

## **Learmonth-Lermontov Family's reunions.**

The idea to reunion families that belong to the Russian Lermontov surname appeared in 1991, Russia, Serednokovo Manor, Moscow region. Lermontovs knew from their genealogy that their ancestor George Leirmont came from Scotland in 1613. They all were proud of their relative - the Great Russian Poet Mikhail Lermontov (1814-1841). In 1991 Lermontovs invited Josephine Learmonth from the Great Britain who already had her view at the origin of Learmonth and Lermontovs from the Scottish poet and prophet Thomas Rhymer Learmont. At this first meeting the association "Lermontov Heritage" was proclaimed and registered, and the Chairman – Mikhal Yurievich Lermontov, a businessman and a great enthusiast of the history of the Lermontov families, was elected. Since those times the association "Lermontov Heritage" provided a much appreciated service for understanding the origin of the Learmonth-Lermontov surname and studying the history of families of Learmonth and Lermontovs. Our book has a great support by the association.

As a result of the efforts of the Chairman Mikhail Yurievich Lermontov the first international meeting of the representatives of both Scottish Learmonth and Russian Lermontov surnames was hold in Russia with the participation of Learmonth and Lermontovs from all over the world in August 2007. This meeting was devoted to the 950th Anniversary of the Learmonth- Lermontov Surname and had a goal to attract the worldwide Learmonth and Lermontovs to their common ancestry; to introduce them to each other; to appeal to share their common values if life and their interests. This event was in essence the First International Reunion of the Learmonth-Lermontov families.

After this meeting it would be reasonable to consider a new association - The Learmonth-Lermontov International Family Heritage Association (LLIFHA). There are now hundreds volunteers who are working in the close contacts all over the world collecting new data and new facts about our families. LLIFHA is a non-profit membership fee-based family association that functions

exclusively with volunteer participation in the various administrative and clerical areas of organization.

## **The 950th Anniversary of the Learmonth- Lermontov Surname, Russia 5th – 12th August 2007**

This Anniversary and Celebration was hosted by Mikhail and Elena Lermontov at their home Serednikovo Manor, Moscow. This delightful Manor House set in extensive grounds was the perfect setting as it was here that the famous poet Mikhail Yurievich Lermontov spent four happy summers in 1829-1831 and wrote one of his most famous poems 'Desire' – To the west to the west.... The guests included: Tiantiana Molchanova (Scientist and writer, Russia-USA; the Ostrozhnikoskaya branch of the Lermontov family); Anya Lyakhovskaya (Tanya's granddaughter); Alexandra, (Anya's sister); Diana Learmonth-Mitchel (USA retired model and actress); Valeri Chernyaev (Honoured Russian artist); Gille Learmonth (Australia, designer); Lubov Chirkova (Honoured Russian artist); Jennie Learmonth (wife of the well known Australian architect, James Learmonth); Michael Lermontov (Business man & Chairman of The Association Lermontov Hereditary. The Kolotilovskaya branch of the Lermontov Family); Elena Lermontova (Michael Lermontov's wife); Olga Sedel'nikova-Verbitskaya (wife of Verbizky, writer, Sainte Genevieve de Bois France); Brian Wilton (Director of the Scottish Tartans Authority, Edinburgh, Scotland); Yuri Vladimirovich Lermontov, Russia (The Kolotilovskaya branch of the Lermontov family, Michael Lermontov's father); Michael Alexandrovich Lermontov (The Kolotilovskaya branch of the Lermontov family) (Architect, Artist and Writer USA); Elena Lermontova (daughter of Michael Alexandrovich Lermontov, USA); Michael Lermontov (grandson of Michael Alexandrovich Lermontov, USA) Anastasia Lermontova-Artemieva (Kolotilovskaya branch of the Lermontov Family, Ufa, Russia) Clive Learmonth (retired Wing Commander RAF, England); Rex Learmonth (retired businessman, England); Andrey Vladimirovich Tsuguliev (nephew of Mikhail Lermontov, A Lawyer, Russia).



On the evening of 5<sup>th</sup> August all the family and guests had arrived and everyone sat around the Lermontov family table in the Manor House dining room where an excellent meal was provided. Frequent toasts were proposed during and after each course expertly translated into both English and Russian as required by Andrey Tsuguliev. Wine and vodka was provided in considerable quantities and the Russian way of proposing and responding to toasts was soon learnt and appreciated by all the guests. The occasion was a delight and by the end of the evening everybody seemed that they had known each other forever.

The morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> August started with a service and prayers at the Obelisk in the Manor grounds devoted to The Great Russian poet Mikhail Yurievich Lermontov. This was followed by a tour of the museum at Serednikovo containing the treasures

connected to the Lermontov family. Photographs, video recordings as well as television interviews by the Russian media then took place with Brian Wilton bedecked in full tartan regalia taking centre stage. In the evening the main celebration was held in a specially constructed marquee in the garden of the Manor, where everyone enjoyed dinner interspersed with many speeches and toasts in vodka. Mikhail was invested with a Lermontov tartan kilt by Brian Wilton who explained that this tartan was specially designed for the Lermontov family in recognition of their Scottish origins.





This was followed by a presentation of a painting of the Learmonth's historic home Dairsie Castle, Scotland, painted by Gregory Learmonth. Several bottles of the finest Scotch whisky was ceremoniously presented by the Learmonth's to the Lermontov's and tasted by all in recognition of their Scottish routes.

This was followed by a short concert given by the Russian friends of the Lermontov family who entertained us with the most wonderful singing of classical Russian songs. Dancing and talking with new found family friends then carried on into late evening.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> August we were all taken into Moscow by coach where we enjoyed escorted tours around the many historic sites of the city.



wonderful city travelling again by coach we visited The Catherine Palace, the Hermitage and the Mikhail Yurievich Lermontov Museum, St Petersburg, as well as all the main historic sites of the city.



The 9<sup>th</sup> August saw us all assembled in the music room of Serednikovo for the presentation of the book Learmonth-Lermontov 1057-2007. Tanya Molchanova and Rex Learmonth, giving short presentations in Russian and English. This was followed by an amazingly brilliant concert by two young musicians playing the guitar and balalaika playing both Russian and Scottish music. In the evening we were taken by coach to the train station in central Moscow where we boarded the night train to St Petersburg. The 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> August was spent in and around this

We also travelled by boat on the river which runs through the city in the most perfect sunny weather.



On the afternoon of the second day we all assembled in the Central Library (Pushkin House) the Museum of Literature, St Petersburg where we enjoyed a concert and presentations given by Mikhail Lermontov, who gave a explanation of the Lermontov tartan, Tanya Molchanova and Rex Learmonth also presented the book Learmonth-Lermontov 1057-2007 in Russian and English. All these presentations were translated into both Russian and English by Andrey. This was followed by a celebration lunch.

After travelling overnight back to Moscow we reassembled back at Serednikovo then after thanking our wonderful hosts for their welcome and hospitality we reluctantly went our separate ways hoping to all meet again before too long.



Coming back to those days when Learmonth and Lermontovs for a first time met to each other in Russia we obviously have a feeling that we met a family. We were able to realize and to share the great proud for our common relative the Great Russian poet Mikhail Yurievich Lermontov who unfortunately died being so young. We heard his personal story; saw houses where he lived in Moscow, Petersburg, Serednikovo; we touched his personal thing; we heard many romances for his poems and as a result we touched the history of a Russian person of the Scottish origin whose ancestor came from our surname Learmonth. We lived in the renewed Old Russian house in the Serednikovo so we can figured out how the Russian noble families lived in XIX century and we like their style of life. We can chart with our Lermontov and Learmonth relatives asking about successes and faults; parents and children and other ordinal thing. These all made the atmosphere of our reunion very causal and warm.

That is why it not surprisingly that the new reunion was hold in the Australia in 2009.