebel groups weren't going to allow that to happen. They came together at Abbey Craig, on the slopes by Stirling Bridge, the only crossing point on the River Forth. The English arrived at the other side. An attempt was made to have the Scots come to terms with the superior English forces but Wallace's response was "Tell your commander that we are not here to make peace but to do battle to defend ourselves and liberate our kingdom." The English made their move and began crossing the narrow bridge – a few knights, horses and well-armed foot soldiers at a time. From their high position on the slopes, the Scots were able to hurl spears down at the English to create complete chaos; then they attacked successfully. The English destroyed the bridge and fled.

A group of Scottish guerilla fighters had overcome the best professional army in Europe. The supposedly invincible English army had been defeated. Murray was injured in the fighting and died of wounds a few months later. William Wallace became a Scottish hero and legend, dubbed a knight and made Guardian of Scotland, leader but not king of the country. His fight had always been to restore King John to the throne of Scotland, not to advance his own position.

### **Bannockburn – June 24, 1314 – Robert the Bruce**

Edward I took the loss at Stirling Bridge personally and vowed to end the rebellion himself. He led a bigger force of well-armed and trained soldiers back into Scotland. The English won at Falkirk and Wallace was made an outlaw, captured then executed in London. Scotland was under Edward's rule again. Edward I died in 1307. Edward II succeeded him.

Meanwhile, Robert the Bruce had seized power to become King Robert I of Scotland in 1306. He set about taking back his country from the English with ongoing struggles against the occupation. Roxburgh and Edinburgh Castles were taken by the Scots in 1314. Stirling Castle remained occupied by an English garrison.

The Scots under Robert the Bruce repelled the English in the well planned and executed Battle of Bannockburn, near Stirling, June 24, 1314. Once again, the terrain helped the Scots. They advanced in the early morning while the English were still half asleep and unprepared. Chaos was created by Scottish archers and spearmen. The floodplain and steep banks of the burn (river) made the cavalry effective and escaping the battle scene impossible.

### **Flodden Field – September 9, 1513 – King James IV**

Battles and skirmishes continued between the two countries. The Battle of Flodden Field in 1513 is a notable example. It was expected to be a brief skirmish with the English to fulfill Scotland's obligations to France which was at war with England. As it turned out, the English had come to win and were much better prepared than the Scots. After only two hours, in an English field south of Coldstream, the Scottish King, James IV, 10 Earls, 9 Lords of Parliament and 29 clan chiefs and nobles were slain.



Coldstream Guard Ken and I at Flodden Field Memorial Service<sup>42</sup>

It was an unexpected tragedy which led to the Scottish folk tune, *Fleurs (flowers) of the Forest*. "The fleurs of the forest have a' wede awa" a poetic way of expressing that the leaders had been killed.

Flodden was the last medieval battle fought on English soil. Never again would troops rely on the longbow, arrows, swords and spears as more sophisticated weapons would take over.

### **Culloden – April 16, 1746 – Bonnie Prince Charlie**

The union of the crowns did come in 1603 under the Stuart King James VI of Scotland/James I of England. The Union of Parliaments followed in 1707, creating the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Clan chiefs who supported the Union were awarded Dukedoms and pensions in Scotland.

However, many Scots felt betrayed by the union with England which put English interests first and used Scottish taxes to pay for English wars. Highland clans were now subject to English rule. There was widespread opposition.

Then, even before the death of the Stuart Queen, Anne, the English decided to appoint a German to the throne of Great Britain without any consultation with the Scots. This was George I, the first

Hanoverian king who took the throne in 1714. George knew nothing of Scotland and could barely speak any English. Prince Charles Edward Stuart, grandson of James II, and the Stuart heir to the throne, was completely overlooked, partly because he was a Catholic. English rules of succession stated that the King or Queen had to be Protestant. The Jacobite Rebellion went into full gear; the movement which attempted to return the Stuarts to the throne.

The rebellion caused division amongst the clans and within families. Some accepted the union with England seeing this was a new era and there was no going back while others never gave up the Stuart cause. It was a time of upheaval. The Prince was known as The Young Pretender by those loyal to the union with England. The Jacobites called him Bonnie Prince Charlie.

The Prince had been living in exile in Italy. (The Stuarts had been ousted from the throne during the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and had lived in exile in Europe since then.) He returned to Scotland to lead the rebellion with one thing in mind: to take the throne he had been raised to believe was rightfully his.

This was not just a clansmen's rebellion. Women played their part with an estimated 150 women in arms aiding the Jacobite cause, notably Lady Anne Mackintosh, wife of Angus, chief of Clan Mackintosh. Angus was a loyalist, a Captain in the Black Watch regiment of loyalist clansmen, but Colonel Anne, 'the beautiful rebel', was from Clan Farquharson who were Jacobite supporters. Among her many exploits were her conversion of many people to the Jacobite cause and command of an 'ambush' of loyalist soldiers near her home during which the soldiers turned and fled back to Inverness.

Despite successful conflicts against the English taking place from the south to the north of Scotland, and succeeding in invading England as far south as Derby, the Jacobite movement ultimately failed at the Battle of Culloden east of Inverness in 1746 with tragic consequences. Bonnie Prince Charlie had run out of funds to support the cause and supply his men. A shipment of gold from France, which might have saved the day, was stolen by the loyalist Clan McKay. The hungry and under armed Jacobite clansmen were defeated by the merciless Duke of Cumberland and his English and German forces – and loyalist clansmen who formed the Black Watch regiment.

Atrocities continued during the days that followed as Cumberland showed no lenience towards the Highlanders. The Prince had escaped and was a wanted man. He was on the run through the western Highlands and islands for five months, relying on aid from the Jacobite clans, before reaching France and spending the remainder of his life on the continent.

### **Culloden's Aftermath – Highland Suppression**

Following Culloden, in an effort to end the Highlanders' ability to revolt, the Act of Proscription was passed in 1746. The wearing of Highland dress was prohibited across Scotland except by army regiments which meant tartan could not be worn, bagpipes and the Gaelic language were banned

and arms were seized across the Highlands and islands. The authority of the Clan Chieftains reverted to the Crown with the Heritable Jurisdictions Act of 1746. The Jacobite rebellion had backfired.

In 1782, the ban on Highland dress finally ended resulting in a renewed pride in Highland culture and tartan. Soon Lowland and Border clans who had never worn Highland dress, began to wear tartan. Scottish regiments had been allowed to wear their kilted uniforms during the ban so they had become a symbol of the Highlands. This new popularity in Highland dress as a symbol of Scottish nationalism also affected tartan design and production. For more see the Highland Dress and Tartan histories below.

Next came what has come to be known as the Highland Clearances, one of the most controversial episodes in Scotland's history. Thousands of people across Scotland were removed from their land to make way for large-scale sheep farming over a period from around the mid 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Profit had become more important than people, a major shift in thinking for Scotland. The plan was to move crofters to the coast where they could fish and gather sea weed for the fertilizer industry, however the kelp market failed and most were left in severe poverty.

The situation wasn't as severe in the Lowlands and Borders where there were many towns and industries so people had options. The worst hit was the far north where crofters lived on desolate land. It was hard to eke out any kind of living there to begin with and there were no alternatives for them once collecting seaweed was no longer viable. This forced an estimated 70,000 people to emigrate abroad. The clearances took on the name, Highland Clearances as the north was the hardest hit area; an extremely dark chapter in Scotland's history.

### **Scotland Becomes an Early Tourist Hot Spot**



Writers Sir Walter Scott (left) & Robbie Burns  
Courtesy Hamish MacPherson  
The National Scot, Dec, 19, 2016

Despite the drama of Scottish history, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Scotland captured the imagination of the English and Europeans through the writings of Scottish authors, notably Sir Walter Scott. Travellers desired to see and experience this ancient, natural and mysterious land depicted in poems and novels inspired by Scottish history and legend. The scenic Highlands were a welcome escape from overcrowded cities being quickly transformed by the Industrial Revolution.

One of the early visitors was the German composer, Felix Mendelssohn, who visited Scotland in 1829. On seeing the island of Mull in the Inner Hebrides, he was moved to compose his *Hebrides Overture*, better known as *Fingal's Cave*. (The publisher renamed it *Fingal's Cave*, after the popular spot on the island of Staffa which Mendelssohn had also visited, becoming sea sick en route.)

The Royals were attracted to Scotland as well. The visit of George IV to Edinburgh in 1822 was a huge success. Then Queen Victoria fell in love with the Highlands on visits in 1842 and 44. The Balmoral estate near Aberdeen was purchased by her husband, Prince Albert in 1852 with the construction of Balmoral Castle completed in 1856. Balmoral became, and continues to be, the Royal family's home in Scotland, a place to escape for relaxation and rejuvenation. Balmoral is their private family estate, not a part of the Crown Estates. These royal seals of approval further increased Scotland's appeal.

### **The Scottish Nationalist Movement**

Meanwhile, the Scottish Independence movement did not die with Culloden. It continued to grow. The Scottish National Party (SNP) was eventually founded in 1934. It is a Scottish nationalist, regionalist, centre left and social-democratic political party. Its first member of parliament in London was elected in a by-election for Motherwell in 1945 but he lost it in the general election later that year.

In 1997 the people of Scotland voted in favour of a Scottish Parliament with the first elections taking place in 1999. The SNP became the opposition party after this election and has formed the Scottish government since the 2007 election. Today the party leads Scotland under First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, a law graduate of the University of Glasgow.

In 2014 Scotland held a referendum on Scottish Independence. The result was 55.3% No and 44.7% Yes with a turnout of 84.6%. There is a keen interest in a second referendum since the Brexit vote which has taken the UK out of Europe, however, at time of writing, English PM Boris Johnson has refused the request and ignored the change of status of the UK due to Brexit, saying the 2014 Scottish referendum was a "once in a generation opportunity".

The fight for independence continues.

### **Scotland's Economy**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, Scotland became a leader in several industries. Ship building at George Brown shipyards in Greenock was cutting edge in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, turning out vessels as famous as the transatlantic liners *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth*. The industry did fall into decline later as more modern facilities in Europe and Asia took over the industry.

Today the top economic sectors are:

- **Oil and Gas:** Aberdeen became Europe's energy capital with the discovery of North Sea oil in the 1960's, suddenly bolstering the Scottish economy. The sector continues to be a major economic player but there are plans to become more diversified in the energy field as the demand for oil and the North Sea deposits are both expected to dwindle.

- **The textile industry** which continues to thrive with the production of highest quality lambswool, cashmere and tweed. It is renowned worldwide and is an important part of the economy today.
- **Tourism** is a top producer attracting visitors from around the world. 8% of Scottish employment is involved in tourism serving 15.1 million visitors in 2018. In 2020, the Scottish Highlands were voted the "Top UK Destination" in a survey conducted by Wanderlust Magazine. Edinburgh placed 4<sup>th</sup>. There are six UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Scotland. The National Trust for Scotland maintains 129 properties of natural, historical and cultural significance.
- **Whisky production** continues to be a leading industry with a report in 2019 indicating it is more productive than the energy sector. Exports are worth £4.9 billion annually. Whisky distilleries are the third most popular tourist attraction in Scotland hosting 2.2 million visitors annually, before Covid-19.

## Scottish Sports

The home of golf, curling and Highland games, once again Scotland has delivered something special to the world.

**Highland Games** are mentioned as far back as the 11<sup>th</sup> century. This collection of heavy sports requiring great strength, includes shot put, tossing the caber (a very long log), hammer throw, tug-o-war and weight for height (throwing a weight over a raised bar). These ancient sports continue today at Highland Games events around the world. Fergus, Ontario hosts one of Canada's best Highland Games and Scottish Festival each summer.

**Golf** originated in Scotland in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The first golf club was established in Edinburgh in 1744 with the first 18-hole round being played at St. Andrews in 1764.

Scottish links courses are renowned for being extremely challenging to play. Set on windswept coastlines on natural terrain, they are highly respected by serious golfers. The prestigious Open Championship was founded in 1860 and first played at Prestwick Golf Club. The Open is always held on coastal links courses in either Scotland, Northern Ireland or England attracting the best golfers in the world. When held in Scotland, The Old Course at St. Andrews, Carnoustie Golf Links, Turnberry or Muirfield are the venues of choice for this celebrated event.

**Curling** originated in Scotland in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was first played on frozen ponds and lochs. It's one more thing the Scots brought to Canada before 1800.

The quality of curling stones is crucial to success and here Scotland has excelled once again. Curling stones need to glide across a sheet of ice. The quartz-free Blue Hone granite from the island of Ailsa Craig is ideal for creating the perfect running surface of a curling stone. Ailsa Craig's common Green granite is perfect for the body of the stone.

All curling stones for the Olympics are made by Kays of Scotland using granite from Ailsa Craig. Kays has been producing curling stones since 1851.

There's a Canadian connection with curling stone manufacturing: The only other quarry for curling stone granite is Trefor Granite Quarry in Wales. This quarry has an exclusive agreement with the Canada Curling Stone Company in Komoka, Ontario, to provide the granite for their stones.

### **Bagpipes and Spurtles**

These two unique items deserve a mention. They are just two of the many unusual items created by the Scots.

Bagpipes are a medieval instrument which appeared in different forms across Europe. The sound is unusual as bagpipes provide a melody and a background drone at the same time, requiring a lot of skill and coordination to play. Scottish bagpipes rose to the level of national icon and are associated worldwide with Scotland. It's a sound people seem to love or hate, but few things are as stirring as a marching pipe band dressed in Highland splendour. Others seem to agree as the Edinburgh Tattoo drew 220,000 spectators in 2019 and a TV audience of millions.<sup>43</sup>



A Scottish Spurtle

The Spurtle is a straight, wooden cooking utensil, an essential tool used for stirring porridge. It helps prevent lumps from forming. Also good for soups and stews; superb for whipping mashed potatoes. The spurtle dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> century and is particularly popular in the Highlands where the annual World Porridge Championships are held. It usually features a thistle on the top. No good Scottish home should be without one!



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## The Evolution of Highland Dress

What is internationally considered Scottish dress originated in the Highlands. The first outfit was a Great Kilt; a belted plaid or great wrap. This was a length of tartan cloth 16 to 18 feet long and 6 feet wide. It covered the shoulders, was belted at the waist and hung down to the knees. Men wore these tartan outfits while women wore plain, long dresses. Long tartan shawls, were used for added warmth.

The kilt as a type of skirt did not appear until the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Traditionally kilts were made from 8 yards (7.3m) of material. Regimental and formal occasion kilts still use 8 yards as it allows for deeper pleating at the back and is harder wearing. With proper care, it can last a lifetime. As kilts became more popular, 5 yards (4.5m) was used for day-to-day wear.

For a traditional length of a kilt, kneel on the ground. Your kilt should be touching the ground around you.

Tartan truis or trews (trousers) emerged in 1538. They were later adopted as part of regimental uniforms.



Scottish Country Dancer wearing a plaid.  
[tartanauthority.com](http://tartanauthority.com)

Plaids and the shorter Fly Plaids hang over the shoulder and often feature a clan badge or decorative Scottish pins to help hold them in place. They evolved from the part of the Great Kilt worn over the shoulders. Note that Americans tend to call tartan, plaid, however, in Scotland, plaid refers to the tartan material worn over the shoulder. *Plaid* comes from the Gaelic, roughly meaning blanket.

- The Long Plaid or Pipers' Plaid is 3.5 yard or 54-inch wide tartan (3.2 metres x 137 cms). It is reserved for Pipe Bands, civilian or regimental, as it is cumbersome for an individual to wear.
- The Small Plaid or Fly Plaid is shorter and easier to wear. Pipe band drummers wear the Fly Plaid to give their arms more freedom. Tartan shops point out that the plaid should be ordered at the same time as your kilt to make sure they are cut from the same tartan batch.

Regimental and pipe band uniforms feature the No 1 Full Highland Dress regalia creating a dashing look which includes a Busby, a military headdress made of fur. Since the 1980's a more casual and lighter "Day Dress" has also been in use by competitions.

Highland dress accessories evolved to include:



No 1 Full Highland Dress regalia  
[scottishbagpipers.com](http://scottishbagpipers.com)

A **sporran**, Gaelic for purse, worn in front of the kilt to replace pockets. These can be very decorative and made of different material depending on the purpose of the kilt. Originally they were made of leather.

**Kilt pins** hold the kilt flap to the main part.

**Clan crests** were worn to show clan allegiance.

**Kilt hose**, thick woolen socks worn close to the knee which in some cases have tartan details called flashes.

Tucked in the top of kilt hose is the **skian doo**. (Gaelic, sgian-dubh). This is a very decorative, single edged-knife used for cutting food, material and for protection, first used in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Various types of **tams and caps** may be worn, again depending on the purpose of the outfit. These evolved over time.

**Shirts, sometimes with lace, a waist coat and jacket** became a part of kilt outfits for formal wear, weddings and Scottish Country Dancing.

Women did not wear kilts until the 20<sup>th</sup> century when they were embraced as fashionable attire. Then, mini kilts appeared in the 1960's. Long kilts to the ankle also became popular for more dressy occasions. Kilt style skirts in plain colours also appeared.

The Traditional dress for women for Scottish Country Dancing is a long white dress with a plaid, as Auntie Anna is wearing below.



Auntie Anna and Uncle John were excellent Scottish country dancers

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## Tartan: Scotland's Masterpiece of Weaving



Kilted hikers. Kilts are worn for any occasion or activity  
[tartanauthority.com](http://tartanauthority.com)

Tartan definitely has enduring appeal. This fine, woven, woollen material with its chequered pattern in various colours, is very distinctive. Turning it into a kilt, is a work of art.

Tartan designs were originally decided by local weavers rather than by clan chiefs so tartans were associated with places rather than clans. It was not until the late 16<sup>th</sup> century that clan chiefs began to adopt a particular style of tartan.

The tradition of wearing regimental tartan started in 1713. It became the standardized uniform for army regiments in Scotland and the colonies who proudly wore their regimental tartans. Soon the clans started to adopt standardization as well. They studied ancestral portraits to identify their traditional designs for use as clan tartans.

Following the Battle of Culloden, there was an increasing nostalgia for the Highland past and once the Highland dress ban was over, more markets opened up.

The firm of William Wilson & Sons of Bannockburn dominated the tartan trade for more than a century, keeping meticulous records and pattern books. Wilson recorded the 'true' names of the tartans produced by local weavers and soon had more than 200 patterns in his books, including many tartans for new customers. He also introduced the new 'fancy' tartans with names such as Caledonia, Robin Hood and Wellington.

In 1815, members of the Highland Society of London requested a sample of clan tartan from each of the Highland chiefs. The swatches were to be signed and sealed in the chief's own hand.

The visit of George IV to Edinburgh in 1822 brought out Scottish pageantry and Highland garb. This visit gave a seal of approval for Highland dress creating another upsurge in tartan's popularity.

James Logan spent five years researching the first significant study on the subject of tartan. In 1831 he published *The Scottish Gael or Celtic Manners, as Preserved among the Highlanders*.

The demand was so strong and Scotland had become so popular that new designs, many with dubious authenticity, were being created. Corporate tartans also started to appear for organizations like Highland games societies, Scottish dance clubs and pipe bands. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century cities around the world started having their own tartan designed. Individuals have also registered their personal

designs. The Stewart F1 Racing Team registered a tartan worn by its personnel and used to decorate its cars.

In 1963 the Scottish Tartans Society began listing tartans in the Scottish Tartans World Register. In 1996 the Scottish Tartans Authority took over registration.

*The Scottish Register of Tartans* was established in November 2008 to promote and preserve information about historic and contemporary tartans from Scotland and throughout the world. It includes all tartans formerly recorded by the Scottish Tartans Society (STS), the Scottish Tartans Authority (STA) and/or the Scottish Tartans World Register (STWR).

James Logan's book listed 55 tartans in 1831. Today there are more than 7,000 registered with clan tartans coming in a variety of designs:

- **Hunting** tartans tend to be green and brown as camouflage against nature.
- **Dress** tartans are brighter in colour with more whites and yellows, used for celebrations and highland dance.
- **Ancient** tartans are softer in colour due to fabrics being coloured using animal and vegetable dyes before 1860.
- **Modern** tartans have stronger, bolder colours.
- **Regimental** tartans are worn by army regiments.

Today tartan is worn for any occasion, event or activity. For modern Scottish weddings, traditional dress and modern designs are both in vogue.



Designer Tartan Wedding Outfits  
[tartanauthority.com](http://tartanauthority.com)



Traditional Scottish Wedding Outfit  
[tartanauthority.com](http://tartanauthority.com)

In order to cater to the influx of visitors and make a sale to the visitors who started to flock to Scotland in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a souvenir industry grew with many new clans, tartans, mottos and crests invented to include all Scottish family names. The trend continues today with these modern creations existing alongside the ancient and traditional. Many Scottish websites that seem authoritative are actually linked to shopping sites. Any new information found there connecting family names and their clans/tartan connections needs to be carefully verified.



## NOTES & SOURCES

### NOTES

**Re. Ship prefix letters:** The names of Liners and early cruise ships used prefix letters to describe the type of vessel it was; usually describing the type of propulsion operating the ship or its purpose. All ships have descriptive letters but we rarely see them used now for cruise ships. This practice has fallen away over the years. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, I have included prefix letters on the liners and early cruise ships which used a prefix when they were in service. If the name is repeated often in a paragraph, the prefix is only used on the first mention of the ship.

SS = Steam Ship

RMMV = Royal Mail Motor Vessel

RMS = Royal Mail Ship

#### Part I

**1** – Re the end of WWII: Hitler's Generals knew the war was over with the allied invasion of Europe on D-Day, June 6, 1944 however, the delusional determination of Hitler caused the war to continue to May, 1945 causing the death of innumerable military and civilians across Europe during those months. Following Hitler's suicide on April 30, 1945, Germany surrendered unconditionally within 10 days on both the Eastern and Western fronts. The war in Europe was finally over.

**2** – East Moor closed to flying in June 1946 and was left to decay thereafter. There is now a caravan park at the remains of the airfield. Description of East Moor RAF Airfield from these sources:

<https://www.415sqn.com/east-moor-stn.html>

[http://www.atlantikwall.co.uk/atlantikwall/ey\\_east\\_moor.php](http://www.atlantikwall.co.uk/atlantikwall/ey_east_moor.php)

<http://www.ukairfieldguide.net/airfields/East-Moor>

**3** – Before she met my Dad, Mum was engaged to Roy Johnson, a US Navy Medic she met in Ireland during the war. They only dated once such was the wartime attitude to relationships. Sadly, she never let Roy know that she had met Bill and called off her engagement to Roy. She had a ticket to go to the States on the *Queen Mary* to marry Roy but never used it. Roy wrote to my Auntie Anna in Earlston a few years later to find out what had happened to Mum. Very sad. I did some research on Roy and it looks like he became a Doctor and continued to live in Rhode Island, New England. He died in the 1990's.

Roy had a younger brother, Roland, who was in the US Navy. He was killed in action in the Pacific and buried at Punch Bowl cemetery in Hawaii. We visited his grave when we were in Hawaii in 1969.

It is curious to me that we were so involved with Mum's ex fiancé she only dated once when Dad never mentioned his first marriage from the day he married Mum.

**4** – Banns were a legal requirement in Scotland to announce a marriage in church on three successive Sundays in case there is any impediment to the marriage required. They existed from 1876 to 1978.

**5** – The Caledonian opened in 1903 as the hotel for the Caledonian Railway Company. Today it is home to two Michelin-starred restaurants and the only Guerlain spa in the UK.

Here are details from <https://www.historichotels.org/hotels-resorts/waldorf-astoria-edinburgh-the-caledonian/history.php>

"Construction finally began in 1899, and when it concluded some four years later, the new building amazed all who saw it. Greeting visitors was the beautifully crafted, rose-coloured façade of the hotel's front entrance. Once inside, guests found an extensive selection of 205 different lodgings, as well as gold-painted ceilings, marble columns, and a stunning grand staircase. With great pride, the Caledonian Railway Company christened the new building, "The Caledonian Hotel," in 1903. ... Known affectionately as "the Caley," the building became one of the most esteemed hotels in all of Edinburgh."

"When Hilton Hotels acquired the Caledonian in 2000, it was still entertaining countless visitors, including many movie stars, international dignitaries, and royal monarchs. The Caledonian Hotel was even the site of a highly important European Council meeting that took place during 1992, in which prominent European politicians drafted the European Union's Edinburgh Agreement. After a substantial period of renovations, Hilton relaunched the hotel as the "Waldorf Astoria Edinburgh – The Caledonian" in 2014. Now a member of Historic Hotels Worldwide, this fantastic historic destination continues to be an internationally respected luxury hotel."

**6** – Michael had qualified for his private pilot's licence at the age of 15 and had to wait till his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday for his licence. He had a highly successful career in aviation, flying as a bush pilot, executive jet pilot for Alcan Aluminum, First Officer and Captain for airlines in Canada and England: Skyways International, Dan Air, Wardair, Canadian, Air Canada and eventually as a 747-400 Captain for Singapore Airlines from 1994 until his retirement in 2003. He enjoyed the lifestyle while based in Singapore and flying all over the world for Singapore's award-winning airline, often ranked top airline in the world.

**7** – The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Head Office (1931) is 34 storeys and was the tallest building in the British Empire from 1931 to 1962. However, storeys are not standard heights. It rises 476 feet above street level.

Today, right next door is the One King West residential/hotel complex where Julian owns two suites, including 3901 which faces the old Bank of Commerce observation level; not five stories higher as the floor number would indicate. One King West comprises the original Toronto Dominion Bank building (1914) and a new 52-storey tower. <https://www.onekingwest.com/>

**8** – Abbeythune Estate descriptions: *Angus Forfarshire, The Land and People, Descriptive and Historical*, Vol V by Alex J. Warden, Charles Alexander & Co., Dundee, 1885. In the Library of The University of California Los Angeles collection.

**9** – *Alice Paul: Claiming Power*, by J.D. Zahniser, Amelia R. Fry, Oxford University Press, 2014 and

*Conversation with Alice Paul*, The Suffragists Oral History Project, University of California, 1976. [http://content.cdlib.org/view?docId=kt6f59n89c&doc.view=entire\\_text](http://content.cdlib.org/view?docId=kt6f59n89c&doc.view=entire_text)

**10** – Winsley Hurst House is now called Hurst House. View photos at:

<https://hursthousewoodford.wordpress.com/> and

<https://www.pettyson.co.uk/about-us/our-blog/406-hurst-house-woodford-green-s-naked-beauty>

**11** – While going through Mum's boxes of memorabilia, I came across a post card of Birnam. Mum had written on the back "Where Mum and Dad met", so it may have been the other way around, that Grandma Susan was on holiday in Birnam and that's how they met.

**12** – Elizabeth Catherine Jane Deeks, MBE: I found the exact award Elizabeth received from the Queen and the year here:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1991\\_Birthday\\_Honours](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1991_Birthday_Honours)

**13** – Online searches indicate that Witold Gronkowski married Stanislawa Borowicz and they had one child, Antoni, born in 1948, in Broxburn, East Lothian, Scotland. (Antoni died in 1983). Witold was born in Zaporze, Lubelskie, Poland on November 15, 1916 and passed away on July 14, 2017 in

Dunfermline, Fife, Scotland, so he lived to be 100. Many Polish soldiers remained in Britain after the end of WWII as Witold apparently did.

**14** – *Fatal Accident*, newspaper piece in Mum's 'Earlston Album' scrapbook. Probably from The Berwickshire News, Monday, May, 31, 1943, the newspaper which also reported the court case.

**15** – Grace's full name was Grizel Falconer McLeish Waterston, born February 21, 1897, died October 18, 1989 in Coldstream. Grace was from Edinburgh. She had a daughter, Margaret, from her previous marriage and was divorced from Mr. Wilson. Grace and Alec Keillor married on February 21, 1945 at Gas Works House, Earlston with Banns read in the Church of Scotland. He was 52 and she was 47 at the time. Alec's eldest daughter and her husband, Auntie Anna and Uncle John, were witnesses.

**16** – 7 Acre Street, Nairn, where George and Betsy Keillor lived, is still there. It has been modernized inside and rendered on the front. It sold in March 2017 and there are photos of it at time of writing at this website:

<https://www.zoopla.co.uk/property/7-acre-street/nairn/iv12-4ad/11472308>

**17** – James Scott Skinner was a Scottish violinist, fiddler, dancing master and composer, one of the most influential fiddlers in Scottish traditional music, known as "the Strathspey King".

**18** – Description of Letham's origins from the Editors of The Gazatteer of Scotland.

[https://www.scottish-places.info/towns/townfirst396.html#:~:text=A%20village%20in%20central%20Angus,Dempster%20\(1732%20D%201818\)](https://www.scottish-places.info/towns/townfirst396.html#:~:text=A%20village%20in%20central%20Angus,Dempster%20(1732%20D%201818))

**19** – West Park House 'Just Palace' built by Alexander Henderson:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Mansion,\\_West\\_Park\\_Centre,\\_Dundee\\_-\\_geograph.org.uk\\_-\\_566893.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Mansion,_West_Park_Centre,_Dundee_-_geograph.org.uk_-_566893.jpg)

**20** – Caird Park, Dundee, history

<https://www.golfdundee.co.uk/history#:~:text=Caird%20Park%20was%20officially%20opened,%20hockey%20and%20children's%20playground>.

**21** – Photo and Description of West Park House, Dundee from West Park Centre, on Wikimedia.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Mansion,\\_West\\_Park\\_Centre,\\_Dundee\\_-\\_geograph.org.uk\\_-\\_566893.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Mansion,_West_Park_Centre,_Dundee_-_geograph.org.uk_-_566893.jpg)

**22** – Announcement re 2021 on West Park House website:

<https://www.westpark.co.uk/blog>

**23** – Rolls Royce for Henderson, from The Real Car Co. Ltd.,

<http://www.realcar.co.uk/view-cars/2034>

## Part II

**24** – This striking painting-postcard of Union Street, Aberdeen by Brian Gerald caught my attention. Mum has several of his exceptional works in her postcard album. I discovered that Brian Gerald was a pseudonym for the artist Walter Henry Sweet (1889 – 1943) from Exeter. He exhibited his work before WWI then saw action with the Devonshire Regiment abroad. He suffered mentally from his wartime experiences which interfered with the progress of his career. He later settled in Dundee where he married, had two children, Brian and Gerald, and worked as a commercial illustrator for James Valentine & Sons, Scotland's most successful commercial photographers from 1825 to the 1970's. They are best known for postcards of the U.K., Canada, U.S., Australia and South Africa.

**25** – During the rise of Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany in the 1930's there was a great deal of violence, upheaval and shocking incidents. Many believed this would lead to another war. Then German expansion began with the annexation of Austria in March, 1938. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain met with Adolph Hitler in 1938 and signed an agreement to stop the expansion and prevent war between Britain and Germany. On returning to England, he famously waved the paper in the air saying "Peace for our time." Chamberlain failed to realize that Hitler could not be trusted and the agreement meant nothing. On March 15, 1939 Germany occupied Czechoslovakia and on September 1, invaded Poland against Hitler's agreements with Britain and France. This was the last straw. On September 3, 1939, Britain declared war on Germany.

For a list of how the war affected people's every day lives, see pages 13-14.

**26** – Eliza Isabella Burgess was born May 5, 1918 at 6.20am at 28 Allan Street, District of St. Macher, Aberdeen. Her father was Alexander John Burgess, a joiner (a type of carpenter or cabinetmaker) and her mother was Jeannie Ann Burgess, née Paterson. They were married June 19, 1914 at St. Nicholas. Isabella married William George Milne (my Dad) on October 23, 1940. She did not have an occupation at the time, likely due to her illness. They married at Ruthrieston West Church, Aberdeen with banns having been read at the Church of Scotland. The church is still a functioning Presbyterian Church of Scotland. It is a beautiful granite church located on Broomhill Road in Aberdeen. Originally a Free Kirk, construction started in 1872. Isabella died on March 9, 1943 of pulmonary tuberculosis at Woodend Municipal Hospital in Aberdeen, age 24. On the death certificate her name is spelled Isobel but it is Isabella on the birth and marriage certificates.

**27** – Norway and Denmark were neutral countries at the beginning of WWII and believed they were safe. However, Hitler wanted Norway for its ice-free northern harbours for control of the North Atlantic and the port of Narvik for the iron ore needed for steel production. On April 9, 1940, Germany invaded Denmark and Norway by land and air. The Norwegian government, King and Crown Prince were able to flee from Oslo before the Germans arrived and managed to evade the Germans for two months before having to escape to England on the British cruiser, *Devonshire*, on June 7, 1940. The allies had been fighting to hold Northern Norway since April but when they realized they had to leave, King Haakon had the difficult choice of what to do. The King, Crown Prince Olav and the Government operated from England throughout the war, diplomatically and militarily and rallied Norway's resistance movement. Norway's resistance was arguably the strongest and best organized of the German occupied countries in Europe. Crown Princess Martha had escaped to Sweden, then America where she worked for Norway's cause in collaboration with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a story well depicted in the 2021 PBS special, *Atlantic Crossing*.

**28** – The photos of the Rhodesian Journey are hazy as the only record I have of this trip is a DVD of Dad's 8mm movie and unfortunately it is a bit out of focus throughout. The DVD was paused and the photo taken of the TV screen with an anti-motion-blur setting. I hope they give you a bit of an idea of the trip even if they aren't really clear.

**29** – Facts and figures from <https://victoriafallstourism.org/>

**30** – The *Queen Mary* has been a museum, hotel and convention centre in Long Beach, California since 1967. It is a fascinating ship with a long and interesting history. The first-class section is the main part of the hotel but you can wander around most of the ship. I have stayed there on two occasions; once with Mum and Dad and once with Julian and Roger, both times following coastal cruises from Vancouver. There have been rumblings for a few years that *Queen Mary* was in financial trouble and might not be staying in Long Beach. At time of writing, a new report indicates the ship might no longer be safe to operate so the *Queen Mary*'s future is again in jeopardy.

**31** – Painter Tom Roberts (Thomas Keith Roberts 1909 –1998) was Uncle Ralph's brother and they looked very much alike. They were born into a very artistic family. Their mother and father, Frieda Humme and Percy Roberts, were both artists and grandfather, Julius Humme, was an original member of the Ontario Society of Artists. Their paternal grandfather, Samuel Roberts, founded the Roberts Art Gallery in 1842 and the gallery is still in operation in Toronto today. Tom Roberts' unpeopled rural scenes were painted on locations across Canada. He is well known for his vibrant

colours and winding woodland roads, edged with maple, birch, spruce and pine.  
[www.fineartcollector.ca](http://www.fineartcollector.ca) & <http://www.robertsgallery.net/gallery-artist/tom-roberts-2/?r=1#bio>

**32** – History of the GE Power Transformer plant in Guelph from the *Canadian General Electric Welcome to Guelph Plant Pamphlet*, in Guelph Museums.  
<https://guelph.pastperfectonline.com/archive/EB7846E3-97E0-4D3F-B48D-167495014127>

**33** – From GE's *Guelph Works News*, Vol 4, No. 18, September 16, 1960. Dad was given the choice of a black or white face and chose the black.

SEPTEMBER 16, 1960

## arded To Guelph Works

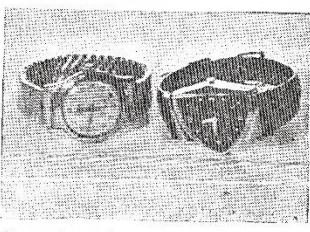
### Bill Milne Joins "Top Twenty"

Bill Milne's new wrist watch is tangible evidence of his membership in the Top Twenty for outstanding sales performance in Breakthru '60. Those eligible for membership are Sales personnel in the District Offices and Headquarters Sales, Sales Specialists and Application Engineers. "T.T." members are nominated by District Managers in the Apparatus Marketing on the basis of outstanding performance resulting in a worthwhile contribution to the Breakthru '60 Program. Bill was cited for the assistance he gave to the District Sales people in connection with the keen competitive bidding for the 43 network protectors for British Columbia. We congratulate Bill and wish him continued success. We know him as a hard-working, energetic fellow who is prepared to go out of his way to help others. In his outside activity, Bill teaches night school at John F. Ross and has a keen interest in 8 m.m. movie photography.

The watch presented to Bill shown in the picture is a Hamilton electric watch which does not require winding, since it gets its power from a tiny wafer-like energy cell. It is said to keep perfect time without winding — whether it's worn or not — and today was right on the minute after having been worn for a period of two weeks without re-setting.



BILL MILNE



The unique electric watch on the right is no larger than a regular wrist watch but will run a year or more without attention. What appears to be a winding stem is only for setting the hands, probably twice a year, when we change our time.

**34** – George and his wife Jo were very fond family friends and they were missed. George passed away a few years ago but I am still in touch with Jo. We talk on the phone a few times a year. She has been living in Wateringbury, Kent near her daughter Simone and family although Jo told at Christmas 2020 that Simone is moving to Cambridge and Jo might follow.

**35** – I continued my music and philosophy studies at McMaster University for a Masters in Music Criticism. For my music career, I was assistant director and director of several music schools and music programs and I taught piano, history and theory from 1974 to 1994. I setup and directed Allegro Music Studios on the island of Curacao in the Caribbean 1992-3. My music career overlapped with travel writing as I started my business, Travel-Write, in 1989, becoming a freelance travel writer for newspapers and guide books in Canada, the U.S. and the Caribbean. I studied in Ft. Lauderdale to become a ship's purser in 1994 and worked on cruise ships sailing from Miami and Ft. Lauderdale when they were in port. Following 4 years as a document specialist for GE Capital in Vancouver as my day job, I completed a certificate program in Digital Production for Print and Web in 1999. This enabled me to start my travel content business, Content by Susan, working for several websites, magazines and Ensemble Travel Group travel marketing over a span of 21 years to 2020.

**36** – Re. Being followed in Russia: It happened again in Varna, Bulgaria in 1989 when we noticed a man watching our tour bus group at every stop we made. Even on more recent trips to Russia there seems to be a lingering "us and them" mentality towards visitors by authorities and the people.

**37** – Pat and Charlotte's three-bedroom suite at the top of The Electra is now an Air B&B. The Electra is the only building in downtown Vancouver that allows Air B&B units. I heard recently from friends who still live there that people are constantly coming and going and there's always luggage in the foyer, just like a hotel. The Air B&B owners have taken over the Strata Council that oversees the running of the building so it has been impossible so far to have the bylaws changed to stop the Air B&B rentals. This is just one of numerous changes in downtown Vancouver which makes me realize I lived there at the best time, in the 90's and early 2000's.

### **Part III**

**38** – Castle Leod <https://www.castleleod.org.uk/history/>

### **Part IV**

**39** – Bowhill House, the home of the Duke of Buccleuch, Chief of Clan Scott.

I visited magnificent Bowhill House with my Auntie Anna for a private tour given by the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch in 1968. The tour was arranged by a Historical Society. The Duke had been to Hamilton, Ontario studying the steel industry and when he heard I was from Canada, he came over to me and we had a good chat. Typical of royalty, he was very easy to talk to being an excellent conversationalist. The house has a very impressive and significant art collection. I remember the enormous table in the baronial dining room which that evening was already set for breakfast, just for two, at one end.

**40** – Photo of Sir Walter Scott's study at Abbotsford House, near Melrose in The Borders.

This stunning photo was taken by Michael D Beckwith and was a finalist in the Wikimedia Commons Picture of the Year, 2018. Michael is a photographer specialising in historic interior architecture, based in Lancashire, England. His work is breathtaking and has been released into the public domain. See [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Abbotsford\\_House\\_Study\\_Room.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Abbotsford_House_Study_Room.jpg) and <http://www.michaeldbeckwith.com/>

**41** – This photo of the River Tweed at Coldstream is a digital macro of the original 35mm slide I took in 1968.

**42** – Coldstream Guard Ken and I at the Flodden Field Memorial Service, 1968, with Grandpa in the middle! This photo is a digital macro of the original 35mm slide.

In the summer of 1968 the Coldstream Guards regiment of the British Army, was presented with the Freedom of Coldstream and the keys to the town during Civic Week. This regiment started in 1650 as part of Cromwell's New Model Army and became known as the Coldstream Guards in 1670, the oldest regiment in continuous existence in today's British Army. The Guards were in Coldstream for a week during which there were daily celebrations and events. I was visiting Grandpa Keillor who lived in Coldstream at the time and was able to see up close the pomp and circumstance of the British system. It was a marvelous opportunity. The formal ceremonies with the Guards in regimental dress uniforms were very impressive. I ran into Ken, a musician with the regiment's band, in the park where the new granite memorial to the Guards had just been unveiled. It was really enlightening to hear about the life in the military from him and other guardsmen who were off duty.

One of the events that week was a memorial service at Flodden Field where the disastrous Battle took place in 1513. The Earl of Hume who lives at Coldstream was absent from the battle and the family have been living it down ever since. Every year the current Earl makes an appearance and gives a speech at the memorial service, which he did when I was there. I ran into Ken a few times that week including at Flodden where I was able to have my photo taken with him.

**43 – Edinburgh Tattoo 2019 – the fascinating history of the spectacular Edinburgh Castle display.**  
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## Certificates

Birth, death and marriage certificates were used to compile most of the dates. They were in Mum and Dad's family papers or purchased from Scotland's People. Thanks to cousin Ken Milne for providing certificates and info for Ann Dean Forman and Edward Milne.

