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# NEWSLETTER

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## CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS



Although our Speakers' Programme for 2017/18 has reached a successful conclusion, the work of the Society continues. Our application to borrow pottery excavated at the castle from the National Museums of Scotland was unsuccessful.

Unfortunately conditions in the Donald Institute did not match the exacting standards required by the NMS. Our own modest Heritage Collection continues to grow thanks to the generosity of local people. Plans are afoot to purchase another cabinet to add to the collection. We hope soon to have a portrait of the late Russell Thomson on display. Local people will remember Russell as a doughty fighter for Bothwell in the Bothwell Village Association and for his work in promoting the centre of our community as a conservation area.

Our petition to the Scottish Parliament to enact legislation to protect 39 battlefields of significance to Scotland's history has attracted world wide attention. We featured in two national newspapers, the Scottish Sunday Express and The Scotsman. As expected we gained the attention of supporters across Europe, the Commonwealth and the USA as well as Hong Kong, the

Cayman Islands and the USA Minor Outlying Islands. We wait to see how our MSPs will respond to this level of interest. It goes without saying that there was considerable local support. The site of the Battle of Bothwell Bridge is, of course, one of the 39 significant locations identified by Historic Environment Scotland as yet not protected by law from inappropriate development.

Our links with local schools continue. I was pleased to attend the prize giving ceremony at St. Bride's Primary School. Our own young historian, Nathan Lafferty, received an award and I'm sure the best wishes of all of us go with him as he moves to Secondary School at Holy Cross High.

All the efforts of the office bearers and committee members would be of little consequence without the support and encouragement of you, our members. As always a special mention must be made of the significant contribution made on our behalf by Liz Denton, not only in the presentation of this newsletter but also in the highly professional website which I recommend to you.

I wish you all a happy and enjoyable summer and I look forward to seeing you in September.

Jack Gallacher

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## A NEW VENTURE

Our society has recently joined "The Scottish Local History Forum". This is an organization for and by local history societies and national institutions. We have a listing on the directory of the forum and space where we can contribute news, information, events and our winter talks programme amongst other articles we wish to make known.

The forum has three journals each year and several newsletters each very well produced and printed. The research that goes into writing articles for the journals is

very comprehensive and makes for most interesting reading.

The website can be found at: [www.slhf.org](http://www.slhf.org) Click on "Member Organisations" then scroll down to find our entry (listed alphabetically) then click on our name to have a look.

If you feel you can contribute in any way, please let us know, that way we can expand our audience.

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## SALUBRIOUS, AFFLUENT AND HISTORIC

These are terms which developers use to describe Bothwell when they advertise houses for sale in the village. “Salubrious”— that’s possible, “Affluent”— for some perhaps, “Historic”— we have to accept that as the signs at the entrance to the community tell us so and we have Bothwell Historical Society.

History does sell houses as we can see from Hepburn Gait, our newest development. Gait is an old Scottish word for street. The Hepburn name is used possibly because the Hepburns were Earls of Bothwell. The title was granted in 1488 to Patrick Hepburn and in time the family exchanged Bothwell Castle for Hermitage Castle in the Borders. From then on the Hepburn connection to Bothwell is tenuous to say the least but then history sells houses and romance is often more persuasive than fact.

Few personalities in Scottish history excite as much controversy as Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots from the age of six days following the death of her father James V in 1542. Libraries have been written about the Queen’s controversial life as both Queen of France and Scotland. One of the greatest of all the debates on the Queen’s story revolves around her marriage to James Hepburn, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Bothwell following the murder of her second husband, Lord Darnley in 1567. It was

firmly believed that Bothwell was involved in the murder of Darnley and shortly afterwards he kidnapped the Queen, allegedly raping her before marrying her. Mary’s part in this is the subject of debate to this day. Following the so called Battle of Carberry Hill on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 1567 (no fighting took place), Bothwell fled to Orkney and then to Denmark where he was arrested and imprisoned.

Tradition has it that he was chained to a pillar and that the groove he made walking round the pillar can still be seen in Dragsholm Castle. He died insane in April 1578. From then until 1975 his mummified body was on display as a ghoulish tourist attraction. It now lies in a closed casket in the vaults of Farevejle Church.

In 2006 representations were made to the then First Minister, Jack McConnell to have Bothwell’s body repatriated to Scotland. As yet nothing has been done to bring this about. Where would he be reburied? Who knows but it certainly wouldn’t be here in our community for we have no claim on him. Perhaps the best solution would be to let him rest in peace in Denmark.

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## PROFESSOR SIR TOM DEVINE



Members will be delighted to know that our Honorary President, Sir Tom Devine, has been awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award in Historical Studies from the UK All Party Parliamentary Group on History

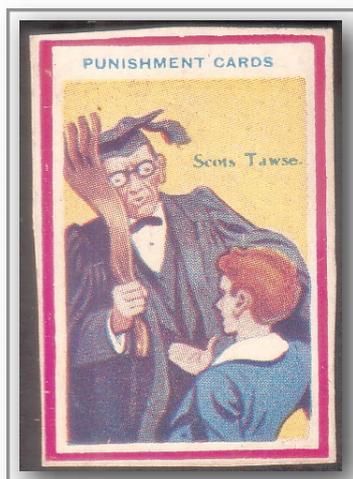
and Archives, the first historian from a Scottish University to be honoured with this award. He is the latest in a long line of distinguished academics including Professor Eric Hobsbawm, Lord Asa Briggs, Sir Keith Thomas and Sir Michael Howard to have his work recognised by the Parliamentary Group.

Sir Tom is a Lanarkshire man, from Motherwell and was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1992. Since Bothwell Historical Society was established in 2011, Sir Tom has taken an active interest as Honorary President in the work of the Society and has been a popular speaker at our meetings on a number of occasions.

He will receive his award at a House of Commons lunch attended by members of both Houses of Parliament in July.

Sir Tom’s next visit to the Society will be on March 12<sup>th</sup> next year. Members will be given the opportunity to purchase his latest book “The Scottish Clearances. A history of the Dispossessed 1600-1900” which will be published by Penguin in October this year.

## THE TAWSE



Many of us of a certain age will remember getting the belt or the strap at primary or secondary school. Children had to endure this punishment not only for misbehaviour, but particularly, in the time of our parents and grandparents, for not understanding the lesson. A Scottish poet Alexander Smart tells of his experience of being punished by the teacher

when writing about his school days in Montrose, "Sixty lashes with the leather thongs on my right hand, inflicted with all the severity of a tyrant's wrath, made me scream in agony of desperation. My pitiless tormentor, unmoved by the sight of my hand sorely lacerated and swollen to twice its natural size, threatened to cut my tongue if I continued to complain and, so saying, laid hold on a pair of scissors and inflicted a deep wound on my lip."

The Education (Scotland) Act of 1872 made education available to all children between the ages of 5 and 13. Over the next few decades large number of schools were built, and teachers trained. The result was large class sizes, learning by rote. Children were expected to work hard, be obedient and silent and this was often enforced by the use of corporal punishment.

The name tawse is derived from the method used to cure the hide known as 'tawing'. The Chambers Scots dictionary definition is a leather strap cut into thongs at one end, and to be used by schoolmasters to punish with, to whip, scourge, belabour. By 1884 70% of these belts were manufactured in Lochgelly in Fife by the Dick family and so these belts or straps

often became known as the 'Lochgelly'. The Lochgelly tawse came in four thicknesses-from light to extra heavy and with two or three tails. In the 1970s a teacher could buy one for a few pounds.

For more than century adults in Scotland could beat children in the classroom if they deemed it necessary. By the mid 1970s public opinion was slowly changing and primary schools were using the belt less than ever before. In 1976 two mothers Mrs Grace Campbell and Mrs Jane Cosans raised an action in the European Court of Human Rights objecting to corporal punishment in schools. The case was heard in 1982 and the Court ruled that all corporal punishment in British schools had to stop. From 1983 the belt in state schools was phased out. Corporal punishment was finally banned in state schools in 1987 but continued in fee-paying schools until it was finally banned in 1998.

With front page headlines in 'The Herald' on Friday the 18th May 2018 '*Bad behaviour soars as pupils no longer fear punishment*' one might wonder if the belt kept the classroom at peace and instilled respect! However, in the 21st century corporal punishment in schools could not be regarded as acceptable. Violence towards a fellow human being, especially a child from an elder, must be considered as wrong. Society must find other ways of dealing with bad behaviour in schools. For example, ending child poverty, more funding for support staff in schools, more engagement of parents with schools and providing more experts who can cater for the complex issues our children can suffer from. Let us not forget that the majority of pupils are well behaved and respectful of their teachers and society needs to find solutions to bridge the attainment gap between rich and poor and keep the use of corporal punishment very much in the annals of history.



## A VISIT TO THE SITES OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS

### Krakow

On the 4th April I visited the wonderful city of Krakow, I was very eager to experience everything.

Soon after landing I embarked on a walking tour of the old town. Firstly, I walked in and around the magnificent St Florians Gate which is the last remaining main fortification around the city. The city itself was first recorded in 965 AD by a Spanish merchant who claimed it was a flourishing city I found it interesting that the city was mentioned that long ago.

### Auschwitz and Birkenau

On the second day I went to Auschwitz and Birkenau both in the village of Oświęcim. At the start of the day I went to the main camp Auschwitz which was used as a concentration camp. We entered the notorious hair room, all my group could not comprehend the vast amount of hair behind the glass partition, I could hardly believe that the hair was on someone's head 70 years ago. I also saw the punishment cells. One of the cells has stayed in my mind after the trip. It was the starvation cell where the inmates were given no food for days. Later I saw the infamous gas chambers or at least an accurate representation of what it would have been like. I was astounded that such inhumane acts of cruelty could come from the human



The entrance to Auschwitz.  
The sign says:  
"arbeit-macht-frei"  
"Work sets you free"

mind. I found this a very humbling experience, a lot of people left mortified at the horrific conditions the Jews, Gypsies and Disabled people had to endure.

In the afternoon we went to visit Birkenau, the first thing that struck me was the railway lines which ran straight through the centre of the camp, when the people disembarked from the train the SS Officers greeted them with a sinister smile. All the old and young people were immediately sent to death in the gas chamber. The remaining people were shown their horrible living quarters expecting relatives to return but they never did.

It is hard to believe 6 million people died in these camps, across Europe. It was unfortunate that Adolf Hitler never came to trial for his part in exterminating innocent people. Instead taking the cowards way out by killing himself.

I enjoyed my visit to Krakow. The visit to the camps will have a lasting affect on me. The camps are a constant reminder to all of us that the holocaust did happen and in the future this kind of ethnic cleansing, or mass genocide should never ever happen again.

Nathan Lafferty

## BOTHWELL BOWLING CLUB

We are celebrating our 150th anniversary this year.

The history of the club may be of interest.

The first minute of the club is dated 5th March 1868 and reads as follows:

At a meeting of the inhabitants of Bothwell convened this day in the Parish Schoolroom, Peter Rintoul Esq., of Bothwell Bank in the chair, the following resolution was put by John Goodwin Esq., seconded and unanimously carried.

*"That this meeting considering the extent population and prosperity of the village of Bothwell, its increasing resort as a summer residence, greatly desired as a place of public recreation and enjoyment, and that in order to*

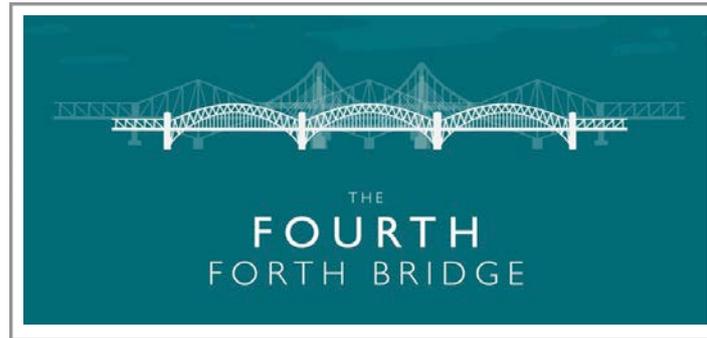


*meet the want which has been felt for so long a time, resolves that an earnest effort should now be made, and that with the least possible delay, to form a Bowling Green, the advantages, and pleasures of which the meeting appreciates and promises to give its cordial support."*

It is interesting to note the names of the original committee.

Peter Rintoul Esq.: Wm. Shaw Esq.: Jas. Mann Esq.: John Goodwin Esq.: John Scott Esq.: John Rogerson Esq.: Neil McEachran Esq.: Messrs. Wm. Henderson, George McDougal, Gavin Shearer, Wm. Wood, Jas. Scott, John P. Watson, John Steven, and John Pearson Watson.

THE 4TH FORTH ROAD BRIDGE? APRIL FOOL BUILT ON TRUTH!



Did you know that in 1945 plans were drawn up to build a new rail bridge across the river Forth? The plans were discovered when Network Rail’s engineers were working on a design for a new visitor facility at the Forth Bridges Visitor Centre. The plans are dated 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1945.

The ambitious design shows a bridge that would look similar to three Sydney Harbour Bridges joined together standing 110 metres high, roughly the same as the old 1890 rail bridge. It shows four very tall masonry towers to support the bridge in order to bring the rail track to the same level above the river as the old bridge.

The new bridge would cross the river between South Queensferry and North Queensferry. It would be built a little to the east of the existing rail bridge but would have to pass through some historic parts of both North Queensferry and Dalmeny. The distinct advantages of building this bridge would be to create another rail route taking some traffic from the old bridge and not interfering with shipping if the rail deck were to be built at a lower level.

A spokesman for Network Rail said “a new rail bridge would add capacity to this section of the route, create

more paths for special trains and relieve the burden on the original bridge, it being a world heritage site”. Network Rail commissioned an artists impression of what four bridges side by side could look like.

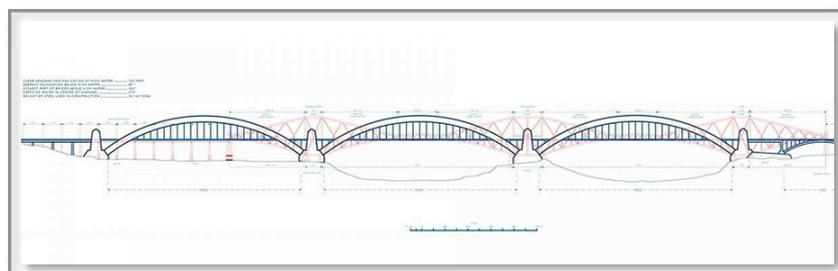
The first crossing of the Forth by railway started in 1850 when the Edinburgh, Leith and Granton Railway began with a “train ferry”, a ferry-boat designed to carry railway coaches between Granton and Burntisland.



The North British Railway Company obtained permission in 1873 to build a railway bridge across the Firth of Forth and construction began in 1878. But after the collapse of the Tay Bridge in 1879 work on that bridge was halted and eventually abandoned in 1881.

The blueprints for a second rail bridge were found as a microfiche file amongst a box of historic documents engineers unearthed whilst working on a design for a new visitor centre.

The plans were used as an April Fool by Visit Scotland, Network Rail and The Daily Record reporting that plans for a Fourth Forth bridge were in the pipeline and construction should begin in the summer of 2018.



## MEMORIES OF CASTLE SQUARE

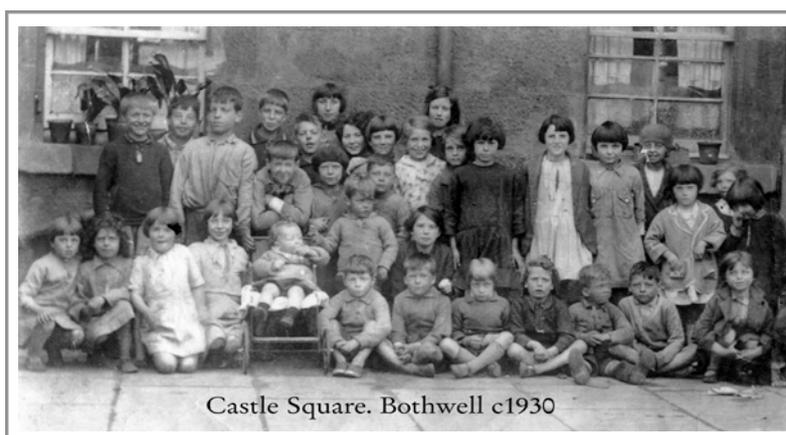
Life in Castle Square was, in the 1940s, a lot different from the kind of life we know today. Socially most families knew almost every other family living there and indeed generations of the same families lived there too.

Locking the front door was seldom done, people knew most everyone who lived there. Sometimes the square was known by its “proper” name, “Baird’s Square” or one popular name “Jubilee Square” but mostly it was “The Square”. My grandparents with their family had an upper flat consisting of a room and kitchen, a stone sink at the window, no running hot water and an outside toilet. The term kitchen was a bit of a misnomer, there was a gas cooker just inside the door meaning when it was being used, the door had to be kept closed and you had to knock the door to warn whoever was cooking to beware! There was an open fire in both rooms, the only form of heating. Sometimes in winter months the outside toilet could freeze as well as the inside water tap! That meant having a couple of pots and a kettle filled with water to be heated to thaw things out in the morning.

I really don’t know how a family of three boys, two girls all in their teens and their parents managed but they did. My great grandmother with her second husband lived downstairs on the ground floor with their family of two boys and a girl. Great grandmother had lost her first husband in a mining accident in 1899 leaving a family of seven children. In order to keep a roof over her and her family’s head she married one of the miners who lodged with her and had another three children by him. Those houses were built by the mine owners for their employees, so the rent payer had to be a mine employee. I was a bit young then to know her first seven children but met some of them years later to add to my total of “aunts and uncles”.

Washing clothes then was a real problem, especially for a miner’s wife in winter. There were three wash houses in the square and people had a rota set up to use them. Between the wash houses were several clothes poles with

many yards of clothesline strung between them. If it was a rainy day when your turn came round, the washing was done in the wash house and then the wet clothes had to be taken indoors to be dried on wooden airers in front of the fire leaving a lot of condensation in the house. There always seemed to me to be almost unlimited coal for home heating and the water boilers in the wash houses, I don’t remember if the miners had an allowance of coal or if something was deducted from their already meagre wages.



Castle Square. Bothwell c1930

In the summer months when the mine closed for maintenance and repairs the miners had an unpaid holiday, no holiday pay in those days, but the men mostly had a suit of clothes for special days. Possibly bought on the ‘never never’ from Winnings shop on main street, but the difference between working clothing and days out dress was

remarkable. Life was hard in those days, if the miners were ill or injured and could not work, then there was no wage paid until they could resume work but the neighbours of the square would help with a door to door collection if the illness continued for some time, that generosity was never abused.

I remember one day out I was taken on was to one of the paddle steamers on the river Clyde. It may even have been the “Waverley”. The destination that day was Dunoon. We had walked for some time when we came across an old deserted building that we explored. In what had possibly stables my grandfather found an old white pith helmet on a shelf and stuck it on his head there and then and brought it back with him to Bothwell, he had it for many years before it just vanished.

All this camaraderie came to an abrupt end after the mine closed in the 1950s and the folks from The Square were moved up the hill to the new Burnhead council housing estate. A lot of friendships did linger for a while but the spirit of Bothwell Castle Square had come to an end.

## JAMES BARR AND SONS

James Barr and Sons was established in 1904 by James Barr (b1874 - d1953) and he acquired warehouse premises with stables in North Road, Bellshill. The principal activity of the business was the wholesale supply of confectionary, tobacco products and dry goods to shops, clubs and pubs in the area. James Barr was an active supporter of the Bothwell Farmers entering his horses and cart in the annual show; certificates for first, second or third places were for many years displayed on the rafters in the stables. The first cart which won the first place medal, was built by Stewart Scott's garage and coachbuilding business in North Road, Bellshill and was a regular sight in Bellshill, Mossend, Bothwellhaugh and Bothwell



Inevitably the horse and cart gave way to the internal combustion engine and this 1948 photograph shows one of the post-war vans in the lower stables and the proprietor's son Andrew Barr meeting with a sales representative in the upper stable. Andrew and his brother Thomas took over the business on the death of their father in 1953

Much of the confectionary sold by the business was manufactured by Scottish based companies including Haltons Ltd, of Uddingston - Toffee and Caramels  
John J Lees of Coatbridge - Macaroon, Milk Maid, and Snowballs

Tunnocks of Uddingston - Caramel Wafers and Tea Cakes

John Millar and Sons of Leith - Boiled Sweets and Pan Drops

McCowans of Stenhousemuir - Highland Toffee and Penny Caramels

Cigarettes supplied by the business were in the early days Capstan, Players, Senior Service and Woodbine but by the 1960s "safer" filter tip cigarettes were becoming more popular with brands such as Embassy, Silk Cut and Players No.6. Pipe tobaccos included Gallaher's Condor and Warhorse produced in one ounce plugs to be cut and rolled. Prior to WW2 there was a demand mainly in the

mining communities for clay pipes and these were delivered to the warehouse packed in straw in recycled tea chests. Pipes were sold by the dozen to local shops but demand fell away in the early 50s

Dry goods were many and varied and primarily for domestic use. Items included for cleaning Vim scouring powder, Duraglit, Brasso and Mansion polishes. For home laundry the business supplied Robin Starch, OMO and Tide washing powders and Fairy Soap. Other dry goods included Vulcan matches, Wintergreen Ointment, Washing Soda and shoe polishes such as Cherry Blossom Tonette.

The de-rationing of sweets in 1953 had a dramatic effect on retail sales with demand doubling in the first 12 months.

James Barr and Sons was by then delivering to businesses in Shotts, Lesmahagow, Carlisle and Coalburn as well as Coatbridge, Airdrie and Plains and new vans were purchased to carry heavier payloads

James Barr and Sons ceased to trade circa 1978 when the premises were subject of a compulsory purchase order to allow upgrading of the Bellshill road network.



## GEORGE WATERSTON - THE CHAPTER HOUSE DEVELOPMENT



On the 13th of March George Waterston gave a very interesting talk on the history and development of the Chapter House. From about 1864 the site had housed a school capable of holding up to 80 pupils. With the opening of the coal mines and further education acts, a bigger school was required and so the old school became redundant. In 1891 Archibald Russell bought the site to prevent tenements being built there as they would overlook the church and church yard. The site was gifted to the church in 1904. When Archibald died in 1906 his wife decided to build a hall on the site in his memory and so 'The Russell Memorial Hall' was built and named.

In 2002 it was decided that the Memorial Hall should be extended to better serve the church and the community. Plans were drawn up to include such things as a games hall, new toilet facilities, an upper floor for storing etc, an office suite including one for the minister, a cafeteria and resurfacing of the car park. However plans had to be toned down slightly as it was going to be too expensive. For example plans for the upper floor were abandoned and the ministers office

was sited in the gatehouse. In March 2007 the Chapter House was officially opened by HRH Princess Anne, the Princess Royal.

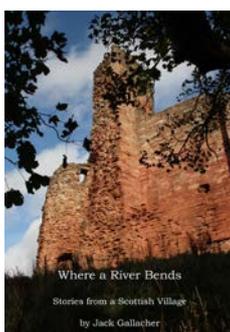
Mr Waterston also talked about the replacement of the large window in the gable of the main hall. It had been in a sorry state for many years and detracted from the look of the new development. David Chalmers, a church member and chairperson of the management group responsible for the new church facility, donated money for a new window to be commissioned. The window was crafted by Mark Bambrough of the Glasgow Stained Glass Studio and is a stunning work of art of which Mr Chalmers would have been proud as, sadly, he died before the window was completed.

The new development, and thus the facilities available, have been met with much approval and regarded by the church and the community at large to be of great benefit to the people of Bothwell. It is thanks to Mr Waterston and his architectural company (LBG Waterston, Chartered and Conservation Architects) who undertook the design of this project, that the Chapter House development not only offers such flexibility for use inside, but also its exterior has been designed to be very much in sympathy with the church building and its environs.

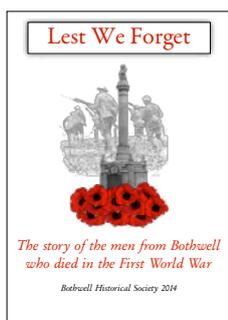
## AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE

These books are available on our website. They are pdf files and can be viewed/downloaded free of charge from:

[www.bothwellhistoricalsociety.co.uk/publications](http://www.bothwellhistoricalsociety.co.uk/publications)



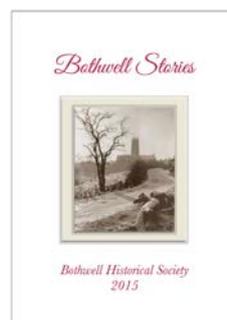
*Where a river bends*



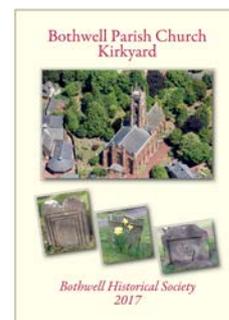
*Lest we forget*



*Archie's History of Bothwell*



*Bothwell Stories*



*Bothwell Parish Kirkyard*