
NEWSLETTER

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS



Seven men met together for the first time on May 5th 2011 to discuss the possibility of organising an exhibition of old Bothwell as part of the first Scarecrow Festival. This was the beginning of Bothwell Historical Society. No one was quite sure how this society would develop. Given the incredible historical

heritage of the village it was surprising that there didn't ever seem to have been anything resembling such a project. What has happened since then?

Firstly we managed to have the services of Scotland's most eminent historian, Professor Tom Devine, later Sir Tom Devine, as our Honorary President. This was a major coup and Sir Tom has been unstinting in his support for the work of the society from the very beginning.

Since then we have gathered together an enthusiastic membership of over 100 local people and we live in hope that we can encourage younger people to join us. The family membership of £10 has remained the same since 2011. We have had 28 speakers' meetings and have been encouraged on every occasion by a good turnout of members. To date all the speakers have generously waived any fee for their services. As part of the splendid Scarecrow Festival we have organised 5 exhibitions with another one planned for September this year.

Two major publications, "Lest We Forget" - the story of Bothwell men who died during World War 1 and "Bothwell Stories", a light hearted series of pictures and reminiscences of Bothwell people and of life in the village over the years, were undertaken. Both books were a resounding success and quickly sold out.

In our first newsletter we had a picture of the original 7 committee members posing against the background

of the Covenanters' Field. Together with other village organisations and individuals we took a prominent part in the campaign to prevent Cala Homes building on this, the last remaining undeveloped part of the battlefield. Although we were successful, we need to remain vigilant for as yet the field does not have legal protection and developers are prepared to wait patiently to try again.

In 2012 with the help of a group of enthusiastic photographers we recorded every street in Bothwell. This will be an invaluable source for future researchers. We have created an archive, housed in the Library and have encouraged Library staff to catalogue the collection of printed material. We hope to expand on this project. As a result of our initiative various artefacts with links to Bothwell are on display in the Library and our ambition for the future is to create a Heritage Centre in the Donald Institute.

Our website, thanks to Liz and Eric Denton has been much admired. As a result of this, we have had contact from many parts of the world. Currently we are raising money to fund the installation of an LED screen in the Donald Institute. We hope that this will provide interesting information to local people and to visitors to Bothwell.

Together with Brighter Bothwell we have created two memorials to the village's mining heritage. The first is a replica bogie situated at the corner of Fallside Road and Uddingston Road. This monument was unveiled by two former miners from the Castle Colliery. The second one, a plaque at the corner of Blanyre Road and Uddingston Road at the Miners' Wildflower Garden was unveiled by local school children.

Bothwell has been twinned with the French town of Jouay en Josas for many years. We prepared a French and English guide to the Mining Heritage, to the Church and to the Donald institute for a group of French visiting beekeepers. George Maxwell, John Hart, Brian Sharp and Eric Denton acted as tour guides. Committee members have given talks to other local organisations and have been well received.

I am particularly pleased to report that links to our schools are flourishing and you can read about this elsewhere in this newsletter. Both schools have now joined us in the wreath laying ceremonies at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday.

Vice Chairman, Professor George Maxwell has organised an Uddingston/Bredisholm historical group to study the history of that area. We offer George and his members all the help and support we can give and wish them well with their efforts.

Since the inception of the Society, we have recorded the memories of a number of older residents for our Oral History project. These recordings are now in our archive and may be examined by applying to the Librarian.

A great deal has been achieved, far more than the folk meeting for the first time on May 5th 2011 could ever

have imagined. Nevertheless we are not complacent and much remains to be done. The Society will support all efforts to preserve local services such as the Library and the Donald Institute building. Above all we need to recruit younger people to our ranks. We are grateful to our loyal membership for the support they give to the Society and for suggestions and advice received.

I would like to record my personal thanks to our hardworking office bearers and our committee members who have made it possible for me to record our achievements. It is to them and to you that we owe our flourishing Bothwell Historical Society.

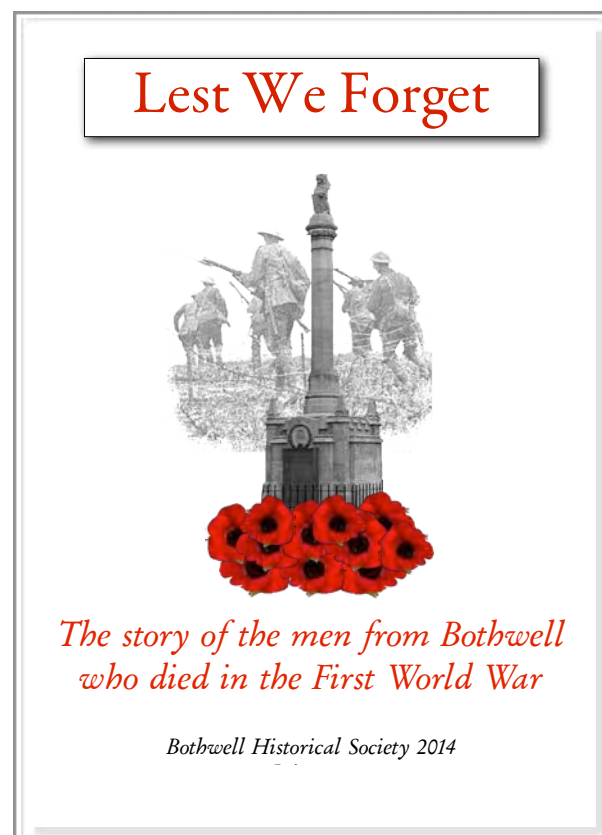
Jack Gallacher

COMMEMORATION OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

A table to commemorate the beginning of the First World War has been placed in the Parish Church. The tall votive candle represents the declaration and commencement of hostilities and as each subsequent year of conflict passes, the smaller candles are lit.

On the table, in front of the candles, lies a specially rebound copy of *Lest we Forget*. This book is a record of the men from Bothwell and Bothwellhaugh who died during the hostilities. Each Sunday, throughout the year, the pages are turned to tell the tale of each man's life.

It is thought that one hundred and ten men, from Bothwell and Bothwellhaugh, died during the First World War.



SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

Recently the good denizens of Castle Avenue looking out their windows might have been forgiven for assuming an invading force of knights in shining armour accompanied by their beautifully dressed ladies was on its way to lay siege to our ancient fortress. Closer examination would reveal that the colourful procession was made up of the children of primary 3 from St Bride's Primary School Bothwell, accompanied by their class teacher, Miss Paula Slater. Following an enthusiastically received class project on the castle, the children were on their way to visit the ancient structure, an important part of their heritage.

On arrival at the castle, they were given a talk by the Custodian Chris Timmons, who engaged the children's attention with tales of the castle, its buildings including the dungeons, the Lord and Lady's

sumptuous living apartments, the Great Hall and the Chapel. Chris was kept busy answering many questions posed by the young people. Primary 3 then went on a tour of the building and enjoyed exploring the towers and corridors before gathering on the central lawns. Here was an opportunity for the knights to engage in some swordplay and as we live in an age of equal opportunity (unlike in mediaeval times) some of the ladies joined in too.

It was clear that the young people enjoyed their day out and that history could be vigorous, exciting and something to be enjoyed both in and out of the classroom. Miss Slater is to be congratulated for her inspiring work with the children and for encouraging them to appreciate how fortunate they are to live in such an historic community.

The children who took part

Ellie Brown	Ben Davidson	Jack McFadden
Star Callaghan	Cerys Dunn	Nathan McGhee
Maria Capaldi	Owen Gallacher	Annie
Louis Carroll	Lauren Gilluley	McLaughlin
Kaia Cassidy	Eilidh Govan	Stephen Meikle
Arianna Connelly	Claudia Higgins	Sophie Mitchell
Orla Connelly	Oliver Kotylak	Finn Slowey
Andrew Currie	Delilah Lowey	Tommy Turner
Paul Currie	Rory Marley	Luciano Zecchino
Olivia Cusick	John McCrory	



SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

We are currently undertaking an extensive project on local history with primary 7 at Bothwell Primary School. Mrs Tracy McHenry, the class 7 teacher, was enthusiastic about the idea that the children should have access to original research and that they should avoid cutting and pasting from the internet.

As a result, committee members agreed to provide the young people with original information on important parts of the history of our community. John Hart prepared material on Bothwell Parish Church, George Maxwell provided research on the miners and on the

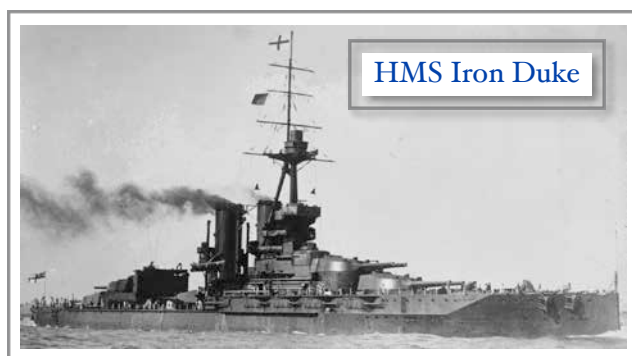
Castle Colliery, Eric Denton investigated the development of the Donald Institute, Brian Sharp told the story of the Covenanters and The Battle of Bothwell Bridge and Jack Gallacher wrote on how castles came to play such an important part of our history, with particular reference to Bothwell Castle.

The children are now working hard on their project and it is hoped that their efforts will be on display at an exhibition in the Library during the Scarecrow Festival in September.

THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND

At the time of World War One, Great Britain had by far the largest and most powerful navy in the world. When the conflict broke out the main British fleets were based at Rosyth on the Forth and at Scapa Flow in the Orkneys. This was to ensure a tight blockade of Germany and to prevent vital supplies reaching that country by sea.

One of the most powerful ships in the Royal Navy was the Dreadnought class battleship *HMS "Iron Duke"* named in honour of the Duke of Wellington. This ship became the flagship of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe commander of the Grand Fleet. On the 31st of



May, 1916 both the British (led by "Iron Duke") and German fleets clashed off the coast of Denmark in what was to be the Battle of Jutland. This was the greatest sea battle of the war and the British public was anticipating a second Trafalgar. What actually happened generated a controversy that has lasted until today in 2016, the 100th anniversary of the battle. 6,000 British sailors were killed as opposed to 2,500 German seamen and more British ships were sunk than

German. Yet it was a tactical victory for Britain in that the German High Seas fleet never ventured out of harbour again and the blockade of Germany continued. Who won the Battle of Jutland? The debate is still ongoing. Following Jutland, Germany resorted to submarine warfare, the result of which is well documented.

During World War Two, HMS "Iron Duke" which had been launched in 1912 was beached at Scapa Flow where she was used as a base ship and a gun platform. In the course of carrying out these duties, she was attacked by German aircraft and badly damaged. In 1946 she was sold for scrap and moved to Glasgow to be broken up.

A relic of this once fine ship found its way to Bothwell. This item is a very ordinary looking bit of wood. In fact it is a piece of teak containing a carving of a sailing ship and bearing a small plaque stating, "From the teak of HMS Iron Duke Admiral Jellicoe's Flagship Jutland 1916."

It is now 100 years since the Battle of Jutland was fought on May 31st 1916.

In 2016, as we remember the men who died in the trenches and on Flanders Field in the war on land, let us

also remember all those who lost their lives at sea.



WHISKY GALORE !

Bothwell resident, Rena Lamberton, was born and raised in Glasgow. During the Second World War, 11 year old Rena was evacuated to live with her great aunt at Eoligarry on the Island of Barra. The family had a croft and for city girl Rena life could not have been more different. She attended the local school, just two classrooms and had to help on the croft. She learned to milk the cow and on occasion was sent with a dozen eggs for Sir Compton Mackenzie who had a house on the island.

However for Rena and the islanders of Barra the mundane routine of island life was soon to be disrupted. On the 3rd February 1941, the cargo ship SS Politician left Liverpool, bound for Kingston, Jamaica and New Orleans with a cargo including 28,000 cases of malt whisky. Two days later, during gale force winds, she ran aground off the Island of Eriskay and later broke in two. The crew were all unharmed and were looked after by the locals for a while.

When the locals learned from the crew of the "Polly" what the ship was carrying, a series of salvage operations took place at night, before the customs and excise officials arrived. The island's supplies of whisky had dried up due to war-time rationing, so the islanders periodically helped themselves to some of the 28,000 cases of whisky before winter weather broke up the ship. The men wore women's dresses on

their "fishing trips", to keep their own clothes from being covered in incriminating oil from the ship's holds. From Eilogarry to the site of the wreck was less than 10 miles so for the men of Barra the Politician became their local 'off licence'. There was only one policeman on Barra who patrolled the island on his bicycle and could do little to stop the flow of whisky to the island.

The local customs officer, Charles McColl, was incensed by the plundering of the ship. None of the whisky had paid a penny of duty, and he railed against this loss to the public purse. He whipped up a furore and made the police act. Villages were raided and crofts turned upside down. Rena remembers bottles being hidden, emptied into all kinds of unlikely containers or simply drunk in order to hide the evidence.

A number of the locals were caught red-handed, and they were sent to trial at Lochmaddy Sheriff Court. They pleaded guilty to theft and were charged between three and five pounds. McColl was beside himself at the leniency of the sentence, but the police (being largely locals themselves) were tired of harassing the locals who had not, in their minds, done such a bad thing.

But McColl continued on his crusade, and more men did appear in court, some of whom were sentenced to up to six weeks imprisonment in Inverness and Peterhead.

At sea, salvage attempts did not go well, and it was eventually decided to let Politician remain where she was. McColl however ensured that there would be no more temptation. He applied for, and was granted, permission to explode her hull. The islanders watched this extraordinary action, their emotions summed up by Angus John Campbell, who commented, "*Dynamiting whisky. You wouldn't think there'd be men in the world so crazy as that!*"

Compton Mackenzie was well aware of the shipwreck and used the story as the basis of his book "Whisky Galore" later made into a successful film.

And as for Rena, life on the island was too quiet and she missed her family in Glasgow. She wrote to her mother and was then allowed to return home.



Rena Lamberton

THE CAMERONIANS

On Tuesday 22nd March, the Historical Society held the last of our “Talks” for Session 2015-16. Our speaker for the evening was Mr Barrie Duncan, Assistant Museums Officer of South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture. Barrie’s subject “The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in the First World War”, proved to be fascinating and extremely relevant, bearing in mind the Regiment’s Lanarkshire connections and the ongoing present day commemorations associated with the Centenary of the Great War.

Barrie began his Talk by looking at the origins of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). The Regiment can trace its birth back to 1689, when a Regiment was raised by James Douglas, Earl of Angus, the eldest son of the Marquis of Douglas, at Douglas in Lanarkshire.

Raised to uphold and defend the Presbyterian form of worship in Scotland and the royal authority of the new joint monarchy of King William 3rd (Prince of Orange) and his wife Mary 2nd, the Regiment was named after the extreme Covenanter, Richard Cameron (“The Lion of the Covenant”) and his followers, “The Cameronians”.

The Regiment evolved into an amalgamation of the 26th Cameronian Regiment and the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry, which were brought together in the Army Reforms of 1881 as The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). Following the amalgamation of 1881, the 26th and the 90th formed the 1st and 2nd Battalions respectively.

For many years, the title “Scottish Rifles” was used by the 2nd Battalion to distinguish it from the 1st Battalion, who tended only to use the title “the Cameronians”. Since then, their recruiting base has been firmly located in Lanarkshire and the Glasgow area, where the 26th Cameronian Regiment originated.

The focus of Barrie’s Talk was, of course, on the Regiment’s participation in the First World War.

He used photographs, objects and records held in the Regimental collections in order to explain the Regiment’s involvement in the great conflict.

He clarified the Regimental structure, when war was declared in August 1914, and gave us an insight into various types of uniforms worn at the time.

The 1st Battalion was immediately sent to France at the outbreak of war. The 2nd Battalion reached France from Malta in November 1914. Special Reserve and Territorial Force Battalions followed in due course.

He went on to focus on various aspects of the Great War, using slides. He covered battles, campaigns and

the personal testimonies of the officers and men caught up in the “War to end all Wars”.

Time limitations meant that Barrie could only highlight some of the actions and events, which indicate the Regiment’s impressive war service.

In the four years of hostilities 7,106 Cameronians were killed and some 30,000 wounded. The Regiment gained three Victoria Crosses.

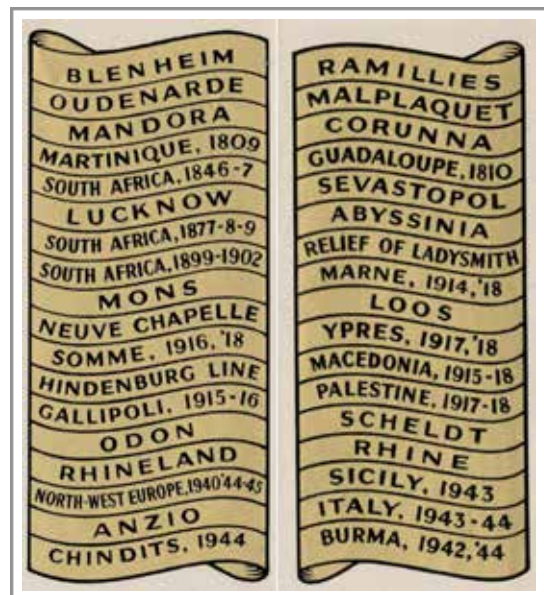
Barrie finished his Talk with an uplifting story!

A signal received by the Cameronians at the end of the war, dated 22nd December 1918 (after Armistice), confirmed that Private James Towers of the 2nd Scottish Rifles had been awarded the Victoria Cross for an “act of the most unsurpassed bravery performed by him on 6th October this year”.

We can only imagine that the news of James Tower’s V.C. coming so soon after Armistice, really gave the men something to celebrate.

Barrie then concluded his Talk by answering a number of pertinent questions put to him by some of our members and friends.

An extremely enjoyable and informative evening was had by all.



These are the battle honours of the Cameronians. Rifle Regiments do not carry colours, so the honours are displayed on the regimental drums and on the officers’ cross belt ornaments.

The Regiment was eligible for many battle honours for its Great War Service. A committee was formed in the 1920’s and the ten honours shown here were chosen as the main honours to commemorate the Regiment in the First World War.

GOING POTTY

Few items in the history of households have come down from the 6th century to the 21st century. The chamber pot, which had its origins in ancient Greece, is still in use today mainly by very young children and sometimes by invalids. It has been given many titles in its long career. Possibly the best known in the west of Scotland is "*the potty*" or in less refined circles, "*the chantie*".

Even in the grandest of houses, such as those depicted in television dramas, the chamber pot was in use and emptying it was one of the less pleasant tasks of the humblest of servants. As the 19th century progressed, indoor toilets started to displace the chamber pot but it was still used widely until the mid-20th century. Many older people will remember the rather curious ceremony where a chamber pot, filled with salt and containing some tiny china dolls, was handed over to a prospective bride by her friends. This is one custom that seems to have disappeared from modern wedding

etiquette possibly having been dismissed in favour of a "*hen night*".

Bothwell Historical Society has found a new use for this ancient receptacle. At Speakers' evenings members are invited to "Spend a Penny", keeping inflation in mind, in a Victorian potty. The money is used to help with the society's running costs and members are invariably very generous.

The chamber pots used by the Society: there are two of them from the Copeland Pottery in Staffordshire. W.T Copeland and Sons operated from 1847 until 1970 before being taken over by Spode. The potties are marked with the standard mark found on Copeland earthenware between 1894 and 1910. They were found over 40 years ago in an antique shop in Kingussie and since then have enjoyed an honourable retirement in Bothwell and a new and useful function as fundraisers for Bothwell Historical Society



The programme for the session 2016/17 is now being finalised and as before starts with the AGM on the 13th September 2016.

In October we are delighted to be able to welcome Professor Kirsteen McCue to speak to us. The title of her talk is "*Bill McCue and Bothwell*." Bill McCue, his wife Pat and daughter Kirsteen lived in Sweethope House, Bothwell until his death in 1999. Last January some of you may have seen the BBC2 programme '*Burns, My Dad and Me*' presented by Professor McCue. If her talk to us is up to the standard of that programme it will be a very enjoyable night.

Some of our members have indicated that they would prefer meetings in the afternoon and as a trial our November meeting will start at 2pm. The talk, given by Marjory Robertson, is titled "*A view of history through a miniature world*." Marjory is very knowledgeable about

the world of miniatures and her talk promises to be of great interest.

We have two speakers for our talks in February and March. Professor Douglas Weir will talk about "*The history of education in Scotland over the past 50 years*". After teaching in schools and colleges, Douglas Weir moved into educational research with the Scottish Council for Research in Education, then into higher education at the University of Glasgow, the University of Strathclyde and finally, before his retirement at the University of Aberdeen. We have all been through the school system and it will be interesting to hear about it from the inside.

Our final speaker will be John Hart, one of our committee members. John is steeped in the history of Scotland and his talk on "*The Border Reivers*" will be well worth hearing.

BOTHWELL LIBRARY

Libraries have been important centres of culture and civilisation for approximately 6,000 years, so much so that any attempt to diminish the role of libraries may be seen as a move to downgrade the importance of



learning. The earliest record of an organisation resembling a library may be found in the stone tablets of ancient Sumar 2,600 years ago. Great libraries existed in Roman times at Alexandria and Constantinople and the rise of the Islamic civilisation was reflected in libraries in great centres of learning such as Baghdad and Damascus.

The destruction of libraries and in particular, the burning of books and manuscripts brought about a period of darkness in countries across Europe and the Middle East. The Reformation in 16th and 17th centuries ushered in a period when the authorities sought to ban written and published material including the Bible itself. In 20th century Germany the Nazis consigned thousands of books to the flames in an attempt to stamp out freedom of thought.

Today, most countries have established National Libraries as centres of learning and civilisation and as sources of national pride. In this country we have the British Museum in London and the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh to name but two. In Glasgow we have the outstanding Mitchell Library the

largest public reference library in Europe. In the late 19th and early 20th century, thanks to the munificence of Andrew Carnegie, public libraries were erected in towns and cities throughout Scotland.

The earliest library in Bothwell was probably located in the Collegiate Church where there would almost certainly have been a collection of sacred manuscripts and books to be used by the clergy. The first public library in Bothwell opened in 1876 in the Public Hall and was taken over by Lanark County Council in 1941. With the closure of the Public Hall in 1960, the Library moved to its present location in the Donald Institute. It is now part of South Lanarkshire Council's Leisure and Recreational Services

Library services are no longer limited to books and other items may be borrowed by members of the public. Computers are available for public use and very shortly WIFI will be made available in the library. Libraries have moved with the times but technology has a notoriously short lifespan. Who would have thought that vinyl records would be back in fashion again. A recent national news report (June 2016) has indicated an 11% drop in the sale of Kindles and a rise of 3% in the sale of books (a small but significant increase) The once struggling Waterstones bookshop chain is now showing a healthy profit. It would be foolish to dismiss the importance of the old fashioned book.

Recently libraries across Scotland have been seen as a soft option for cash strapped local authorities and opening hours have been cut or libraries closed altogether. Our library in Bothwell is one of the central features of our community. We in the Historical Society have encouraged the development of a local history collection and the Donald Institute contains our growing archive. Our LED screen should be up and running shortly. As far as our library in Bothwell is concerned, we must use it or lose it. It would be a dreadful loss if a community resource that has lasted for 140 years were to disappear.