

William Mackie Cameron
Founding Director of the 'Cobbs' Group of Companies
United Kingdom

After 25 years in financial services, latterly in Business Development for Scotland within a leading building society, Willie went into marketing of the tourism destination – Loch Ness. He also went into business with his business partner Fraser Campbell, in operating the Drumnadrochit Hotel.

In 1994 Willie established Loch Ness Marketing – a service company to film, TV and media. This developed into a creative consultancy working closely with a strategic marketing company. Involved in many related tourism projects along with Professor Terry Stevens and the View Stevens Partnership. He was also associated as writer and researcher for Jacobite Cruise Company and still is- The voice of Loch Ness by Jacobite.

Willie went on to be the Director of Highland Feast Food and Drink Festival of the Highlands for 10 years, and Director of Highlands and Islands Tourism Awards. He also sat on the Board for the University of the Highlands and Islands – Inverness College, and on the Board for the Archie Foundation charity. Willie is a member of Scotland Food and Drink, Inverness Chamber of Commerce, ASVA and Destination Loch Ness, and is involved with fundraising for the Archie Foundation and the Highland Hospice. In 2005, Willie was voted Highland Ambassador of the Year for services to Tourism, and in 2016 was voted Highlands and Islands Food and Drink Ambassador.

Willie was the Founding Director of the 'Cobbs' Group of Companies and is now their Business Development Director. Cobbs – based on the shores of Loch Ness in Drumnadrochit - was voted Highland Business of the Year in 2014, and currently operates 4 hotels and 20 coffee shops located around Scotland, 1 pub and an award winning bakery which produces between 50,000 – 80,000 portions of handmade cakes each week. Cobbs' turnover is £15 million, and employs approximately 250 persons.

Cobbs has been involved in The Scottish Open Golf for six years, supplied The Olympic Games, The Commonwealth Games and The Ryder Cup and is involved in sponsorship of Glenurquhart Shinty Club, Highland Cricket Club, and an Olympic hopeful bi-athlete Sam Cairns.

Willie is a sought after conference 'after dinner' speaker, MC, auctioneer, voice over, story teller and tour guide. A creative writer, an odd ode composer, a Burns supper aficionado; Willie is also an Italianophile with an apartment at Lake Garda, and had a holiday house in Local Hero village of Pennan, for over twenty years.

He was seconded out of Cobbs for 15 months to head up Collaborative Export Solutions T/A Made in Scotland a consortium of 10 high end food and drink companies with great narrative as their International Development Director, dealing in Dubai/Abu Dhabi/Germany and Ireland. This contract ended in September 2017. During that period he took MIS to winning the Collaboration Prize at The Scottish Export Awards and also runner up to Marine Harvest in the Highland Business Awards. Also in 2017 he made a business development trip to Guangzhou in China and signed a deal with one of

China's largest tour operators Nanhu Travel to bring 12,000 tourists to Scotland, this is now underway and already in excess of 600 have been at Loch Ness with over 1200 arriving over Winter 2017

Willie has also been involved with UHI-Inverness College in the prospects of starting an International Hotel School in the Highlands -ongoing.

As an aficionado of food and drink he has this year engaged with a local crofter in tying up a deal to buy all his local bred grass fed lamb for The Loch Ness Country House Hotel, this is an area he is interested in progressing with crofters in high amenity tourist areas to engage with the hospitality industry to provide a better infrastructure and create a local supply chain to provide food and drink for visitors

Willie's family includes his wife of 42 years, Alison, his daughter Fiona who lives in London (via Ottawa), his stepson Marco in Dublin, who is the largest ski operator for Schools and Colleges in Ireland, his stepdaughter Michele in Singapore, and granddaughter Mia in Cork Eire, a student at the University of Galway. Willie's only brother Alastair lives in Queensland, Australia, whose son Rory – Willie's nephew – is one of the Managing Director's at Cobbs.

Willie is known as "Mr Loch Ness" by the media for his frequent TV and Radio appearances talking about a certain...elusive... lady.

Date of Birth: 16th March 1951

Place of Birth: Grantown-on Spey

Domicile: Milton, Drumnadrochit, Loch Ness-Highland Region-Scotland