



CLACKMANNANSHIRE FIELD STUDIES SOCIETY

The CFSS was formed in October 1970 after attempting to revive the Alloa Society of Natural Science and Archaeology established in 1865. The society's aims are "to promote interest in the environment and heritage of the local area" and it has some 100 members.

In winter there are fortnightly lectures or members nights, from September to April, beginning with a coffee morning and concluding with our AGM. In summer, from April to September, there are four Saturday outings, a weekend event and Wednesday Evening Walks fortnightly from April to August.

CFSS has run and participated in various events on David Allan and at Alloa Tower, is associated with the Forth Naturalist and Historian in publishing, and with the annual Man and the Landscape symposium, November 1999 was its Jubilee, 25th year; this 26th is **Conserving Biodiversity and Heritage**.

Research projects have included- Linn Mill site, Mining and Alloa Port, Ships and Shipbuilding; these have been published as booklets *Linn Mill*, *Mines and Minerals of the Ochils* and *Alloa Port, Ships and Shipbuilding*. A project in progress is a survey of the old Alloa graveyard. Other publications include *David Allan; The Ochil Hills – landscape, wildlife, heritage, walks*; *Alloa Tower and the Erskines of Mar*; and the twice yearly *Newsletter*. October 1999 will be no. 63, and there are 5 yearly contents / indices.

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in, or desire to support the aims of the Society in this field of Local Studies.

The society has a study / council room in Marshill House, Alloa. This has a small collection of books, maps etc. which members are encouraged to use for reference or study.

L Corbett, EK Roy, I Stewart or R Snaddon should be contacted for access.

Clackmannanshire Field Studies Society

Newsletter

66

NB – this CFSS Newsletter 66 includes a report on the 26th annual Man and the Landscape symposium, Nov. 2000 – Conserving Bio-diversity & Heritage

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EDITORIAL

At the time of writing (mid March) the Foot and Mouth virus is still causing concern. You are aware that everyone has been advised to keep clear of country roads and footpaths. Unfortunately, these measures, if they continue, may affect some part of the Summer Programme. Members will be informed if there has to be a change of the events.

At the moment a 'reccy' for the Field trip to Dunoon cannot be undertaken and we have decided to postpone this event. Perhaps it may be possible later in the year. Some events in the Summer programme may be affected if restrictions continue into the summer months. Particularly those outings under threat are:- MacArthur Braes, Alva; The Deserted Village of Kilbryde; Carr Wood, Menstrie; and Gargunnoch / Kippen, should this dire scenario continue.

On to a happier note, the Winter session was a success in spite of having to make some adjustment. We were disappointed that the Rev. Father Reilly had to cancel due to illness. Nevertheless, our last speaker, Katie Jackson of the John Muir Trust who was contacted at short notice, entertained us with the origins and work of the Trust – a most rewarding evening.

Meetings throughout the year have been extremely well attended – sometimes there is hardly elbow room! Only one meeting 'Bob Lindsay's Clackmannanshire Clocks' fell foul of the weather when the audience numbered only 22.

After four years of time-consuming work, the Alloa Old Kirkyard survey is being printed. I must here thank members who have taken part in the survey.

We are always on the lookout for articles for the Newsletter, no matter how short. I am certain there must be some budding writers out there! The next deadline for the Newsletter is 15th September 2001. Many thanks to those regular contributors without whose input this publication could not be produced.

Betty Roy

Clackmannanshire Field Studies Society Summer programme 2001

Meet at Alloa Health Centre car park –Wednesday 7 pm, Saturday 9.30 am

Wednesdays

- May 16 Exploring Bridgend Stirling
The history of the Old Bridge of Stirling and its neighbourhood – a guided walk by Ken Mackay.
- 30 Falkirk Millennium Wheel
An evening at the spectacular canal boat lift with its project director Marischal Ellis. Lime Road, Tamfourhill Road, Falkirk
- June 13 MacArthur Braes and Old Kirkyard, Alva
Guided walk with historic interests by EK Roy.
- 27 The Deserted Village of Kilbryde, Dunblane
An excursion with historian archaeologist Ron Page.
- July 11 The Church of the Holy Rude,
Enjoy the story and the atmosphere of this historic Church – presented by Donald McCallum
- 25 Discovering Alloa
The Old Town Trail with Betty Roy and Susan Mills.
- Aug 8 The Millennium (Red Carr) Wood, Menstrie
A walk in this Millennium Woodland purchased by Menstrie Community Council – with Brian Thomson and others.
- 22 The Wallace Monument area
Exploring around the Abbey Craig – with Ken Mackay.

Saturdays

- May 26 Stirling Castle / Great Hall
A guided tour of Stirling Castle and the Argyll Lodging –courtesy of Willie MacEwan of Historic Scotland. Non Historic Scotland members entrance fee is £4.50(covers both Castle and Lodging; everyone has to pay to park on the esplanade).
- June 23 Newtongrange Mining Museum, Midlothian
A visit to the Lady Victoria Mine Museum – Bob Monk
- July 21 Walk – Gargunnoch / Kippen
Gargunnoch to Kippen (c. 3.5 mi); see Kippen's resource centre, meet Tom Begg, author of *The Kingdom of Kippen*; and walk the Community Woodland.
- Aug 25 Methven Castle & area
An excursion to this handsome 17th C Castle, 6 mi north of Perth – Elizabeth Crane.
- Sept 15 Coffee Morning, Spiers Centre, Alloa 10-12

Weekend Field Trip:

May Dunoon

See Editorial

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THE FORTH NATURALIST AND HISTORIAN

This is the charitable informal organisation of the University of Stirling to promote environment and heritage.

The 26th annual Man and the Landscape symposium on 18th November 2000 was themed this time 'Conserving Biodiversity and Heritage', and attracted over a 100 attendees and a range of displays. A small one was sadly in memory of Bill Brackenridge prominent naturalist and member of FNH Board, who was so tragically killed in a car accident at Aviemore just shortly before the symposium.

The annual journal *Forth Naturalist and Historian* was as usual 'launched' on the day, and a 'promotion' was made by John Harrison, historian, for the forthcoming RCAHMS (The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments) survey of farming and settlement in Menstrie Glen, to be entitled 'Well Sheltered and Watered'. To be published early summer 2001, it is being assisted by some organisations in the area including AHSMS (heritage societies), FNH, and Clackmannanshire Libraries.

This year (2000) three of the subjects of the presentations on - biodiversity, the Cowane garden, and the Falkirk Wheel, - were also presented as papers in FNH vol 23 just published, and available as usual at the bookstall. Of the other presentations - Jim Hansom illustrated man's influences on the River Forth, Duncan Orr-Ewing described the dedicated efforts made to keep watch on an eagle's nest, and Robin Harper MSP gave a survey of environment concerns, and the Parliament and the 'establishment's' failings to deal with them.

The theme of the 27th symposium is to be 'Loch Lomond and the Trossachs', and by 17th November will be very timely, as October will see a climax of discussions, including the Scottish Parliament's, on Scotland's first National Park - to be started at last, after many years campaigning, in spring 2002.

Lindsay Corbett

The 26th Symposium, on the above topic, attracted an attendance of around 100 participants. The first speaker was Davie Black, Conservation Manager for Scottish Wildlife Trust, tackling the subject '*Biodiversity Management in the Forth Valley*'. The SWT started in 1964, and now has 122 Reserves nationally including 12 in Central Scotland. There are also 88 SSSIs in Central Scotland, covering 21,000 ha and occupying 6% of the land surface. Both these classes of reserve can be claimed to be already managed for biodiversity.

It is the rest of the area of concern for which biodiversity is required by Article 10 of the EC statement on Biodiversity. It calls for management of important features in the landscape, such as continuous linear structures (rivers, canals, even lines of hedges), which it regards as ecological stepping-stones. SWT has identified 121 further wildlife sites covering 5485 ha.

The next step is to assess the current state of each site, and to find out whether its biodiversity is decreasing. Owners would then have to be contacted to alert them to the potential of the site and to offer advice on management. So far, landowners from 32 sites have been approached. The CARSE network already in place is seen to fulfil a valuable function.

Jim Hansom of Glasgow University gave a fascinating talk on '*Human Modification of the Forth Estuary*'. Most of the estuarine coast of the Forth has been modified by industrial and landfill developments; only 5% of the coast-line is still natural. The inexorable rise in sea-level through global warming spells potential disaster. Jim examined the options available. Firstly, non-intervention; let flooding go ahead where the defences are weakest. Secondly, increase the height of sea-walls to hold back the highest tides; an expensive solution, and one meeting inevitable defeat. The third one, allowing the estuary to re-locate by removing existing sea-walls, may well be the best idea, since nature tends to re-create coastal defences.

It was stimulating to have a visit from Robin Harper, the only 'Green Party' MSP. He gave an insight into *the way the Scottish Parliament works*; how informal but effective Cross-Party Groups link MSPs with a common commitment, say to environmental issues. Then there are major Committees which consider specific topics, two of them being interested in biodiversity.

**MAN AND THE LANDSCAPE SYMPOSIUM
EAGLE WATCH – Duncan Orr-Ewing**

He listed some of the environmental issues already debated - National Parks, mobile phone systems, GM crops, climate change, house insulation, transport and renewable energy. The Scottish Parliament is only 18 months old. His impression is that MSPs are listening, and that environmentalists should learn to work with those sympathetic to their views. A practical example of a development project which taxes its engineers' abilities to conserve both biodiversity and heritage was the subject of the final lecture. Marischal Ellis, Project Manager of the Falkirk Link on the Mid-Scotland Canals, gave an enlightening overview of the *Millennium Link*, the ambitious plan to renew the Canal route across the waist of Scotland, based on the Forth & Clyde Canal of 1790 and the Union Canal of 1822. The staircase of 11 locks by which the Union Canal reached the lower level of the F & C has long disappeared; its function is to be performed by a 35m diameter 'wheel' carrying 2 balanced water-troughs capable of carrying boats between the two canals. The hazards to be overcome include roads, railways, mines, open-cast workings, and the Roman (Antonine) Wall. The planned opening date is November 2001.

As usual, the conference allowed us to glimpse aspects of Biodiversity Conservation which brought home the importance of ensuring that new developments are designed to conserve our biodiversity and heritage.

Ken Mackay

'Eagle Watch' was the striking title of the talk given by Duncan Orr-Ewing from Doune who is head of Land Use Policy and Conservation, based in Edinburgh.

Issues crop up frequently in regard to the Raptor group of Birds in Scotland. The speaker holds a licence to study the Golden Eagle in particular, but, firstly paid a tribute to the work of the late Donald MacCaskill who energised the process of conservation with the study of a pair of Golden Eagles.

These birds are the second largest breeding species in Scotland where there are 419 in all at present. The species exists in Russia, Northern Europe and North America. In Central Scotland there are known to be ten pairs; it is a stable population, first noted in a 1992 survey; they have a low productivity, however. The uplands have sheep and deer which are necessary to predators. In Scandinavia, Golden Eagles are common in farmed lowlands, but there they have been persecuted for the past 100 years. In America, on the contrary, the native American (Red Indian) population have a reverence for them.

'Eagle Watch' has been established in the Trossachs during the 1970s and 1980s when theft of eggs was prevalent and no young were produced. The Oologists' Guide targeted various breeding species, so volunteers protected nests, spending time outdoors in dreadful conditions. By 1994 and afterwards more people came forward to help in guarding the sites. Young eagles were hatched. Central Scotland Police gave access to radio monitoring, to help in catching thieves. Eagles may die by being caught in (legal) traps for crows; one was found dead at Pitlochry. Another eaglet was found poisoned near Comrie. Birds of prey move into areas of high persecution, but they are in the sixth year of breeding in the Grampians. They move about widely in winter but avoid areas of forestry.

Some former Forestry Commission land has had trees removed and these will not be replanted. There are funding packages in place for 40/50 hectare areas. The Scottish Parliament has planned a review and the late Donald Dewar set out a 'marker' for this consultation. County Donegal in Ireland is thinking of re-introducing Golden Eagles from Scotland we were told.

THE SOCIETY'S HORSE-MILL

What's a horse-mill? Well, you know what a water-mill is, so think of a mill which is turned, not by water, but by a horse (or two, or three). Two hundred years ago, if you wanted a horse-mill, you came to Alloa, to George Meikle, and told him your requirements (assuming you didn't have a source of water to work a water-wheel, though George was good with that too.) His father had invented this device to work a mechanical threshing machine, and so relieve farm-workers of the daily darg of flailing grain to feed the horses.

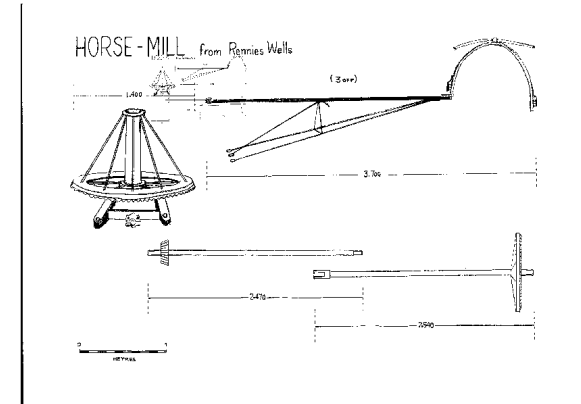
In November, 1971, a four-member team of CFSS members inspected a three-horse mill on an abandoned farm near Blairhall, Fife. The farm, called Rennie's Wells, was owned by the National Coal Board, who kindly gave permission for CFSS members to remove and conserve the mill. This was duly done over a cold, dark and miserable weekend, and the Society found itself in time the possessor of one of the last horse-mills in Scotland; including one pivot (to be anchored vertically in the the ground), one hub with crown-wheel (to rotate about the pivot), three arms with semi-circular hoops (to harness three horses to), and one jointed underground drive-shaft with gears at either end (to carry the motion provided by the horses to the threshing mill in the adjoining building).

The horse-mill was temporarily housed in North Street Rifle Range, Clackmannan, while the same small team cleaned and derusted and painted it, in time for public display at a local history conference at Stirling University from 7th to 9th January, 1972, the fore-runner of the Man and the Landscape Conference (first held in 1975, in case you were wondering).

After some years in storage at various locations in Central Region, an opportunity came for the mill to be installed 'permanently' at the farm of Dunaverig, the home of Lewis and Sarah Stewart, where Lewis hoped to build up a farm-museum. After Lewis's tragic death in April 1991, Sarah went ahead with the farm-museum idea, and was succeeding financially, until the E-coli scare cast its shadow, and schools became unwilling to risk farm-visits.

The horse-mill is still at Dunaverig. It did not disappear as scrap iron at the displenishing sale. My sketch gives some idea of the dimensions of the surviving components. I think it is as complete as the day we removed it twenty-nine years ago. It badly needs cleaning and derusting and painting (again!), Sadly, it is looking for a new home, and we have approached the new Scottish Agricultural Museum at Kittochside, East Kilbride. So far, we have not heard from them, yea or nay.

Ken Mackay



REPORTS FROM WINTER TALKS 2000 - 2001

The Great Hall, Stirling Castle - Willie McEwan, Historic Scotland
Monday 9th October, 2000

A record of the first meeting of the 2000/01 session was not kept owing to the absence of the Press Reports Officer. We are always grateful to Isobel Grant Stewart for the excellent work she does in keeping our affairs in the public eye.

However, all is not lost as Willie McEwan, the speaker kindly forwarded Historic Scotland's report on the restoration of the Great Hall, Stirling Castle. The following is a synopsis of this report.

The restoration of the Great Hall was part of the £22m Stirling Castle Project, programmed to be completed for the Millennium, 500 years after its construction. By October 2000 the Great hall restoration has cost £8.5 million.

Built during the reign of James IV, the Great Hall is said to have been completed around 1503.

This magnificent medieval hall is the largest of its kind in Scotland. During the Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815) the increased need for military accommodation saw the hall hurriedly altered to form a three-storey barrack, at which time the hammer-beam roof was removed. When the army moved out in 1964, work began to carefully dismantle the army alterations and start restoration work to create a medieval royal building.

Considering it took almost 10 years to conserve Alloa tower and 36 years for the Great Hall project, we can appreciate the enormity of the task. Initially (1964+) masons from Historic Scotland's predecessor, the Ministry of Works, carried out early investigation and restoration of the windows, fireplaces and staircases. Little original stonework remained above wallwalk level, but using pictorial records, archaeological and survey evidence the top levels of stonework were recreated.

In 1997 the hammer-beam roof was constructed from 350 oak trees. Not a single nail or screw was used, instead beams and struts were secured with 4000 oak pegs. This part of the project cost £380,000.

Those of us living in the vicinity of Stirling Castle were appalled at the bright ochre colour of the harling used on the building; it did not appear to be in keeping with the other buildings. However, we have since learned that this lime harling, using traditional pigments, had been used when the building was first built. (I have it on good authority that traces of the ochre-coloured harling was also found on Alloa Tower.)

To justify the decision Historic Scotland state that the medieval masonry was deteriorating and harling and lime washing were traditionally used as a protective coating to save the stone from further erosion. The harling, as well as giving protection, will extend the life of medieval masonry, and present the Great Hall in its original form, rather than the exposed stone façade we have become used to.

Attention to detail was also given to the refurbishment of the interior. The windows were probably glazed, using the traditional diamond leading pattern with the added insertion of stained glass roundels representing the Court of King James IV and detailing the leading nobles of the day.

The new Cloth of State, along with its canopy and fringing, decorates the dias. Persons of rank in medieval times generally sat under such cloths, giving an immediate means of identification and recognition of power. The design was taken from a depiction of James IV's own cloth as represented in a medieval prayer book 'The Vienna Book of Hours'. This sumptuous cloth of red chenille edged with thistles on gold braid is quite spectacular. Elements of the design include leather appliqué and silk embroidery as well as being decorated with garnets, baroque pearls, fake jewels and crystals in the unicorns' decorative collars (these have come from a chandelier!).

Project Leader, Malcolm Lochhead was assisted by seven members of embroidery guilds throughout Scotland who worked on the project which took two years to complete.

Other hangings were also made using a chenille and gold woven fabric, patterned with stylised snakes and thistles in green and gold tones.

The Great Hall demonstrates the comfort and style enjoyed by the Royal Court of James IV in the 1500s and adds to the visitor experience at Stirling.

Betty Roy

A Date for your Diary

On Saturday the 26th May CFSS have organised a guided tour of the Great Hall to be led by Willie McEwan. Names of those wishing to attend should be handed to Dick Clark.

Members Night

Monday 23rd October 2000

The recent CFSS meeting featured a new initiative – the provision of tea / coffee and biscuits at the close of the evening for a small charge. This allows members to discuss and meet socially until 10 pm or earlier. Most of those present approved of the idea.

"Members Night" was re-introduced to this session, and it centred around slides of outings and longer trips, this year, a visit to Skye included three nights in a hotel, at the north of the island.

Good weather enabled us to appreciate the many landmarks, such as the Kilt Rock, the Old Man of Storr, the Quiraing ridge and visits to a Clachan Museum and a private geological collection noted for dinosaur bones.

There was an optional visit to Dunvegan Castle, which some of us took, and at Trumpan Churchyard, the grave of Lady Grange, sister-in-law to the 6th Earl of Mar (1715 Jacobite Rising fame). This lady was suspected of being a spy and was imprisoned on St. Kilda at one point; she is noted for having had three funerals, but she is finally at rest.

“Days Here and There” could have been the title of other slides we viewed, featuring visits to Blackness Castle, Hopetoun House and Abercorn Church with its symbol gravestones.

Ken Mackay and Betty Roy were jointly responsible for the above-mentioned slides. There was also an intriguing series by Betty of the Kilncraigs area and the changing scene which may result after the demolition of industrial buildings.

Ken’s pictures of the Aurora Borealis earlier this year were much admired, while a cruise he had made from Barra Head to Mingulay provided some attractive seascapes and island views.

Finally Ken Mackay gave a talk about standing stones and geological finds in the Carse of Stirling and Clackmannanshire.

Isobel Grant Stewart

Wee County Picture Road Show – Alex Shuttleworth, Clacks. Museum Service
Monday 13th November 2000

The recent CFSS meeting attracted a large number of members and it was a matter of regret that Rev. Father Reilly, due to his sudden illness and hospitalisation, could not be present to speak on the Treasures of Rome. We hope he makes a good recovery and can speak to us at some future date.

The computer-based “Wee County Picture Roadshow” proved an excellent substitute with humbler “treasures” of its own to reveal in the wealth of pictures from the County’s archives and from personal collections of photographs. The computer has many features among which are the ability to pinpoint and enlarge individuals or elements in a scene; this facility was greatly in demand last Monday night. Groups of workers, footballers, school classes, roused interest, as also the buildings which have disappeared such as Norwood, Schawpark, the mansions at Alloa, Alva and Tillicoultry.

Unfamiliar settings such as the long-abandoned Alloa harbour provoked some comment which continued after the presentation by Alex Shuttleworth, when tea / coffee and biscuits could be enjoyed at a small price.

The “Picture Roadshow” is a Millennium Project set up during the curatorship of Marij van Helmond, and commissioned by the local council. The project – to gather “memories” from Clackmannanshire – will end in February 2001, so readers are urged to come forward with pictures and reminiscences to build up a blueprint of the life and times of the Wee County. (Because of the interest generated in the project, the deadline has been extended to end May 2001, Ed.)

In the Footsteps of Charles Edward Stuart – David Ross, Author

Monday 27 November 2000

“Stravaiging on a Motorbike” might have been the description of the talk given by David Ross; but this was no random exploration. It was a wide-ranging and thorough tour to trace the course of Charles Edward Stuart’s attempt to regain the throne of Britain in 1745/46.

“In the steps of Bonnie Prince Charlie” began with a demonstration by the speaker of the weapons used by the clans, following which he gave a lively talk, with slides on the prince, sparkling with unfamiliar facts and references, revealing for example the extent of Hanovarian propaganda which depicted a small weakly fop with a bouffant white wig (the “chocolate box” image) when he was in reality six feet tall, athletic, wearing his own hair, and a crack shot and boxer.

David Ross, like many others, had been starved of Scottish history at school but had acquired a taste for learning about Scotland’s past by reading Nigel Tranter’s “Bruce” Trilogy, when he was 14 or 15. This began a fascination which resulted in more and more reading and eventually the expeditions throughout Scotland and England. The result has been the publication of “In the Steps of Wallace” (written in six weeks), “In the Steps of Robert the Bruce” and “In the Steps of Bonnie Prince Charlie”. More than the historical titbits and the slides of landmarks and battle sites, the amusing accounts of David Ross’s adventures, as he roved far and wide, ensured an entertaining evening for the large audience.

Isobel Grant Stewart

War Memorials of Clackmannanshire – Tony Martin, Dollar

Monday 11 December 2000

The recent sad commemorations of “battles long ago” have made us aware of what we owe to past generations, particularly those from our own district.

Tony Martin of Dollar gave a moving account of these monuments in our midst. A retired lecturer in geography from Strathclyde University, Mr. Martin has turned an interest into an all-consuming study, by becoming the only representative for Scotland in the Imperial War Museum’s survey of national memorials.

Initially, out of over 8000 on the database for Britain, only 300 were listed in Scotland; now, due to the speaker's activities, there are 3000. Four times a year, he goes to London for consultations. Last year, along with Marij van Helmond, the previous Alloa Museum curator, he set up an exhibition of display boards, which were recently to be seen on the stair leading to the first floor at the Spiers Centre.

The public may study memorials in terms of architecture, military history, genealogy, but some may react against traditionalist ideas, seeing them as glorifying war, or as a reminder of "horrible things". Since early times, memorials have been erected as sites of worship (as witness, the standing stones at Callanish), the first slides shown.

The talk followed a lightning tour thereafter, throughout Scotland, with many memorials, simple or elaborate, where the sorrow of many has been set in stone. An unusual example is the Peace Cairn on Ben Nevis. Locally we have Britannia with wire-cutting soldiers at Bedford Place, Alloa (Lorimer—Pilkington Jackson) from World War I and the Marshell Boer War Memorial (Rhind and Lorimer) put up in 1902 at the end of a conflict which resulted in 38,000 deaths country-wide.

Many more pieces of statuary were shown, as well as "Rolls of Honour" in halls and churches and on plaques.

The large audience revealed the depth of public interest in the topic, and after many years, their determination not to forget.

Isobel Grant Stewart

The Burgh of Clackmannan – Jim Banks, CFSS
Monday 8th January 2001

At the first meeting of the New Year, there was a very good attendance to hear Jim Banks, a CFSS member, speak on Clackmannan.

Aided by slides, the speaker gave a very good account of this ancient Royal Burgh, using plans and Ordnance Survey maps to clarify the growth of the town from medieval times.

The pattern of a main street running up along a ridge, punctuated by the Tolbooth, Church and so to the Tower and one-time mansion nearby, was clearly shown in views taken from the church tower.

There were familiar pictures as the David Allan one of the water-wheel and women pit-workers carrying coal. There were also many "before and after" scenes, which showed the changes in the burgh, in the time of architect Mr. Hendry. Traditional architecture had been put in place but no outside stairs had been left; however, skew-putts were still to be seen (these are scroll-shaped ends to roof edges).

A good many pictures featured the distinctive Tolbooth, Mannan Stone, originally nearer the river, and the market cross, which in 1897 had a ball-finial on top. Jim had several anecdotes of the mansion and tower, seat of the Bruce family, related to the famous King Robert the Bruce. Details of doorways, gates, windows, plaques have been faithfully recorded before being lost forever.

The viewers obviously knew the buildings and scenes, judging by comments made. I was particularly pleased to see that several slides had been taken of the 1949 pageant (people who took part and the mock 'tower' erected for the purpose). The Queen's visit in 1963 had also been recorded. It was very much enjoyed and a good beginning to 2001.

Isobel Grant Stewart

The Hills of Home – Ken Mackay, CFSS
Monday 22nd January 2001

"Scottish Mountains" was the title of Ken Mackay's talk on the Clackmannanshire Field Studies Society printed programme but he preferred to give it the more 'user friendly' name 'Hills of Home'.

In this wide-ranging presentation of slides and comment, their impressive beauty was revealed, providing a sometimes daunting background to our lives. Many of the slides had been taken of Field Studies outings, showing happy members at an earlier stage in their existence.

The whole of Highland Scotland was covered starting with our own familiar Ochils range; its dramatic sheer front face falling to the flat carseland. Among other hills pinpointed were Ben Lawers with its Alpine flora; the Cairngorms; Ben Loyal in Mackay country; Ben Nevis; the island or Rum; Glencoe and its early association with the climber Percy Unna; Aonath Eagach (the notched peak) a challenging ridge, the distinctive Arrochar Alps --and many more.

Although never a ‘Munro-bagger’ Ken had nevertheless climbed more than 100 peaks throughout Scotland.

Judging by the interest aroused in the large audience, many fell into the category of actual or would-be mountaineers, as befits a country with such a wealth of summits to surmount.

Isobel Grant Stewart

Alpine Flowers – Freny Olbrich, Dollar

Monday 12th February 2001

A delightful evening was enjoyed when Freny Olbrich from Dollar presented her slide show – Alpine Flowers.

The series of close-up pictures were astonishing in their clarity, showing each genuine dewdrop or raindrop on a leaf or petal, as well as the normally tiny flowers themselves.

The views of the impressive mountain scenery of Switzerland ‘set the scene’ for the wild flowers; Zermatt with its looming Matterhorn was often featured including one series of sunrise which took six minutes to film from the first streaks of light in the sky to full dawn.

The yellow globeflower, the yellow rattle, the familiar gentian, the Pasque flower, even the humble daisy acquired glamour when photographed from only a few millimetres away, with the photographer crouching or lying flat for minutes at a time. The pure light of the Swiss Alpine region gave the flowers more intense colour in many cases. I particularly liked the series of butterflies gently perched on flowers and showing their delicate structure in detail.

All these pictures revealed the extreme patience and determination of Freny Olbrich. Copies may be obtained from her at a reasonable rate. What a soothing talk this was –and what a wonderful world!

Isobel Grant Stewart

Clackmannanshire Clocks - Bob Lindsay

Monday 26th February 2001

Severe winter weather reduced the numbers but not the enjoyment of CFSS members when Bob Lindsay presented his talk and slide show of ‘Clackmannanshire Clocks’.

Several aspects of this topic were dealt with; Bob sketched the history of time-pieces in general, and their development from 1500 in Britain.

Friar Alexander Lindsay (!) had made a clock for Falkland Palace in 1530, one of the earliest in Scotland. When James VI left in 1603 for his life in London as James I, many of the nobility also went ‘down South’ and clockmakers also emigrated to London. Ramsay from Dundee in 1631 was the first Master of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers in the capital.

The speaker then covered the various enhancements made to the original clock design. The 17th century Lantern clock, as seen in Alloa Tower is weight-driven with only one hand and operates over 30 hours.

The trade was strictly regulated by the Guild of Hammermen with only one apprentice clockmaker. Robert Miller of Alloa set up his own business in the early 1700s; he made the steeple clock in Kinross for which Sir John Bruce put up £20 in 1750. Details of the Miller family from a book by a Church minister had been found to be less than correct by Bob Lindsay.

Beautiful embellishments on brass-faced, long-case clocks were noted by the speaker. Some of these tall clocks had pediments removed to fit into cottage interiors or even had holes dug in the floor to accommodate them!

Many names of local men were mentioned; some made the movement, some the dials and some the cases. Thirty trades were involved in making a watch. Robert Westwood of Alloa moved to London’s Leicester Square. One of his watches was taken on an Arctic expedition but he was murdered in 1839 when his house was robbed and two and a half thousand pounds stolen.

This was a fascinating talk where technical detail and ‘human interest’ were displayed to good effect.

The John Muir Trust – Katie Jackson, Edinburgh

Monday 12th March 2001

A packed audience enjoyed Katie Jackson's presentation of the life and work of John Muir, a man lauded around the world but virtually unknown in Scotland.

Born in 1838 in Dunbar, Muir emigrated with his family when he was eleven to Wisconsin in the mid-West of America. Harsh discipline from his religious father and the hard life of shanty-dwelling homesteaders marked his early years but he always found time to read in the early hours of the morning. He was especially interested in science and was eventually admitted to Madison University when he was about 20 and spent three years there.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861 Muir went to Canada and took various jobs in factories; he was temporarily blinded in one job and never recovered his full sight.

He felt the need to explore the vast country in which he lived and first undertook a thousand mile walk from Wisconsin to the Gulf of Mexico. Botany, geology and glaciology were his interests and although he 'lived rough' and was robbed en route, he gained much information in these fields. Thereafter Muir went to Cuba, Panama and the West Coast (San Francisco).

In a walk of 200 miles John Muir saw the Sierra Nevada and the Yosemite Valley, which greatly impressed him. His roving life came to a halt temporarily when he married the daughter of a rich fruit farmer and settled in San Francisco, where the couple had two daughters. Ten years later, he began exploring once more and was shocked by the tree-clearing in Yosemite to make meadows for sheep. He wrote 300 articles in his 'scribble-den' in defence of conservation; luckily both presidents, Teddy Roosevelt and Wilson, were supportive and over 50 areas and 200 national monuments were designated.

In 1983, the John Muir Trust was set up to safeguard and conserve wild places. A public launch in 1988 has led to Scottish wildernesses being designated. Knoydart, Ben Nevis and Schiehallion, for example. Path-fixing, drystone dyking and protection of native trees -- birch, alder, willow are all paramount.

Katie Jackson, a long-serving member of the John Muir Trust, shared her enthusiasm with all those present. We must not forget.

Isobel Grant Stewart

KENMUIR PART TWO

After Robert's death, the property is left to the Bernard relations in Edinburgh who are involved in brewing and distilling (are there links here with Kilbagie? Is this where Thomas made his money?) "divided up as set out in the Trust Disposition Settlement of 1853. And so I wave a fond farewell to the Bernard father and son and move on to the next occupants Dr James Bruce Thomson and his spouse who purchased the house in 1855 for the grand sum of £510 from the inheritors of the late Robert Bernard.

Dr Thomson is an interesting character for two reasons the first being that he assisted the Rev. Andrew Brown, Minister, in drawing the Alva chapter in the second statistical account (1841).

The second item of interest is that on the purchase of Kenmuir Mrs JBT acquired life-interest in the property BUT when it is sold in 1858 she also has to sign the disposition for the sale in front of the Justice of the Peace and a Notary Public, without her spouse being present, stating that she approved of the sale and "in no way was she coerced, compelled or seduced to concur with the sale but that she did so of her own free will and motive" She also gave her GREAT OATH "that she would never quarrel or impugn the same, directly or indirectly, any manner of way in times coming as she should answer to God." Pretty strong stuff here and surely the early stages of married women being entitled to have a say in the disposal of the property in which they have their domicile are now beginning to appear in mid 19th century domestic life.

Dr JBT only lived at Kenmuir for three years then was off to a position at Perth Prison as a surgeon and the house was sold to a familiar name - William Archibald (of the Boll Mill) - for the sum of £500 (funnily enough the £10 had been crossed out!). But after four years and a removal to Bridge of Allan and with the consent of his wife in similar fashion as above but interestingly her disposition has two witnesses related to the grocery trade in Stirling - John McEwen and the clerk to David McEwen & Co. Oh! What lovely pieces of research could follow from this - was she a kinswoman of the McEwans? However back to mundane matters, William Archibald sold the house to Daniel Ross, a manufacturer in Alva for the sum of £550 - so he made a profit. The boundaries are the same as before but the neighbours have changed: Robert Dawson, wool spinner to the south and Robert Mills, Flesher, Alva to the west, Johnstone leaseholds to the east and Old Stirling Road to the north. It is now obvious that Alva is attracting the manufacturers.

There is liberty granted to Daniel Ross to use the 6 feet wide path leading to L'Estrange Avenue (Terrace as it was named then) bordering two other properties. This path is still there at the foot of the property. However it is Johnstone he is dealing with and to enjoy the use of the path and follow some conditions of the leasehold he must

ARCHAEOLOGY UPDATE

contribute to the upkeep of L'Estrange Terrace as well as a "proportion of the expenses of any general system of Drainage, Sewerage and Lighting in the village of Alva. The third condition is to bear a share of the expense of leading water for domestic purposes to a convenient well and keeping it in good repair. In earlier sales of the property the term CESS (a land tax) was used but in Daniel Ross's lease this goes even further for, apart from relieving the landlord of cess, he must also relieve the burden of keeping the roads in good repair by "conversion" which means paying out money instead of his labour. Doesn't this fit in well with the reputation of J.J. Johnstone of his commitment to eradicate those diseases brought about by filthy living conditions in the village but he IS a businessman so why should he not involve his leaseholders who are relatively wealthy? The conditions attached to this leasehold are much more detailed and onerous than in the previous leases and a pattern

seems to be emerging where Johnstone appears to be demonstrating a 'patriarchal' interest over those properties he has leased for the general good of the community. Perhaps it is not too fancy a notion to say that this also might be the beginning of the rating system!

Oh and Daniel is NOT ALLOWED to set up premises for waulking and scouring goods, slaughtering cattle, a steam manufactory, distillery, tannery, a lime/brick kiln - in other words not to use the premises to be "as a nuisance or substantial discomforts to the neighbouring properties. " What tame leaseholds conditions we now have - I'm not allowed to park a caravan in the driveway but one can't help but wonder what on earth went on in these people's backyards.

Daniel has one more surprise up his sleeve for us - he decides to get married and an Ante-Nuptial contract is entered into with a Helen Thomson of St. Andrews, registered in 1863 at Stirling. (So you thought that this was only entered into by film stars anxious to retain their wealth if the marriage fell through!) The contract was supervised by Trustees who will dispose of the property on Daniel's death which, alas, they had to carry out in 1890 by public roup. Kenmuir, then known as Strude Bank was sold to Alan Watt, spirit merchant, Alva (The Cross Keys). Two of the Trustees are William and David Ross owners of the Brookfield Mills (William Ross & Sons) just a little down from the present site of Ochilvale Mills. Another little point of interest is that one of the witnesses of the sale to Alan Watt was Alexander Ross of Lynnwood, Alva which is just south of Kenmuir - the Rosses were making their presence felt! Alas it doesn't mention what happened to Helen Thomson and whether she was still living at the time of her husband's death and benefited from the sale - there seemed to be no "Great Oath" applicable to her. Alan Watt is an interesting character too so we can tell a little of his history as owner of Kenmuir or Strude Bank at a later session - this is beginning to appear like Alva's very own soap!

Barbush Quarry, Dunblane

Lorna Main, Regional Archaeologist, advises that the dating of the bone samples is within the CALIBRATED period as last reported but more accurately as being 1000 BC.

As regards the VESSEL found and the CANNEL COAL necklace these have now been redated as 200 BC which makes the find rather puzzling.

The artefacts were of course registered as TREASURE TROVE and Dunblane Museum have been successful in their requests that they be given for display permanently in Dunblane.

Roman Fort with Hospital – Doune

Just as we went to press last issue work had commenced on what has proved to be one of the best examples of Roman occupation in the country.

The site is of particular interest not only as a fort or barracks but most importantly evidence of a hospital facility is proving to be very exciting.

A more detailed report will be available towards late summer and will be included in the next Newsletter.

Wallace Monument – new lighting

Work is due to commence as we go to print and Lorna Main advises that excavations have to take place in respect of the lighting. This is also being used as an opportunity to investigate the outline of the fort remains which are believed to be within the perimeter of the lighting works. More details will be made known as work progresses.

Sangobeg, North west Sunderland

Glasgow University are still quantifying the finds on John Morrison's croft and are expected to continue in the summer. Mr. Kevin Brady will be supervising further investigation of the Norse / Viking settlement on top of the Pictish / Iron Age burial and I hope to be on holiday once again whilst this is underway. The university promise to advise once their reports are complete but this may be some time.

Stirling Castle Graves

Historic Scotland's editor has given permission for us to reproduce Chris Tabraham's article from the Spring Issue 2001. Chris is Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments. With Stirling Great Hall being the subject of our Winter evening talks and our visit next month the article on the "Dig" and finds link our itinerary. I have expressed our thanks to Barbara Fraser, Editor, and can say the Historic Scotland really are a "sterling" organisation.

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"...when churchyards yawn and graves give up their dead..." BY CHRIS TABRAHAM
PRINCIPAL INSPECTOR OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS

It all began with a routine 'dig', working in a rather unprepossessing building known as the Army Kitchens. But no sooner had the first floor-slab been lifted than the first skeleton emerged from the dark soil beneath. By the end of the excavation nine others had joined it. The inevitable questions were asked: Who were they? When did they die? And how?

The Army Kitchens became like one of those 'scene of crime' incidents more familiar to us in TV detective programmes. The archaeological detectives examining the room for clues:

- All ten bodies had been buried with the head to the west, thus all were Christian;
- All had been buried within a building, presumably a chapel, and not in an open cemetery;
- Not all had been buried at the same time, for some had been disturbed by later ones and the chapel itself had undergone at least two alterations;
- The chapel had passed out of use during the 17th century.

Next it was the pathologist's turn to examine the bodies in detail and try to establish things like sex, age and cause of death. She concluded that:

- Eight were adults and two were infants (one about one year old, the other six months);
- Six at least were male;
- Four at least of the males had died in their late teens/early 20s, and none had reached mature adulthood (over 45 years);
- The one definite female had died in middle age;
- Most exhibited a muscle injury caused by 'lifting heavy loads with the arms, or heavy physical activity involving movement of the shoulders'.

Fascinating stuff. But most intriguing of all was one skeleton, that of a male who had died in his mid to late 20s; he had an iron arrowhead buried in his chest cavity, and a healed cut mark, possibly caused by a sword blade, above his right eye. Neither injury had apparently been the cause of death.

To establish the dates of death, samples of bone went off to the radio-carbon dating lab. Back came the answer: the bodies had been buried between roughly 1250 and 1420. Only one predated the Wars of Independence, the female was from around the time of Edward of England's invasion in 1296 and the body with the scar above the right eye and arrowhead in his chest was buried around 1400.

But as for the most intriguing question of all – who they were – we have no definitive answer, just speculation. Castles weren't normally places of Christian burial, and we can instantly rule out kings and queens and other members of the royal family, for they were buried in the great monasteries such as Dunfermline, Paisley and Holyrood. Perhaps they were clerics associated with the running of the chapel? But not with sword-cuts on their heads, and arrowheads in their chests, surely.

These together with the muscle injuries consonant with heavy lifting point of course towards them being soldiers. And the inevitable conclusion to be drawn is that these were soldiers, probably of some rank and station in life, who had died in the castle during siege and so denied proper burial in a parish church.

Stirling Castle, of course, isn't short of sieges in the period covered by our skeletons. Most were bitter and prolonged affairs, and casualties high. Many of those who died are unknown to us, but there is one who is named – Sir John Strickeley, an English knight, lord of Kerselow in Buckinghamshire, who died on October 10, 1341. Could he, perhaps, be among those found beneath the floor that spring day in 1997?

Stirling Stone Group plc Industrial Visit – 26th March 2001



Stirling Stone visit was one of the most successful industrial visits within the surrounding local area that we have had. Mr. Ian McDonald (retired director) and Mr. Kenneth Turnbull organised an extensive insight into the world of stone from quarry to finished building using marble to granite. At Stirling we arrived on an excellent dry day with sunshine which was ideal as part of the visit was outdoors taking in also the operation in Alloa on the site of the Alloa Docks.

An introduction to the company was given and we then proceeded to the Drawing Office where Billy Kee using his CAD computer explained how every stone was "drawn" for each contract. Laid out for us also all the working drawings which had been used for the Great Hall at Stirling Castle. This was very thoughtful and time, had it been available, could have been spent much longer on looking over these.

We were then shown various examples of their craft in the showroom area and most members would have carried off the fountain and spherical ball which was intriguing.

The cutting and shaping machinery has been a huge investment and supplied from Italy. We had a look at the stock of marble and granite sheets before visiting Bill Revie, who runs the laboratory used for testing all stone used by the group. This again was fascinating and it is likely that Bill will come to talk to us next winter. A buffet lunch was served with "monumental" portions.

Alloa Site –

Ian McDonald led us to the Alloa site and we had excellent viewing from the platform which overlooks the three cutting machines. These resemble giant circular saws which are fed by water to maintain a dust free operation. This is recycled and the sludge allowed to settle before disposal.

These saw blades cost £9000 – 13,000 each and may last only a maximum of two months. Mr. Begley, Site Manager, met us and gave a description of the work that the masons were doing by lathe turning of stone and finishing by traditional mallet and chisel. There were very many fossils to be seen which in itself one could have spent many hours looking at as every stone was cut. An excellent day which everyone enjoyed and appropriately for a local company their logo is Wallace Monument.

Dick Clark

The Poem “Sunset”

“Sun Set” was written at the same time as that published in our last Newsletter and of course relates to the same area. Now, just as a little fun, the photo reproduced albeit it is only an outline, as the colour does not show, should give a clue.

Members are invited to say exactly where the view is. Another clue to make it easier:- a Viking Burial was uncovered after severe storms with high winds in May of 1991 in the sand dunes above the high water mark.

To make it even easier the location name is recorded as there has been a church site since the 8th century in the Vatican records of a contribution towards the cost of the Third Crusade in 1190 AD. Who has the correct answer??

A box of chocolates goes to the winner.

Dick Clark

Sun Set

Oh how still thy waters be,
In the evening calm.
A chorus of seagulls converge,
To sing their joyous psalm.
Lapping waves caress thy golden sand,
Fiery red in the dying sun.
Rippling through pebbles bright,
Return to the sea where'er they come

Curtains of slinking shadows,
Falling over fertile land.
Cloaking thy green hillside,
Harebells sleep where they stand.
That there abides a peace within thee
Should another day unfold.
As the sun kisses the ever changing sea,
Neither man can break thy mould.

Jem Clark
September 1988



