

4th Annual Clan Cameron Cattle Reiving Challenge



Lochie the Bull



Coo of Many Colours

On Saturday, September 26th, 2009 we enjoyed the best Cattle Reiving day to date. We hiked through the Mono Cliffs Provincial Park section of the Bruce Trail, near Orangeville, Ontario. The scenery was lovely, and the trail ideal. The weather was crisp and cooperative, without rain until we had made it back to the Mono Cliffs Inn. There were no fatalities or serious injuries reported, and very **few by-standers frightened or died of laughter**. It was a grand day out for everyone who participated.

There were many familiar faces, and some new ones too, with a respectable number of younger people. They came from far and wide (Calgary AB, Houston TX & Zurich ON) to join us for a **10 km Drove**, or the shorter Stroll, or in some cases just to meet us at the end. Together 51 Reivers and seven dogs, representing seven clans, associated friends and allies made this the largest Cattle Reiving Challenge yet. Clans Cameron, McGregor, Keith, Graham, McLennan, Elliot, Rattray (and Vikings) were out in all their fabled glory, with dogs, tartan and other regalia.

All wee coos donated are going to the Salvation Army's Christmas Hamper Program for needy families. '**Lochie the Hereford Bull**' was his regal self and presided with an air of nobility (thank you to Ed's Concrete Products). The Mono Cliffs area was already well kept, but we still left it cleaner than we found it. There may have been one or two funny demerits, but there were certainly commendations for several Reivers going above and beyond (thank you also to McDonalds Independent Grocers for the bags). We must acknowledge the Dufferin Highlands Bruce Trail Club for providing **Ghillies**. They acted as ideal guides and kept up the pace.

Many thanks are extended to Bill Richardson (Clan Graham), the '**Chief Gauger**', '**Lord High Sheriff**' Sir Ernest Blair (Clan Keith) who shamelessly pinched some wee coos as people registered! and '**Sheriff's Minion**' Linda Dorey (Clan Keith). Of course we have a special thank you for Pat Jansen, our own official '**Buxom Serving Wench**'.



Ernie Blair



'Wee Coos'



Pat Jansen



Clan McGregor

When the final score of the day was tallied up, the wily newcomers from **Clan McGregor** took home the 1st place **'Coo of Many Colours'** for being the 2009 Best Reiving Clan in Canada. Well done, and congratulations to them! Clan Cameron was very competitive, and finished a strong 2nd. Although we are looking forward to retaking first place next year, the mood of the Camerons was hardly one of defeat. This has been a banner year for us, and we enjoyed our success on this day too.



Lynne Borne & **Karen Dunbabin**



John Shepherd



Dave & Gayle

Karen Dunbabin of **Clan McLennan** reived a **herd of seven 'wee Coos'**, the highest score of the day (experience from having owned 'real' highland cattle may have been an advantage). Grant Shepherd of Clan Cameron was a very close second with six. He and his brother John were aggressive and successful cattle thieves. The entire Shepherd branch once again represented the Clan Cameron in fine form. Gayle captained the short hike. Dave held his own on the long hike, and shared GORP with the Ghillies!

Donna Goldstraw helped reivers physically struggling with the long hike. The biggest thanks for the day should once again go to Glenn Goldstraw, our **Am Fear Fardaiche** for the day. He not only stood out as a leader but inspired leadership in others.



Donna



James Cameron & Shantell Powell



Judith & Leighton

James Cameron (my brother) and Shantell Powell (a distant Cameron) were cudgel bearing, costumed, '**Lurkers**', hiding in the woods to provide a surprise ambush on the Drove route. They added a different dimension, with mixed results but certainly surprise and excitement. Some folks who were just out for a hike were certainly shocked.

My own favourite moment of the day was when someone grabbed a wee coo from Leighton Cameron's back pack. A piece of twine made it appear that it might have been tied on, an obvious infraction. But the twine just kept getting longer as he walked away, rolled off some hidden spool. I don't know if it helped him get the wee coo back, but it was hilarious.

Thanks also to everyone who took and shared photos. These have been compiled for future use and display.



Leighton, Larry Judith, Wayne



Isaac & Devon Taylor



Diego & Ayden

Donated Malt Whiskies were shared and enjoyed, without anyone going too far with it. We toasted all the Clans, our Chiefs 'across the water', Donald Angus Cameron of Lochiel, XXVII Chief of Clan Cameron, and the memory of our own Murray Garrett. The **Challenge Questions**, themed 'Unite Across the Western Sea' were maybe a little on the easy side, but were well enjoyed. Clan Cameron had the highest scores, but averaged out to tie with several clans for first place in that regard.



This year there were many aspects of the **Reiving Challenge** that were better than ever before, and we all have ideas about things that can be improved. The question sheets included an opportunity for feedback from the Reivers, which was very positive. One often repeated suggestion was to simply include the opportunity to wear name tags, to show our names and clans. Clan Cameron had the greatest victory of all in that there were more of us than anyone else. Name tags could really help us.



Richardson family (Clan Graham)



Shearer Family (Clan Cameron)



Dana & Brian McPhail with CoCo and Ella



Al Nickels (Clan Elliot)

The whole event has an exciting energy and momentum, which we can harness. We have an opportunity to transform some of the enthusiasm into volunteerism for the 5th Annual Clan Cameron Cattle Reiving Challenge in 2010. No new members joined at the event this year, but there is more potential than ever. We will use the off season to register many of them. **The true challenge** of this event will be to register more new people than any other clan.

Clan McGregor is to return to defend their title. We don't yet know how the 5th Annual Clan Cameron Cattle Reiving challenge will look, but we can be certain that it will be more successful than ever before. We need to plan for the biggest **Creach** yet!

*Ewan D. Cameron, Director
Ontario Branch*