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# NEWSLETTER

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2017 has been recognised nationally as the “Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology. We will continue to endeavour to stimulate an interest in both our national and local history. Last year archaeological digs were undertaken at the castle and it

is anticipated that further excavations will take place this year. Already Bothwell Castle has provided historians with the finest collection of mediaeval pottery retrieved from any site in Scotland. These artefacts are now on display in the National Museum in Edinburgh.

“History Scotland” is the country’s most prestigious magazine recording our national heritage. The January/ February issue contains an article on Bothwell Historical Society, together with a photograph of the committee at the launch of “Lest we Forget”. The magazine is on sale at bookshops and newsagents. Priced £4.20. The website is [www.historyscotland.com](http://www.historyscotland.com).

Our winter programme has allowed us to listen to speakers of exceptional quality and I can assure you that these high standards will be available for our

2017/18 programme. Attendances have been high at all our meetings including our experimental afternoon session which we will repeat later this year

Although we are interested in the past, we are happy to progress this by means of modern technology. Our large screen TV in the Library has proven to be very popular. We need your help however in providing material to stimulate continuing interest in this project. If you are a member of any other village organisation and would like to see it featured on the screen, let us know. We are always on the lookout for items of local interest which you may have. Visit the Library when you can and support the Library staff in maintaining this vital local service.

We will be represented at the rededication of the quire of the Parish Church on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Our project on recording the information on monuments in the Kirkyard is nearing completion and should be available soon

As always I would like to record my thanks to the office bearers, the committee members and to you, our supportive membership for all that is done to make Bothwell Historical Society a successful organisation.

Jack Gallacher

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## WEE TOMMY MENZIES



In March 2016 the village lost its best-known character, “Wee Tommy”. He was a familiar figure walking along the Main Street to his favourite watering hole, the Camphill Vaults and at Christmas, dressed as Santa

Claus, he would hand out sweets to any passing children. The sweets had been donated by some of the local shops. Christmas must have been in Tommy’s

blood, having been born on Christmas Eve 1926. When you stopped to have a chat with him his sense of humour was fun and he had quite a raucous laugh. His photo hung in his favourite pub for many years and is now in the care of the Historical Society to be hung (after cleaning) in the library with a short biography alongside.

Sadly missed.

## ANOTHER ARTEFACT FOR THE COLLECTION



A surprising donation was received recently at the end of one of our winter talks. The object is an old electrical measuring instrument used for measuring electrical resistance and electrical insulation and is known as a “megger”.

At first glance it is obviously rather old but not so old that it could not be associated with the electrical engineering of the early or mid twentieth century. It has obviously seen a lot of use in its time, but the real attraction is that it was manufactured in Bothwell.

The company in Bothwell that manufactured electrical instruments was Edcumbe Peebles, later Edcumbe Instruments but it closed in 2000 when the land on which the factory stood was sold for housing development. The land was where a railway station stood until the closure of the passenger railways in 1955.

Grateful thanks to Aseem Din for the donation.

## GRAVESTONE SURVEY

The survey of all the gravestones in the churchyard is nearly complete and it is hoped to publish the results in the early summer. Thanks to all those who braved the elements to photograph the stones and transcribe the inscriptions. Thanks too to those who audited the work.

As you would imagine the work has thrown up much interesting information about some of the people buried in the churchyard and this will be recorded in the book as illustrated by the following story.

Hugh McDugald (McDougall) was born c1803 in Bothwell. His wife Margaret Sinclair was born c1822 in Edinburgh and the couple married in Bothwell in 1846. In the census of 1861 the family was living at the west side of Glasgow Road, Maltkiln, Bothwell, with Hugh working as a hand loom weaver employing 4 people. On an internet ancestry forum, Australian Katherine Kachor was looking for information about her ancestor Hugh McDugald and wondered where ‘Maltkiln’ was in Bothwell. Contact was made with Katherine and she she was sent a photograph of Hugh’s gravestone. Further research revealed the following from the book ‘By Bothwell Banks’ by Henderson and Waddell, published in 1904.

*“At Silverwells there was formerly a malt kiln, changed subsequently into a weaving establishment. This was by no means a place of good repute in its day, and enjoyed a most unenviable reputation as a resort of the lawless.”*



## THE KIRKYARD OF BOTHWELL

Few ecclesiastical buildings in Scotland can claim to be more historic or beautiful than the Parish Church of Bothwell. In its time it has represented the three great strands of the Christian religion in this country. From its early foundations, it was a church for the Roman Catholic faith. In 1398, Archibald, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Douglas, petitioned the Pope to have it elevated to the status of a collegiate church. The quire that he added to the Norman building remains one of the great glories of Scottish church architecture to this day. At the Reformation in 1560 it housed a Presbyterian congregation and from 1667 to 1689 reflecting the torrid history of Christianity in Scotland, it was Episcopalian. Since the restoration of Presbyterianism in 1689, it has been a congregation of the Church of Scotland.

Today, as it has done down the centuries, it dominates the centre of Bothwell and since the building of the Church Centre, it has become an important resource for the whole community.

Reflecting the building's long history is the surrounding kirkyard, containing monuments which in themselves are records in stone of the people who once lived in this community. Sadly with the passing of time and because of the vagaries of Scottish weather, many of the gravestones have deteriorated badly. At the

invitation of the Minister, Reverend James Gibson, a group of volunteers from Bothwell Historical Society led by Bill Gow, agreed to photograph and where possible to record the inscriptions on the gravestones. This has proved to be a fascinating project which has added greatly to our knowledge of the history of the Church and the community and will be a valuable resource for future generations.

Those volunteers who took part were Genevra Ritch, Jean Caulfield, George Waterston, Bob Boyle, Nicol Rennie, Iain Inglis, Alan Slater, Anne Ferguson, Tom Abercrombie, Edward Mallinson, Joan and Harry Marsh, Marjory Robertson, Ian Crawford, Ian McKellar, John Hart, Alison Rennie, Brian Sharp, Bill and Christine Jack and Eric Denton.

Their findings have been collected for publication in this book. We owe them a great deal of thanks for the time and effort. The Historical Society is also indebted to the Minister, Rev James Gibson, for his encouragement and support. I have pleasure in commending our new book to the people of Bothwell and beyond.

Jack Gallacher



*Dedicated volunteers Nicol Rennie and Alison Rennie checking the inscription on a gravestone*

## LIBRARY VIDEO INFORMATION SYSTEM

On the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016 the new video information screen in the library was officially launched by Provost Eileen Logan. Several invited guests attended the launch with members of the Historical Society to welcome them. This represents our largest and most complicated project to date and was funded by the generous contributions of local businesses and groups together with financial support from Society members .

Visitors to the Library, tourists, as well as local people, now have access to a screen showing aspects of our history and giving information about numerous local organisations. The programme will be changed at regular intervals to maintain interest.

An introduction was given by Mr. Jack Gallacher to explain the original concept of the system and the purpose and proposals for its future use.

Provost Logan then gave a speech, praising the concept of the idea and the work and thought that had gone into the final result. She continued with praise also for the various groups within the village and the work of those groups and their efforts to improve the general amenities of Bothwell. She made it clear that she had a very good knowledge of the history of the village and the efforts to recognise and preserve it.

The Provost then pressed a button to initiate the layouts programmed into the digital signage unit concealed behind the video screen to start the various pages or “layouts” being displayed.

Everyone then sat down to watch the display that lasts about 15 minutes before repeating.



*Courtesy of The Hamilton Advertiser*

## COMMEMORATION OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

It was totally appropriate that on 1st July 2016, a Lanarkshire wide service to commemorate the Battle of the Somme was held in Bothwell at the Parish Church. This is the oldest Collegiate Church in Scotland that is functioning still as its founder intended in 1398. Her Majesty The Queen was represented by Vice Lord Lieutenant of Lanarkshire, Sheriff Robert Dickson. The moving service was conducted by the Minister of Bothwell, the Reverend James M Gibson, TD, Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen, Member of the Chapel Royal in Scotland.

The Minister was joined in taking the service by the Very Reverend Ian Barcroft, Dean of the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway, The Right Reverend Mgr Thomas Canon Millar, Vicar General of the Diocese of Motherwell and Dr Salah Beltagui representing the Muslim Community and Other Faiths.

Also assisting were John Crichton, session Clerk, Bothwell Parish Church, David McAllister of the SSAFA, Ian Forsyth MBE of the British Legion and Colonel Stuart Robertson, Commanding Officer, Royal Logistics Corps (Rtd).

Included in the congregation were service personnel from the Royal Regiment of Scotland together with colour parties from Hamilton and District British Legion. Robert Sawyers (Bugler) and David Stark (Piper) provided music appropriate to the solemnity of the occasion. All music used in the Commemoration dated from the period of the First World War and was under the direction of Phil Hotham Director of Music at the Parish Church. The choir of the Parish Church took part augmented by guest singers.

The large congregation which included representatives of Bothwell Historical Society heard how the Battle of the Somme was an offensive by British and French forces against German troops. It lasted an agonising five months. A paltry six miles of German held territory was all that was taken and it was said the an allied soldier died for each inch of ground gained. Over a million casualties on both sides were killed and wounded.

Visitors to the church are able to see a copy of the Society's 2014 publication "Lest We Forget" a page of which is turned every week in memory of a local man who died in the service of his country in the Great War.



*Soldiers go over the top of the trench*

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## PRIMARY 7 AND WORLD WAR 2

On the invitation of Mrs Francine Malley, their class teacher, Historical Society chairman Jack Gallacher visited primary 7 at St Bride's to talk about what life was like during World War Two. The class had just finished an exciting and fascinating project which had included some remarkable written work which members of the class read out to the visitor.

Having established that he was too young to fight in the war, Jack invited the children to examine what was important to them in their lives today. There followed a long list of modern imperatives such as X-boxes, television, mobile phones, bathrooms, central heating, microwaves, fridges, washing machines and so on. These are all items which we all take for granted today.

The children were then taken back to a time when most people lived in tenement flats. These were commonly two rooms and if the family was lucky, an inside toilet with few people enjoying the luxury of a bathroom.

How many people today would appreciate sleeping in a hole in the wall bed (still to be seen in the National Trust's Tenement House In Glasgow)? This was a time of

wailing sirens and dropping bombs, of visits to the pictures interrupted by an air raid, of windows covered in tape to prevent injury from bomb blasts, of baffle walls built at the end of closes (again to absorb the blast from bombs), of emergency water tanks to be used if incendiary bombs fell, a time when supermarkets were unknown and folk shopped in the local shops or in the cooperative. This was a time of rationing (no pick and mix sweets on demand) and queues at grocers, butchers and bakers. Schools, unlike today, were grim Victorian buildings where the children sat in serried ranks and counted in pounds, shillings and pence.

Three bombs did fall on Bothwell, having been jettisoned by a German pilot on his way home after a raid on Glasgow. As they fell on open fields in the Fallside area of the village (where Churchill Crescent now stands) they did little damage with the possible exception of creating three craters in the fields.

The children were enthusiastic in their questioning but were glad to get back to 2016 and the delights of 21<sup>st</sup> century living especially as they were off that afternoon to go skiing at Bellahouston Park.

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## A THANK YOU FROM A JUNIOR HISTORIAN



My name is Nathan Lafferty and I am a P6 pupil in St Bride's Primary School in Bothwell. I am a keen Junior Historian whose interest was fostered thanks mainly to my Grandad with whom I spent a lot of time. We went on long walks to Bothwell Castle and the David Livingstone Centre. He told me great stories and facts about my local area and

reminded me how lucky I was to stay in Bothwell.

My favourite stories were the ones he told me about being a child during the war, particularly the tales of air raid alarms and huddling together with his family while they waited for the all-clear. They sent chills down my spine as we would talk about how he hoped this would never happen again.

This year in school memories of these stories came back as we studied the events of WW1 in class and I could talk to my classmates about the things I already knew about wartime. As I have learned more about the different periods in history my thirst for all things historical has grown.

I have continued to look at WW1 and the stories of WW2 and on a recent trip to London I visited Churchill's Bunkers. I was so engrossed that I lost all

track of time and my gran had to come and find me! As everybody my age would say the Tudor period is exciting and interesting because we all love the stories of the many disgusting and unhygienic practices as well as the gruesome executions. But who needs London as with my love of history what better place to live than Bothwell. The wonderful Bothwell Castle on my doorstep. The stories of the Earl of Bothwell running away from Mary Queen of Scots. The Covenanter's Bridge to keep me keen.

Mr Gallacher, the President of the Society is a frequent and popular visitor to our school so I emailed to say that I am keen to learn more about the history of Bothwell as I think the past is really important and should be remembered to inform future generations. Unfortunately I am too young at the moment to officially join the Society but he kindly gave me this opportunity to say thank you to the Historical Society, on behalf of all of the children of Bothwell for their hard work in keeping the history and stories of Bothwell alive for us and the children of the future.

Thank you.

Nathan Lafferty (*Historian in waiting*)

## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2016

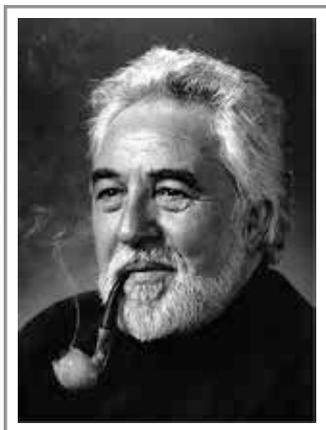
At the Remembrance Day Service last November, four pupils from St Bride's Primary laid the traditional wreath of poppies at the War Memorial on behalf of the Historical Society. They were joined by local people and representatives of local groups.

The pupils were accompanied at the remembrance service by Mrs Pacitti, their Head Teacher.



*From the left, Kiera Cusick, Kian Docherty, Brogan Walker, Caris Docherty.*

## BILL McCUE AND BOTHWELL



Last year's October talk was by Prof Kirsten McCue about her father, singer Bill McCue.

Bill McCue, whose deep rich tones were heard around the world, was born in Allanton, Shotts, the son of a mining family. He started his working life as an apprentice

electrician in the local colliery. His rich bass voice enabled him to get a National Coal Board scholarship to the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. National Service interrupted his studies but his local MP Margaret Herbiston was able to get him a posting which enabled him to continue with his studies.

After his National Service Bill McCue attended the Royal Academy in London but before he completed the course he was offered and accepted a contract with Grampian TV in Aberdeen. That was the start of his singing career.

Bill and his wife Pat started their married life in Old Glasgow Road, Uddingston. It was said that his practice room in the house was so small and his bass voice so loud that it caused nose bleeds! In 1967 the family moved to Sweethope House where the rooms

were perfect for his rehearsals. It was there that Kirsteen grew up and during her talks she reminisced about her childhood in Bothwell where she attended the old primary school.

Bill McCue performed in concerts in Scotland and round the world. His radio and TV shows included 'It's a Fine Thing to Sing', 'Double Bill' and 'The White Heather Club'. In addition he was a founder member of Scottish Opera and gave many notable performances. Following a production of 'A Midsummer's Night Dream' it was said "He was the best Bottom in the business". He was awarded an OBE in 1982 for his contribution to Scottish music.

Bill McCue died in 1999 but his memory lives on through his music.



## A VIEW OF HISTORY THROUGH A MINIATURE WORLD

For the first time the Historical Society held one of its talks in the afternoon instead of the usual evening slot. Some members had suggested an afternoon time might be better to avoid coming out on a dark, cold winter's evening. Apprehensions about numbers at this new time were soon allayed when members filled up the hall to hear Marjory Robertson's talk on a Miniature World.

Marjory Robertson is a lady of many talents and a well known personality in Bothwell. She works tirelessly for 'Brighter Bothwell' and is currently their Chairperson.

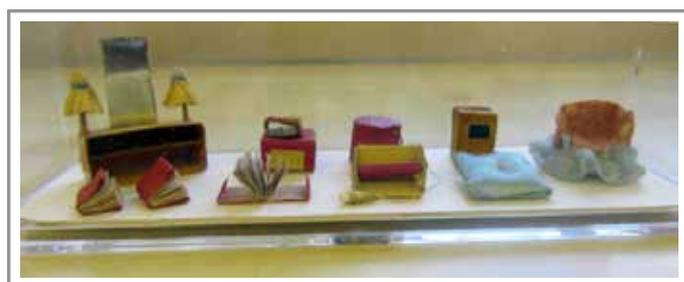


Marjory captivated her audience from the beginning by not only having some of her own collection of miniatures on display for all to see, but having an extensive number of slides to back up her talk. She started off by giving us a history of the miniature world and how it developed over the centuries. In the early days specially made cabinets were on show in wealthy people's homes displaying wonderful pieces of miniature porcelain and furniture.

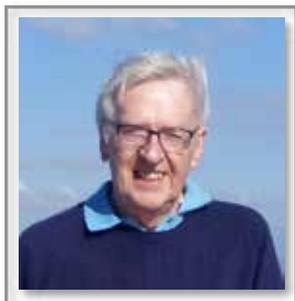
In the 18th century in Britain there developed an interest in miniaturising buildings. Marjorie spoke about many places throughout Britain where miniaturist work is displayed and preserved for posterity. She spoke about Queen Mary's dolls house which can be viewed at Windsor Castle and was designed by Edwin Lutyens as a flagship of endeavour showcasing British craftsmanship for the rest of the world to see. This helped to lift the nation's spirits after The Great War.

As Marjorie pointed out, apart from the art of the miniaturist bringing us pleasure and fascination, it preserves what life was like in the past. Marjorie showed us slides of a house and contents which demonstrated what life was like during the Second World War including miniatures of ration books. What better way have we of preserving history for the present and future?

Marjorie also spoke about how she got started making her own miniatures. As a young girl she made a rabbit's house out of a chocolate box and roped her grandfather into helping her cut a handbag mirror to use for the dressing table. Her imagination and gift for interior/dress design has played a huge part in making her a successful miniaturist in her own right. Marjory captivated her audience with her wonderful talk and inspired many to go away and learn more about the subject.



## THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS



BHS was privileged to have Douglas Weir speak at our February meeting; the subject being the history of Scottish education over the last fifty years. Douglas started his working life as a secondary school teacher and is now professor of teacher training at

Aberdeen University and is well placed to talk about his experiences and the way government policy has affected Scottish education.

Douglas spoke about the sixties when three landmark reports were published, one on teacher training and the others on primary and secondary school education. It was mooted that primary schools should be places where pupils could come for enjoyment and where each child would feel loved and nurtured. Secondary schools should have no more than 800 pupils. The first three secondary school years should teach general subjects and 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year should be for subjects chosen by pupils themselves to study. In teacher training colleges time should be given to professionalism and the understanding of the theories of teaching and learning.

It was in the sixties that comprehensive education was introduced in order that pupils would not be streamed by ability and all pupils would attend the same school.

Douglas said that since the sixties there has been very little change in Scottish education. He points to the fact that the teaching profession has become more feminised and it is thought the fall in the number of male teachers could be detrimental for some pupils who would benefit from a male role model. Also in years gone by secondary teachers would take boys on a Saturday morning for football but these days extra curricular activities are timetabled within school time. This has resulted in a fall of talented young footballers, not to mention the disappearance of an opportunity for youngsters to feel part of a team and enjoy keeping fit outdoors. He also highlighted that despite the recommendation that secondary schools should have no more than a role of 800 pupils 50% of schools today have well over this number. This contributes to youngsters feeling dispirited in such a populated environment.

Change has been needed in Scottish education but unfortunately, as Douglas stated, schools were used by the government of the day to solve national problems. For example, when the school leaving age was raised from 15 to 16 as it was cheaper to keep children in school rather than trying to find employment in economically stressed times. Today children are encouraged to stay on at school and go on to further education. In 1984 23% of children stayed to do a sixth year compared with 63% in 2014. Douglas expressed his frustration at the inability of governments to make the required changes. In his opinion this was partly due to education ministers being in office for too short a time to see through needed change.

### PROGRAMME 2017/2018

*Tuesday 28th March 2017 @ 7.30pm*

"The Border Reivers"

John Hart

*Tuesday 26th September 2017 @ 7.30pm*

AGM

&

"Bredisholm and Uddingston Oil Company"

George Maxwell

*Tuesday 24th October 2017 @ 7.30pm*

"SS-GB: the German conquest of Britain in 1940.

Could it ever have happened? "

Professor Sir Tom Devine

*Tuesday 28th November 2017 @ 2pm*

"Tales from Bothwell Kirkyard"

Bill Gow

*Tuesday 6th February 2018 @ 7.30pm*

"Off the Record: a life in newspapers past and present - but do they have a future?"

Tom Brown

*Tuesday 13th March 2018 @ 7.30pm*

"The Chapter House Development"

George Waterston