

THE FIERY CROSS



Award-Winning Newsletter For Clan An Cu, The Highland Independent Company of Darien

AFTER ACTION REPORT

BLAIRSVILLE SCOTTISH FESTIVAL & HIGHLAND GAMES

The Blairsville Scottish Festival and Highland Games were held for the first time ever in Blairsville, Georgia on June 12-13, 2004. Clan An Cu was invited to attend by Alex Cameron, The Wild Highlander, Armorer of Clan An Cu, The Highland Independent Company of Darien. Though short notice, we had a pretty good turnout.



Clan An Cu and The Wild Highlander pose alongside the creek at the Blairsville Scottish Festival and Highland Games [L-R: Collin King, J. P. Hackney, Philip Boyd, Alex Cameron (The Wild Highlander), Britt Brinson, Neil Fitzgibbons, and Ed Lunderman]

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Britt Brinson, Neil Fitzgibbons, and Ed Lunderman met up with **Philip Boyd** near Woodstock about 10 p.m. on Friday evening and continued the trek north. Our clan rolled into Blairsville about one o'clock in the morning on Saturday. We were fortunate to find someone to direct us to the park where the event was to be held. Once there, we happened up on a deputy who directed us down the hill, but had no idea who we needed to talk to other than the marshal. After talking with the marshal, who pointed out some likely places to camp, we decided to throw down next to the stream that runs through the property. None of us need much coaxing to close our eyes. Each of us fell asleep to the restful sound of rushing water.

It was a beautiful night, with no need for tents. The sky was clear. There was a hint of a breeze, so there were no bugs. The temperature was around 69 degrees when we arrived. It didn't dip much lower during the night. Within minutes of lying down, all of us were sawing logs, with nothing but the leafy trees for cover.

Typical of most games, the Saturday morning activities began early. We scouted out the place & found Alex's site, but had to wait for him to arrive. Somewhere along the line, a miscommunication had occurred, so there was no place set aside for us. This was quickly remedied, much to our satisfaction. We found a place along the creek, about a hundred yards upstream from where we had bedded down the night before, at the beginning of the vendor area. Our camp was placed in a little grove of trees, about four feet above the rushing water. There was a small rapid nearby. In all of my years of reenacting, this was probably the prettiest campsite we've ever had, even prettier than the KOA in Verona, Virginia that has the waterfall.

As we finished setting up our camp, we experienced the return of the prodigal. **Collin King** had arrived. The public was not far behind. We had one of our best crowds of visitors ever, including a few prospective recruits. Though the day was kind of humid, our shady campsite, steady breeze, and steady stream of visitors made the day fly by. With each clansman talking with the visitors, we all had time to visit the vendor and clan areas. While in the clan area, we ran into **George** and **Patty Strickland** and had a nice visit. We formed to march in the welcoming ceremonies about 11:30 a.m. and headed up to the announced starting point. About 20 minutes after the alleged start time, we decided to go to the games field to see what was up. Just as we got there, the parade was finishing up, so we marched out by ourselves.

With evening approaching and the crowd starting to dwindle, **Joseph Hackney** arrived. That evening, we shared some fine fellowship and marinated pork tenderloin brought along by Fitz. For once, it wasn't a late night for any of us. Everybody started to turn in about 10:30. While the temperature was just as nice as the previous evening, the sky had threatened for most of the evening. Late that night a thunderstorm hit the area. Though there was a lot of thunder and lightening, the rain seemed to pass through in a hurry, dropping just enough water to slightly dampen the chief's waistcoat, which had been left out on a rope line.

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Early Sunday morning, we fried up some bacon and potatoes, and then got our camp in order. The day was overcast and humid. About 10:30 we got the clan together for some photographs alongside the creek. Shortly afterward, the crowds returned. Once again the day flew by. There was a short thunderstorm in the afternoon. About 2:30, we formed directly behind the massed bands for the closing ceremonies. It was all over about 3:30 and we began to pack for the return home.

Blairsville put on a very fine event. As has been previously stated, it was in the prettiest place we've ever been. There were only two small blips. We were not allowed to shoot or have fires. Hopefully, that can be changed in the future. This was their first attempt at something like this and, in all likelihood, their first exposure to reenactors. We seem to have made a good impression, demonstrating that we are professionals and not just a bunch of yahoos. Hopefully, we will make the trip north next June for the *Second Annual Blairsville Scottish Festival & Highland Games*.

THE LATEST NEWS

CHANGE OF NAME

When Clan Am Cu was formed back in 1998, we received some early guidance from a group calling themselves the *Georgia Highland Rangers*. While we intended to concentrate on the years of 1736-46, they covered a much wider time frame. After an apparently ugly split, a portion of the group, under **George Strickland**, has started to call themselves Oglethorpe's Highlander Company.

We experienced some confusion with the public at Blairsville when we would explain that we were portraying the Highland Independent Company of Darien and they thought we were part of George's group, even though we were set up in a different area. We wish their group the best, but we have never

wavered in our attempt to portray the Highland Independent as accurately as possible.

So that the public will understand whom it is that we strive to portray, our clan will undergo a change of name. Additionally, we have found that An is more grammatically correct than Am. Henceforth, we will be *Clan An Cu, The Highland Independent Company of Darien*. Clan An Cu for short. This new name will let people know who we are and what we are about.

NEW FREDERICA VIDEO

As you saw in the last issue of *The Fiery Cross*, **Great Divide Pictures** of Denver, Colorado is looking for 8-10 Highlanders for a new video production which will replace the 1950's film, "*This is Frederica*" at Fort Frederica. They will pay **\$150 a day** for two days work, Saturday and Sunday, August 28-29, 2004.

Clan An Cu has been invited to participate. We have, in fact secured 10 slots, so \$3000 is being budgeted for Highlanders. So far, **Cody Bennett, Philip Boyd, Ronald Brimer, Britt Brinson, Neil Fitzgibbons, James**

Heldreth, Collin King, Larry Lynch, Skin Neal, and Mark Tippens have said they will participate. **DEFINITE COMMITMENTS ARE NEEDED IMMEDIATELY.** Any of the ten slots we don't use will be offered to people outside the clan, probably George Strickland's group. In fact, if more than ten of you participate, Great Divide Pictures split the pay equally among us all. Historical accuracy is of the utmost importance in this project. Proper attire, including coats and sewn hose, will be required for each clansman.

CLAN EMBLEM ADOPTED

Clan An Cu now has an official symbol. It is a Celtic hound. Ed Lunderman is making us a sign to identify our camp to visitors and will incorporate this symbol into it.



FORT KING GEORGE NEEDS OUR HELP

Many improvements are going on at *Fort King George*, if you can believe it needed improving. On the modern side, the visitors' center is being enlarged and will include showers for reenactors. They have added real gates to the two openings on the left side of the fort (blockhouse gate & rear gate).

Improvements are also planned for the gate leading to the boat dock. **Ken Akin** has plans to build enough chavaux de frix to encircle the fort. He would like for our clansmen to take a part in this endeavor. We'll try to pin down a date that we might all go down and help.

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CLAN INVITED TO MARCH ON LONDON

Clan An Cu has been invited to attend the March on London as part of the Army of King James. The event will be held on September 4-5, 2004 at Old Bedford Village, in Pennsylvania.

Our clan attended last year's event, their first ever, and were the largest clan there with 10 men under arms. **Chris Timm**, who portrays **Prince Charles Edward Stuart**, sent us a personal note with his hopes that we might attend. He said, "I hope all is well with you and the clan. His Royal Highness sends his greetings. I wanted to confirm that you and the clan

will be coming out to the Bedford event Sept. 4-5. I hope you are since we missed you at Culloden last month."

We will be in contact with him to determine the number of troops expected. English participation was very poor last year, with only six men. Hopefully, they will make enough of a showing that an 1800-mile trip becomes even more worthwhile. They have an excellent site there and it is a chance for us to fight alongside old friends. **Feedback on your interest is needed ASAP.**

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME

As we were packing up after a day of living history at the Savannah Highland Games, we were approached by some folks about having their picture made with our clan. They were on their way to the prom and we were only too happy to accommodate. The father of the young man sent us a very kind note, as well as some pictures of the event. His note follows.



"My son and his date were heading out to the Junior/Senior prom and wanted to have their pictures made with "men in kilts". Anything to make an evening more memorable. Little did they know that when they approached *Clan Am Cu* that they would be treated to a bit of living history. What started out as a lark for a couple of teenagers became a time of respect for the time and culture your clan represents."

"To say that you folks accommodated these young people would be a gross understatement. You delighted them, you regaled them, and you gave them a memory for a lifetime. Rather than take their request as an inconvenience at the end of a very long day, you donned your full uniforms and weapons, posted your colors, and posed for pictures. As a dad, I thank you."

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"The young man is my son, **Aaron Wolfe**, a sophomore at Richmond Hill High School. His lovely date is **Marcy Thornton**, a senior (now graduated)."

"Thank you again for the kindness you showed to these two young people."

Philip W. Wolfe
Josh 24:15

LATEST FROM THE WEB

Just another reminder for each of you to visit Clan An Cu's website at www.geocities.com/clanamcu/homepage.html. Pictures from the *Savannah, Culloden, & Blairsville Highland Games* have been added.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST



Our youngest clansman, **Joseph Hackney**, submitted the following article. You may contact J. R. at his email address jackalopexcstar@mycobbweb.com.

Fellow Clansmen and Friends:

The following is an account of what I learned in my recent trip to Scotland and England. I have included notes on weaponry of the '45, tartan, Culloden, the highlands, Edinburgh Castle, Tower of London, and First-person reenactment impressions.

Regarding Castles and fortresses:

While I was in Britain I visited two castles, and saw many others. On my first day I went to the Tower of London. I saw the Yeoman Warders popularly known as "Beefeaters" due to the fact that at one point half their pay was dealt in beef. I also saw the ravens that supposedly prevent the country from collapsing whilst at least one remains at the tower. Needless to say the Yeoman Warders keep a few in cages. I also had a very interesting discussion with one, Colonel Dooley, of 1716 whom I shall talk about more in the "first person impressions" segment of this article. I saw several displays of armor and weaponry. I was amazed to see a targe taken from Culloden as well as two large claymores they stuck in the display case due to people's common association between the two. The Tower of London did not have much to offer in the way of '45 information however I did learn that the majority of the pre-45 Jacobite prisoners were held in the tower.

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On my second day we flew to Edinburgh where I saw the giant Edinburgh Castle. All the while as I walked uphill to it from my hotel I kept thinking how hard it would be to charge it fully armed and kilted. When I got to the side of the wall I then realized fully why ever book I ever read about the place continually mentioned its strategic advantage. I could see for at least fifteen maybe twenty miles. I saw Mons Meg the castle's first cannon and I also saw the many other cannons that comprised the half moon battery. I visited St. Queen Margaret's chapel the oldest surviving building in the city; it dates from the twelfth century. It is also one of the oldest fully intact Catholic places of worship in the country. The armory in the castle was filled with weapons from the Fourteenth century onwards. On the drive up from Edinburgh to Inverness I saw many, many castles, perhaps one every thirty miles or so. There are just too many to name them all.

The final castle I actually visited was Urquhart Castle on Loch Ness. It was most definitely the most majestically situated of all. I have very little to say about the interior as it no longer exists the castle is but a mere ruin, but one worth seeing. It was abandoned by its last owner due to repeated, even regular attacks by the MacDonalds.

Regarding The Highlands and Tartan:

My family and I drove up to Inverness from Edinburgh on our fourth day and let me tell you it was worth the drive. We crossed the highland line about noon and continued north. On the way I saw many, many snow capped mountains (interestingly enough we heard on the B.B.C. earlier that morning that two backpackers had been trapped in the snow and were successfully rescued.) I also saw two red deer I only saw the two stags for but a second, but I shall always remember that. The town we stopped in to visit a distillery had a trout on their town sign (since my father and I are avid fly fisherman we thought this might be the best town in the world.)

Continuing north I noticed a rather peculiar yellow plant, which I later found out, is called broom. I now know why the MacLeod tartan is that distinct yellow it would be excellent camouflage in the broom. While I am talking about tartan camouflage I must say that my brother's Stewart Hunting blanket was hardly noticeable on the highland hill those Scots were most definitely masters of hiding. In Scotland one must understand that it rains at least once a day and with wind chill the temperature is roughly 35 degrees, and this is in April!!! Tartan wool and the highland short coat are definitely necessary when hiking through the heather. I do not believe that the average highlander could go about day-to-day business in merely a shirt and belted plaid it just couldn't be so.

The few days I spent in the Highlands were I think the best of the trip; of course it may be that I just love the country whether I am in Scotland or Georgia.

Regarding Weapons of the '45 and Culloden:

When I was at Culloden or Drumossie Moore I learned much about the weaponry used at the battle. I found very interesting displays of targes. The ones found at the beginning of the battle typically had one large hole in it somewhere. However, targes found nearer the

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British line had several small dents. This undoubtedly was the grape shot ordered to be fired at the charging highlanders. This grape shot was stopped by the targe perhaps this is what is meant by the old legend that targes can stop musket balls (one will note that the full sized balls went straight through). With regards to broad swords the sky seemed to have been the limit on the types. There were straight blade swords with black iron as well as brass baskets. I had the privilege of seeing Prince Charlie's sword; its basket was made of gold, silver, and bronze with many different iconic symbols (most were Italian in origin.) The likes of such a sword I had not seen before nor since it was truly a work of art. I also saw a tureach or Turkish scimitar style sword that had been taken from the battle and hidden for about sixty years in hopes of another rising and the sword was later donated to the trust. These Turkish blades were apparently pretty common among highlanders who had fought on the continent.

As far as firearms were concerned the British were using first model Brown Bess. The majority of the Scottish arms were the same type as well as Charleville and other guns that were the individual property of the men. Most of these guns were burned after the battle. There were also a great many pistols with shoulder stocks on them. On the Scottish side there were the all-metal pistols as well as others made of wood. The Brits had standard issue and personally owned handguns.

Pole arms were typical of everything that is written about them. You see lochaber axes and farm implements adapted for warfare.

Culloden itself has been totally restored to its original state. This place is more of a bog or swamp than the field that one envisions the highlanders and English facing each other on. It is covered in heather and broom. There are few trees and it is basically flat. It is most definitely not the ideal locality for the highland charge. I visited the cairn and all the clan stones (there aren't that many) and the Irishmen stone. I noticed at the MacIntosh stone that there was a bouquet of white roses perhaps the rebellion still lives in the hearts of some? Let us never forget our ancestors' sacrifices so that they could be free.

Regarding First Person Impressions:

Those Brits did a fine job of reenacting everywhere I went. I thought colonial Williamsburg had good first person reenactors, but I'll tell you what the reenactors I saw were never out of character. The one Colonel Dooley I met at the tower I had to force out of character to have a talk with him about his reenacting. At Churchill's Cabinet War rooms I met a major who was so in his character he gave me the directions to where the old cafeteria was not the modern day snack bar, however he had all the mannerisms and language of a World War II English officer. I think that if we were to reenact in such a manner it would be a wonderful learning tool.

This concludes what I thought y'all would want to know. However, if any of you have any questions about what I did in Scotland please send me e-mail.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NPS Black Powder Certification. July, 2004?

Fort Frederica. This is a two-day course, which would be done on a weekend. Scott Hodges has also offered to conduct a short evening course on first-person impressions, which might be helpful during the filming for Fort Frederica. We also plan to swear in all new members of the clan who have not yet been sworn in.

Movie Shoot. August 28-29, 2004.

Fort King George. A new movie is being created for Fort Frederica. It will include the Battles of Gully Hole Creek and Bloody Marsh.

March On London. September 4-5, 2004.

Bedford, Pennsylvania. Our attendance has been requested by the Prince.