
NEWSLETTER

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS



It may not have been the best summer for good weather, but September has been a good month for the people of Bothwell. This year's Scarecrow Festival, larger

than ever, has been a resounding success. We owe the organisers a great deal of thanks for the tremendous efforts they put into a festival that has attracted national attention with a wide variety of scarecrows of all shapes and sizes to be found in every corner of the community. Bothwell Historical Society's exhibition, "Young Bothwell looks at old Bothwell" during the Festival gave the public an opportunity to see the talents of the young people from our two primary schools. Comments from members of the public on the children's work may be seen elsewhere in the newsletter. Out of this project came our third publication, "*Archie's History of Bothwell*", a children's history of the village that has proved to be popular with both young and old. A few copies remain for sale in the Library and the Post office at the modest cost of £5.

Our gardens are the envy of other communities and for those of us who have lived in Bothwell for many years, the village has never looked better. For all this we owe a great deal to the stalwarts of Brighter Bothwell and it is totally appropriate that they won the coveted gold medal from Keep Scotland Beautiful. I'm sure everyone in the village is delighted that years of hard work and imaginative planning have been recognised in this prestigious award.

We in the Historical Society look forward to a varied and interesting Speakers' programme in the months to come. Thanks to the generosity of two of our committee members, a screen has been donated to the Community Hall and it was given its first "outing" at

our AGM. It will enhance the quality of visual presentations at our meetings. For the first time, after members' suggestions, we will be having an afternoon meeting on November 22nd at 2.00pm.

Along the road in the Donald Institute, our OneLan screen with its temporary programmes has proved to be very popular with visitors to the Library. The technical complexities of this complicated system have taxed the legendary patience of Eric Denton to the extreme but never willing to admit defeat, Eric is well on the way to mastering the beast. We need your help in collecting photographs, video films, tapes and so on so that a varied programme can be presented on the screen.

Recently George Maxwell resigned from the Vice Chairmanship of our committee to establish an historical research group in Uddingston. George's contribution to the success of our society has been prodigious and in thanking him for his work, we also wish him well in his future endeavours. Happily he will remain a member of the society and will no doubt be available for advice and support. Fortunately we have been able to appoint the multi - talented Eric Denton as our next Vice Chairman.

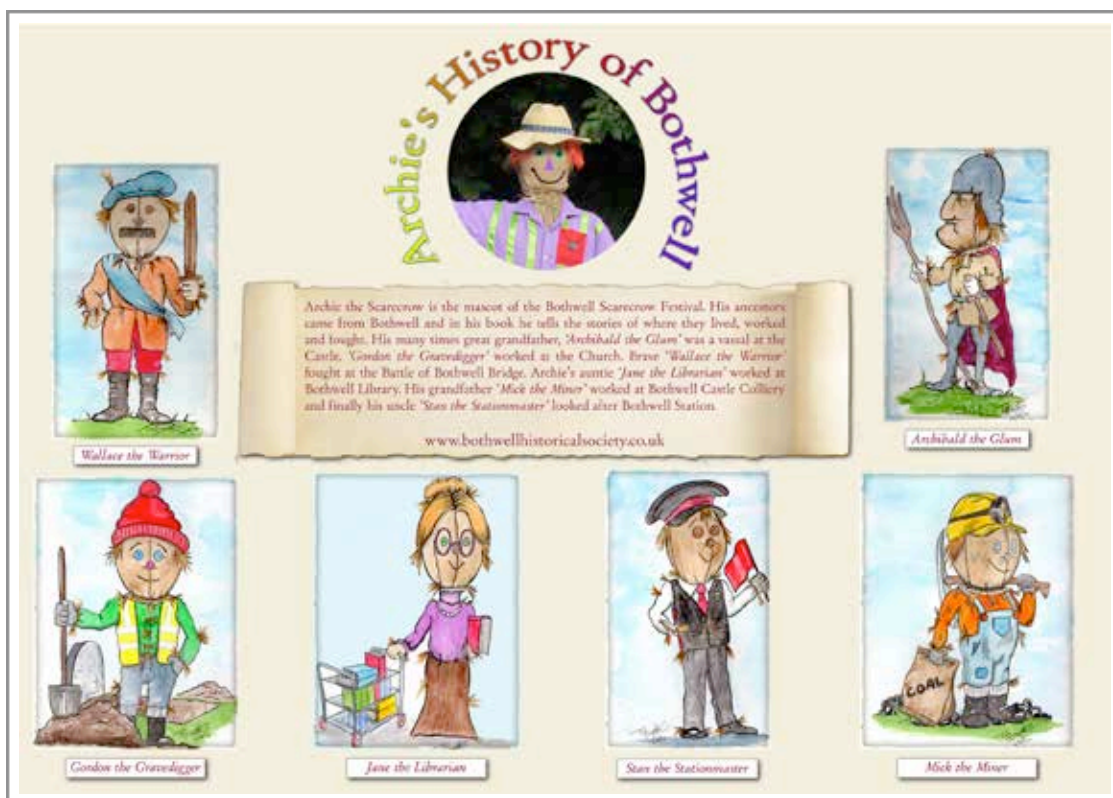
Our website, in the capable hands of Liz Denton, continues to attract an astonishing number of "hits." from across the globe. As you all know, we rely on Liz's talents in creating the highly professional and attractive layout of our newsletters. Less well known may be that we also have Liz to thank for the bright and breezy visual aspects on "*Archie's History of Bothwell*."

Finally I would like to express my appreciation to the members of the committee, especially to our Secretary/Treasurer Bill Gow for his massive input into the work of the society. As I have said before, every organisation should have a Bill Gow. Thanks also to you our members for your encouragement and support over the last year. I look forward to seeing you at our meetings.

Jack Gallacher

BOTHWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL VISIT TO CHURCH

Following extensive work on their project on Bothwell using original research material provided by the Historical Society, Primary 7 pupils from Bothwell Primary School, visited the Parish Church in June. After a welcome from the Rev James Gibson, the children were divided into groups for a tour of the church building and the grounds. They were given a sneak preview of the restored quire and the magnificent East window. This visit was regarded by the children as a fitting climax to a fascinating project. The children's work was on public view as part of the Society's "Young Bothwell looks at old Bothwell" during the Scarecrow Festival week.



Copies of the book are still available for purchase in the Library and the Post Office at a cost of £5.

SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

All children in Bothwell's two primary schools, St Bride's and Bothwell Primary, are honorary members of Bothwell Historical Society. This means that approximately 700 local children have links with the Society. Since the foundation of the Society in 2011 committee members have attended the schools on numerous occasions interacting with the pupils, supporting them in project work, taking part in discussions with school staff and attending school functions as invited guests.

In the Spring term of 2016, Bothwell Primary School (Primary 7: 11 and 12 years old), requested help from the Society with a comprehensive project on the history of the village including the Castle, the Parish Church, the historic Library building and our mining heritage. The teacher, Mrs McHenry, was anxious that the pupils should not simply copy information from the internet but that they should have access to original research material. This was provided by Committee members, Eric Denton, John Hart, George Maxwell, Brian Sharp and Jack Gallacher and delivered to the school. In June, Primary 7 pupils were welcomed by the Minister of Bothwell, Rev James Gibson to the Parish Church and were given a conducted tour of the building and its grounds by Society Committee members. The children voted the visit a great success and their project work was displayed on the walls of the classroom.

Primary 3 (aged 7 and 8) at St Bride's took enthusiastically to their project concentrating on Bothwell Castle. Having borrowed artefacts from the castle, Jack Gallacher visited the school. To the delight of the children, they were able to see swords, shields, armour and models of siege engines. In April, suitably attired as knights and fair ladies, the young people paid a visit to the castle where the Custodian Chris Timmons regaled them with tales of the castle's history. Later they were able to let off steam with mock sword fights. Again their art work was displayed

on the classroom walls. Eric Denton and Jack Gallacher were invited to the school by class teacher Miss Paula Slater to record the children's impressions of their visit to the castle on a CD. Following discussions between the Society and the teachers in both schools, it was suggested that both projects could be developed further and that the children's work should be exhibited to the public in the Library during

the village's "Scarecrow Festival" week. At the same time the project material should be published in the form of a book for children to be called, "Archie's History of Bothwell" (Archie being the Scarecrow festival's mascot). The book which was highly commended by Scotland's foremost historian, Professor Sir Tom Devine, Honorary president

of Bothwell Historical Society, was an instant success and only a few copies remain to be sold at the cost of £5. Books may be purchased at Bothwell Post Office and Bothwell Library.

The grand finale of the projects came when the work of the children in both schools, Primary 7 in Bothwell Primary School and Primary 3 in St Bride's Primary School were joined together at an exhibition in Bothwell's Library, The Donald Institute, during the Scarecrow Festival from the 6th to the 11th of September. Comments recorded in the Library's visitors' book are a clear indication that members of the public were highly impressed by the work of all the children.

Bothwell Historical Society looks forward to joining our friends in the schools in further work to encourage the children's appreciation of the heritage they are privileged to enjoy as members of the Community of Bothwell We are grateful to the Head Teachers and the staff of both schools for their support.



COMMENTS FROM THE VISITORS BOOK ABOUT “YOUNG BOTHWELL LOOKS AT OLD BOTHWELL”

- “Great exhibition. Hard work. Well done by schoolchildren.”
- “What a wonderful exhibition. Congratulations to all the boys and girls.”
- “What a lovely display. I enjoyed reading the stories of down the mines.”
- “Excellent display, very interesting. Well done to those who organised this.”
- “Very interesting display. Would recommend to others.”
- “Lovely exhibition. Well done Historical Society and children of both primary schools.”
- “Great work by both the children and the organisers.”
- “Very interesting. Very talented children. Very enjoyable, indeed.”
- “Very interesting and lovely work from the children.”
- “Had a great day today with P7 Bothwell/Primary kids. Learned so much about Bothwell. Thanks.”
- “Wonderful display- both children’s art work and Historical Society displays.”
- “Brilliant display.”
- “Most impressed by the quality of the paintings and the essays produced by the children.”
- “Great displays as always. Love the children’s input. Continue the good work.”
- “Lovely drawings, excellent stories and great song.”
- “Lovely exhibition of the children’s work and great to see the history of the area.”
- “Great exhibition. Lively writings and drawings. Interesting maps.”
- “Enjoyed the children’s work, paintings and recordings.”
- “Very interesting, great little writers! Well done (and the paintings.)
- “Beautiful art work of the castle. Well done, boys and girls.”
- “Well done. Great local talent.”

All these and others may be seen in the Visitors’ book in the Library

While the majority of visitors came from Bothwell itself, we were pleased to welcome people from, Hamilton, Wishaw, Crewe, Uddingston (many) Bishopbriggs, Kirkintilloch, East Kilbride, Newarthill and Alloway.

JG had an interesting conversation with a gentleman formerly from Alexandria, Egypt who was there during the Six Days War between Israel and Egypt. History is all around us.

The total number of visitors to the exhibition was 342.

ST. BRIDE CO-PATRON SAINT OF IRELAND

The village of Bothwell has two churches dedicated to the patronage of Saint Bride; the Parish Church on the Main Street and the Catholic Parish Church on Fallside Road.

So who was this saint?

Saint Bride or Bridget of Kildare, sometimes Mary of the Gael, is generally considered to be one of the three patron saints of Ireland along with Saint Patrick and Saint Columba and the subject of many stories and legends.

She was born about AD 450 in Faughart, near Dundalk in County Louth. Her father was an Irish chieftain called Dubhtach and her mother was a woman named Brocca who was baptised, legend has it, by Patrick himself. Her father named her after the Celtic goddess Brigid or Brid. Brocca was sold to a Druid before Bride was born and she and her daughter were kept as slaves until she was old enough to be returned to Dubhtach so Bride spent most of her early life cooking, cleaning and tending animals on her father's farm.

She was inspired by the teachings of Saint Patrick and became a Christian herself. Bride decided that she wanted to dedicate her life to God and to spend it tending to the poor, the sick and the elderly. This brought her into conflict with her father who wanted her to find a husband, Bride prayed that her beauty would be taken away making her less attractive to potential suitors. Legend has it that her wish was granted but that, when she finally made her religious vows and became a nun, her beauty returned. The final straw for her father came when Bride gave away a valuable jewelled dagger to a leper. He realised then that she was better suited to the religious life. She was consecrated into the religious life by Bishop Mel of Ardagh. Tradition has it that, in error, Bishop Mel performed the rite for the elevation of a bishop, thus making Bride both a nun and a bishop!

Bride set up many convents throughout Ireland and word of her good deeds soon spread attracting many girls to the religious life. The most famous of these convents was at what is now Kildare. Around 470 AD she founded a double monastery with both monks and nuns, carefully separated, with Bride as

Abbess. This monastery grew in fame throughout Christian Europe. Bride created a school of art at this monastery and it was in the scriptorium here that the famous Book of Kildare was created which was reputed to rival the more famous Book of Kells.

Bride died in AD 525 aged 75 and was buried in front of the high altar of her Abbey in Kildare. Her body was later exhumed and transferred to Downpatrick and interred with Saint Patrick and Saint Columba. Her skull was removed and taken to a Jesuit church in Lisbon where it remains to this day.

Her feast day is celebrated on the 1st February. She is the patron saint of a large list of people and professions including nuns, midwives, mariners and poultry farmers to mention only a few

SOME LEGENDS ASSOCIATED WITH ST. BRIDE

THE ST. BRIDE'S CROSS



Many homes in Ireland have a Cross of Saint Bride on the wall or by the door. Many were kept in the roof thatch as a protection against fire. There are a number of

versions of how the Cross came to be. One version relates that Bride was asked to come and sit by the bedside of a pagan chieftain who was dying in the hope that he might be converted to Christianity. It may even have been her father, Dubhtach, himself. When she got there, the man was delirious and in no state to be talked to. Bride instead sat quietly by the bed. She picked up some rushes from the floor and started weaving a cross, tying off the ends of the arms. The man, who by this time had calmed down,

asked what she was doing, so Bride started to explain about Christ and the Cross. After hearing what Bride had to say, the man asked for baptism and was converted on his deathbed.

ST. BRIDE'S CLOAK

Saint Bride approached the King of Leinster to ask for a piece of land on which to build a convent. The land that Bride asked for was a fertile piece of ground and the King was loath to part with it. As a result he refused her request. Bride prayed to God for help. Again Bride pleaded and made a bargain with the King that she would only take as much land as her cloak would cover. Seeing the size of her cloak the King readily agreed, thinking that he had the better part of the bargain. On the appointed day they met at the piece of land. Bride had four of her

companions each take a corner of her cloak. They pulled the cloak north, south, east and west. The cloak spread and kept on spreading, further and further, covering acres of land until the King realised that he had lost the bargain. Not long after this event the King himself became a Christian.

Another version of the story has it that, for weeks before they met the King at the disputed piece of land, Bride and her companions spent the time sewing cloak after cloak together until eventually they had enough to cover the ground that they wanted. When they got to the land they started to unroll this huge piece of material. As before, the King, recognising his defeat, converted to Christianity.

GRAVEYARD SURVEY

At the request of the Revd Jim Gibson the Society is carrying out a survey of the gravestones in the Churchyard. A number of the stones have toppled while others have decayed to the point that their inscription has become illegible. Before there is further deterioration, each gravestone is being photographed and its inscription recorded. Sixteen volunteers are taking part in the survey and it is now well underway.

It is proving a fascinating yet moving exercise. Many of the inscriptions are for children, highlighting the extent of infant mortality in previous centuries. The survey also underscores the truth that in death everyone is equal. The gravestone of a wealthy iron and coal master lies next to that of a weaver. Another stone gives some indication of rapport at Bothwell Castle in 1827. It was erected by Lord Douglas in memory of his servant Jane Eaton.



The oldest stone in the graveyard dated 1422

Responsibility for the graveyard was taken by Lanark County Council in 1967 and the only known record book of burials is held by South Lanarkshire Council and dates from 1933. The last internment in the graveyard took place in 1978.



ERECTED
by
MARGARET SCOTT
In memory of her husband
ROBERT STOBO
Late Smith and Farrier Goukthraple
Who died 7th
May 1834 in the 70th year of his age.

My sledge and hammer lies declined
My bellows pine have lost its wind
My forge's extinct my fire's decayed
And in the dust is my wife is laid
My coal is spent my iron is gone
My nails are drove my work is done

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 13TH SEPTEMBER 2016

On Tuesday, 13th September 2016, The Bothwell Historical Society held its AGM in the Community Hall, Fallside Road, Bothwell.

Our Chairman, Jack Gallacher, warmly welcomed the assembled company of members and friends of the Society.

The Minutes of our previous AGM, held on Tuesday 22nd September 2015, were duly proposed and seconded, then our Chairman began his report by looking back at the Society's previous five years of activities, since the original formation of the society.

So far we have produced fifteen newsletters, plus the next edition to be produced in October this year. The Society's excellent website has proved to be very successful with "hits" from all over the world.

To date, the Society has hosted 28 speakers during our past "Programmes of Talks" covering a wide range of historically related topics.

The Chairman then called our attention to our next talk to take place on Tuesday 25th October by Professor Kirsten McCue on "*Bill McCue and Bothwell*" which is highly anticipated by the Society's members and friends.

He then went on to say how much the Society values the patronage of our Honorary President, Professor Sir Tom Divine, OBE. His enthusiasm for the Society is gratefully acknowledged by the members and friends alike.

He then highlighted how popular the Society's publications have been, namely:

"*Lest We Forget*", "*Bothwell Stories*" and "*Archie's History of Bothwell*", our latest publication based on our schools' history project.

He went on to praise both St Bride's Primary and Bothwell Primary Schools for their keenness to be involved in activities promoted by the Society.

We then looked at a range of projects promoted by the Society.

In our Oral History venture, we have recorded the personal testimonies of 25 people with "Bothwell connections" and in our "Bothwell Streets" photography project, we have created a photographic record of the streets of Bothwell.

Our Chairman then informed us that the Society plans to create a "Heritage Corner", possibly in Bothwell Library, to complement our Information Screen, which is displayed at the reception desk.

He went on to remind us that the B.H.S. will be featured in the November/December issue of "History Scotland" magazine.

Finally, he wished our former Vice-Chairman, Professor George Maxwell well in his new venture with the Uddingston/ Bredisholm Group.

Eric Denton was appointed as the Society's new Vice-Chairman. The other Office Bearers and Committee members were reappointed by acclaim.

Bill Gow, the Society's Treasurer, gave his report to the assembled members of the Society. There being no questions, the accounts were moved by acclaim. There being no other business, our Chairman concluded the AGM.

After a short tea and coffee interlude, proceedings came to a close with a "slide show" compiled by Eric Denton, depicting a selection of photographs taken during this year's Scarecrow Festival.