
NEWSLETTER

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Despite often inclement weather, attendances at our Winter Speakers' programme have been consistently high. Details of the individual speakers and their topics are to be found elsewhere in the newsletter.

In November last year I paid a visit to Holy Cross High School to talk to Higher History Pupils. The discussion ranged over a wide variety of topics relating to History and I left impressed by the enthusiasm of the pupils for the subject and by the depth of their commitment to learning.

In January of this year, together with Eric Denton, I was invited to St Bride's Primary School in Bothwell. Visiting the school is always a great pleasure and Eric and I were warmly welcomed by Mrs Denise Pacitti, her staff and pupils. On behalf of the Historical Society I presented a book "The Great Tapestry of Scotland" to celebrate the school's 40th anniversary.

Our mammoth World War One project is almost complete and we owe a great deal to Bill Gow and his team for their intensive research into the lives of local men who died in that terrible conflict. I'm sure we all look forward to buying a copy of the book when it goes on sale later in the year.

Our new sound system was used successfully for the first time at our last meeting in February. We may have an interest in the past but we also like to move with the times in matters technical. May I also remind you to keep an eye on our website which is updated regularly.

Looking forward to the year 2014/15 I can promise you a continuing programme of high quality speakers and stimulating topics. Our Honorary President Professor Tom Devine will be making a welcome return in October.

As always I am grateful for the support of our hard working committee, to the ladies who provide hospitality at our meetings, to the guardians of the website, to the members of the Society and to anyone else who works to progress the aims and objectives of Bothwell Historical Society.

Jack Gallacher

OUR WEBSITE:

www.bothwellhistoricalsociety.co.uk

CENTENARY YEAR OF THE START OF WWI

The research into the lives of the 105 men of Bothwell who gave their lives in the Great War is progressing well and we are on target to publish a book this year.

We have managed to make contact with descendants of five of the men and they have helped us with our work. One of these is Jean Sneddon who lives in Bothwell. Two of her uncles were killed in action. Private Thomas Sneddon enlisted with the King's Own Scottish Borderers and died in Buzancy, France, in July 1918 aged 22. Jean's other uncle, Corporal Peter Sneddon, enlisted with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders but was later transferred to the Machine Gun Corps. He was killed 3 months after his brother in October 1918, while fighting to take Hill 41 at Flanders.

Many of the men from Bothwell were miners and after they enlisted their expertise in Civilian life was recognised and they were transferred to the Royal Engineers Tunnelling

Companies. Their experiences in driving mines to be packed with explosives and to be detonated under the German trenches are described in the book. They had to dig these tunnels in silence for fear that the enemy would track where they were and detonate countermines adjacent to where they were digging.

The men from Bothwell also fought with the other services. Mary McWhinney's uncle, Lieutenant John Mitchell, served with the Royal Air Force and was killed whilst an observer flying over enemy trenches in France. The Royal Navy is represented by Seaman William Breakenridge whose Commonwealth War Commission gravestone is in the Parish Churchyard. He died when his ship HMS Valkyrie hit a mine in the North Sea in 1917.

Bill Gow



THE ST. BRIDE'S CONFUCIUS CLASSROOM

The St Bride's Confucius Classroom swung into action on Thursday 23rd January with a day visit from Su and Sophia our Chinese visitors and in-house experts.

Primary 5 along with their class teacher, Mrs Butcher, worked hard to prepare and host an "East meets West" showcase for parents and invited guests which highlighted the similarities and contrasts of each country's culture and history.



Over the coming months the children will continue to explore Scottish culture and folklore through the poetry and storytelling of Scotland's own Rabbe Burns while Su and Sophia will share the traditions and stories associated with Chinese culture. They will use Expressive Arts and Technology to establish the context of our project and will examine and adopt Chinese approaches to Maths investigations and problem solving as well as weekly Mandarin classes.

The children will develop this comparative study looking at the themes of Scottish clans and Dynasties, Chinese and Scottish childhood games, Myths and legends and probably most exciting of all "A school day in the life of a Chinese Child"

We hope this experience will prove to be an invaluable and cultural one for everyone involved.

Denise Pacitti



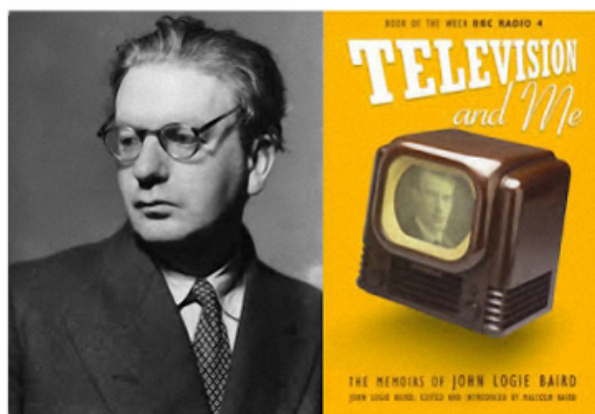
MEMORIES OF MY FATHER, JOHN LOGIE BAIRD

Diana Richardson

Diana Richardson and her husband Norman are valued members of the Historical Society and have been generous with their time in editing society publications.

I was born in 1932 and my father died in 1946 so I have no memories of his early life. However it is well documented, especially in his own memoirs, "Television and Me", that he wrote while convalescing from a heart attack in 1931. His life was dogged by ill health, causing frequent absences from school. However, he read any book he could find on electricity and science and set up a telephone system between his friends' houses.

His father was a minister in the Church of Scotland but John went to The Royal Technical College (now Strathclyde University). He was still there in 1914 and went to join up but his record was stamped "Unfit for any service".



He then took a job in the Clyde Valley power station in Rutherglen but was too ill for outdoor work. His first attempt at inventing something was the Baird Undersock, inspired by his perpetually cold feet. This was a success and brought him a comfortable return. Again ill health put an end to that. He had experimented with television as a boy and in 1924 he started work in a rented room in Hastings before moving to London. There he demonstrated television at Selfridges. One of the spectators was my mother who had just arrived from South Africa and was looking for work as a pianist.

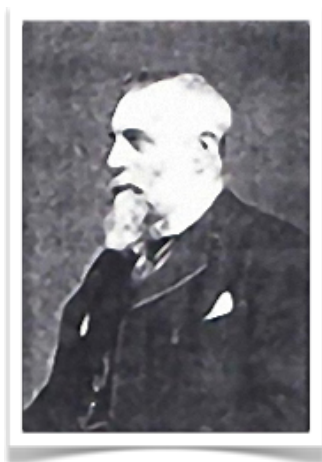
By the late twenties the Baird Company was transmitting programmes from a studio in London and when my parents married in 1931, they bought a big house which doubled as a laboratory in Sydenham Hill. I remember my father working all day (and nights too frequently). Colour television was achieved in the lab and my brother and I were allowed to see "Stooky Bill", the ventriloquist's dummy my father used, appear on screen in colour.

When war came in 1939, Britain closed all television transmissions and as my father said, "Television sets became useless junk". He went on with colour and stereoscopic television at his own expense. As he said, financially it was like watching himself

bleed to death.

He remained in London during the war but evacuated the family to Bude in Cornwall, joining us there when he could. I remember being shown how to use a magnifying glass to make fire as well as making moving pictures by drawing successive pictures on the corners of the pages of a book and then flicking them over. The war took a frightful toll on his health and he died in 1946.

A BOTHWELL WORTHY



The Bothwell Medical Practice was started in 1853 by Dr Bruce Goff.

He was born in 1832 in London where his father was a merchant who died when Bruce was young. His mother remarried and moved to Glasgow. He attended Glasgow High School and entered the University

at the age of 17.

He studied there and at medical schools in Edinburgh and Paris. Glasgow awarded him the degree of MD in 1853. He then set up practice in Bothwell. The 1851 census shows him as a resident in Longdales Lunatic Asylum (which was later named Kirklands Hospital) and he is described as a medical undergraduate - not as an inmate!

He remained active in the practice for 58 years and lived in "The Lindens" at the corner of Blantyre Mill Rd and Mill Rd. He married in 1859 and had 4 sons two of whom became doctors.

In 1853 the population was approximately 1000, including surrounding farms. Most work was in agriculture or home weaving.

Bothwell Castle Colliery opened in 1878 and Hamilton Palace Colliery in 1884 and the population rose to 2400 by 1891. His son John joined him in the practice in 1882 and another partner, Wm McPherson in 1888.

He built up a very successful practice and became well known and respected in medical

circles. He became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow and was elected President from 1895 to 1898.

For 25 years he represented Glasgow and the West of Scotland on the Council of the British Medical Association.

The Crimean War showed up serious defects in the Army and in 1859 the Government decreed that each county should set up companies of volunteers to be trained as a reserve force.

Bruce Goff immediately joined the Lanarkshire Volunteers, medical branch, and rose to the rank of colonel. Under an age limit rule he retired and was given the rank of Hon. Colonel. After the Boer war the army was again reorganised. The Volunteers became the Territorial Army and he became Hon Colonel, RAMC, Lowland Division.

He was Parochial Medical Officer treating the poor and destitute of the parish (no NHS in those days) and dealing with matters of public health e.g. outbreaks of smallpox and cholera.

During his years in practice there were great advances in medicine. Pasteur's discovery of bacteria and their part in infectious diseases and Lister's development of antiseptics in surgery are only two. Bruce Goff kept abreast of these and applied them.

A tribute to him in 1911 states:-

Dr Bruce Goff has shown great skill as an eminent practitioner over many years and his courteous manner and refined habits, together with a disposition leaning entirely towards goodness in all its forms deserves our veneration and affection.

Ken Chisholm

WINTER TALKS 2013/2014

In *October 2013*, we held the first illustrated talk of our programme for session 2013/14. The title of the talk, “A Beginner’s Guide to the Heraldry of Bothwell Parish Church”, was given by one of our members, Mr Edward Mallinson.

Edward is also a member of the Heraldry Society of Scotland and is actively engaged in academic research into Scotland’s heraldic heritage. Edward began by giving us a brief introduction to the language of heraldry, terms used, and the division into metals, colours and furs. We then focussed our attention on the heraldry displayed in Bothwell Parish Church Choir. The medieval Collegiate Choir (or Chancel) contains some fine examples of



armorial achievements. He described in detail the coats of arms carved in stone on the east end of the building and their association with the Douglas, Moray and Royal Stewart families.

We then looked at the 17th and 18th century monuments within the Choir and the armorial achievements displayed on them. The heraldic devices carved on the monuments gave us a very interesting insight into the Hamilton, Douglas and Campbell of Shawfield and Skipness families.

The 17th century monument to William, third Duke of Hamilton, is richly sculptured and displays the coats of arms of families associated with William and his wife, the celebrated Duchess Anne. Edward again described in detail these armorial achievements and gave us a very interesting insight into the genealogy of the Douglas and Hamilton families.

At time of writing, the Choir is undergoing extensive restoration work and is “closed off” to members of the congregation and visitors alike. We look forward to the completion of the restoration work, and viewing once again the heraldry and monuments, so ably described by Edward in his talk.

Brian J Sharp

At the *November 2013* meeting of the Society, Brian Sharp gave an excellent history of the beginnings of the two Glasgow football clubs known in the west of Scotland as “The Auld Firm”. His intriguing development of the financial background to their rivalry made for a new light on the present Scottish professional football scene. He also explained how the early friendly rivalry of the clubs was lost by their supporters as the intensity of the rivalry became an outlet to the injustices of their social life. He ended his talk by remembering some of the highlights of the Celtic Football Club’s past successes.

The turnout for the meeting was very encouraging in such a cold and wet night. The absence of the usual balance of men and women in the audience was to be expected, and the general opinion was that the missing women members would have

enjoyed his talk. As usual, May Gow supervised the catering.

George Maxwell



On 18th February a talk was given by Mr John Dalziel whose chosen subject was “The Victoria Cross with special reference to Lanarkshire”.

John told us of the history of the medal from its inception through to the final decisions about the wording on the medal and the metal from which these medals are struck. Queen Victoria herself was deeply involved in the final decision making. At some point the wording on the medal was intended to be “For Bravery”. But, at the Queen’s insistence, was chosen to be “For Valour” because she said that bravery was attributed all the men and women in her armed forces.

John then gave us very detailed information about the fourteen men from Lanarkshire to whom the medal had been awarded. It would be difficult indeed to single out any one of those men for special mention, all the stories John related told of astonishing acts of bravery and self sacrifice in circumstances only ever encountered in the terrifying context of front line warfare. It would appear that, almost to a man, all the recipients of this, the highest award for bravery, simply acted with little regard for their own safety or even their

life to achieve something that saved another’s life or assisted in gaining an advantage over the enemy.

John’s illustrated talk was well attended and very well received by his audience as demonstrated by a substantial round of applause at the conclusion of his talk.

This evening event was also the first outing of our newly acquired audio equipment. This allows the speaker to freely move around the platform wearing a clip-on lapel microphone so that his/her speech can now be heard clearly at the back of the hall. We occasionally have had a little difficulty if the speaker’s voice did not carry too well, but this evening’s talk could be clearly heard

Eric Denton



PROGRAMME OF TALKS FOR WINTER 2014/2015

23rd September	AGM and Film Show	
28th October	Tom Devine	<i>‘Scotland, Slavery and Amnesia’</i>
25th November	George Barnsley	<i>‘A Brief History of Policing in Lanarkshire’</i>
27th January	To be confirmed	
24th February	Jim Wilson	<i>‘Roman Scotland’</i>
24th March	To be confirmed	