



## 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 150 members.

In winter there are fortnightly lectures or member's nights, from September to April, beginning with a coffee morning and concluding with the 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 – Conserving Biodiversity and Heritage and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs are the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.

Research projects have included- Linn Mill, Mining, and Alloa Harbour; these have been published as booklets *Linn Mill, Mines and Minerals of the Ochils*, and *Alloa Port, Ships and Shipbuilding*. A recent project is *Old Alloa Kirkyard, Archaeological Survey 1996 – 2000* further work is in progress. Other publications include *David Allan, The Ochil Hills – landscape, wildlife, heritage walks*; *Alloa Tower and the Erskines of Mar*; and the twice yearly *Newsletter* with 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 Marshall 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, R. Snaddon or D Clark should be contacted for access.

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**Clackmannanshire**

**Field**

**Studies**

**Society**

**Newsletter**

**71**

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## EDITORIAL

Sunshine all the way – that was Summer 2003. After a heavy winter most could not believe that the fine weather would continue --- but it did !!!

The first event of the season was the Field Trip to Dornoch and the 29 members who attended voted this a great success. On the out-ward journey we re-visited the Highland Folk Museum at Kingussie and were delighted to meet former member and Alloa Glazier, Alan Candlish. On our previous visit, it was his wife Marie we met who was then acting as a guide. Keeping up the family tradition, Alan looks after the Museum`s machinery. Dornoch and the surrounding area provided a wealth of sites for us to visit. Many thanks to Bob Monk for his help in organising the trip.

The first Wednesday Walk, however, was the only outing where umbrellas were required. Seven stalwarts braved the elements, and, though damp, a most pleasant walk round Doune Ponds was enjoyed by those who let neither wind nor rain deter them from enjoying the open air.

2003 has been a summer of interesting walks and excursions and I would like to thank those members of Council who put a great deal of research and effort into making sure the events run smoothly. Some have been written up and are published in this newsletter.

The lottery funded Alloa Old Kirkyard Outreach project is progressing in spite of some set backs, e.g., the new building underway in Kirkgate resulted in stopping up the roadway to the graveyard. Due to the efforts of Dick Clark, the Society did eventually obtain right of access in time to allow the Geophysics Survey by GUARD to go ahead as scheduled. At the time of writing we await a full report of their findings. Next on the agenda will be the repair of some of the toppled stones as well as others that are in need of attention. We look forward to seeing this historic site restored to something Alloa can be proud of. Research is ongoing though a plea is made here for members to volunteer to undertake some research, photography or computer work. I am sure there is a lot of untapped talent out there.

Continuing the Outreach programme four events have recently been organised. The film “A Town Built on Water” was shown at the Bowmar Community Centre. Alloa Library Archive Evening – archivist Ian Murray demonstrated

material that can be accessed for research purposes. Twenty four people attended and the evening was voted a great success. A guided walk for CLICK's `Walk the Walk` group was organised taking in Victorian Alloa. A group of three children undertook a small survey of the Symbol stones in the Kirkyard – a video has been produced of the visit.

The Winter Programme has been sent out and I hope you will find the topics chosen interesting. In the past it has been the custom to allow non- members to attend meetings, first visit, free of charge. However, due to rising costs and to encourage members of the community to attend, the Council have decided that a donation will be expected from non-members.

The Annual Coffee morning was held on the 13<sup>th</sup> September and as usual was a great success – many thanks to all members who supported the event in various ways – donations, home baking and also helping on the day.

BETTY ROY.

### **AGM NO 33 - CHAIRMANS REMARKS**

Welcome to this 33<sup>rd</sup> AGM. We have had a successful year. Participation at the 2002 Summer events was encouraging, though there is room for improvement and I am sure that those who have not come on these walks and outings would find them enjoyable.

The Summer programme has been issued and the outings should prove of interest to members. Please note that the outing for 9<sup>th</sup> July to Falkland House and grounds will start at the earlier time of 6.30pm.

You will have noticed the increased attendance at the Winter Talks that, of course, endorses the fact that members find the topics to their liking. During the session there were a number of non-members at the meetings, our policy has been to allow attendance at one meeting before we expect people to join - this may not be the fairest way. The Council of the society has decided to ask for a donation from nonmembers.

The Council has met seven times during the year and many topics have been discussed. We are a very busy society and it requires the participation of all to make it work. No sooner is the Summer Programme issued than it is time to start organising the Winter series of talks. All members of Council are involved with these so that there is no great burden placed on any one member. Compilation of

this year's programme has already begun and will be issued along with the mail shot for the Coffee Morning. Reporting the winter talks has been taken over by Dick Clark and on the whole these reports have been published in the local papers.

At times there has been a problem with the clip-on microphone and it has been decided to buy a replacement for next session.

It is our policy to keep abreast of planning matters, and, although not ideal, we are pleased to note that part of the riverside is to be restored for public use. Because of the safety issue, the area by the river will be fenced off but information boards, seating, paving and tree planting will enhance the area. It is, however, disappointing that the site that includes the old warehouse building is now part of the redevelopment. Forth Valley Enterprise has not yet released this site for public use. The warehouse building has had the roof removed, the walls reduced in height with coping placed on the remaining walls. Perhaps a future environmental use may happen. We must make sure that no unwelcome development takes place in that area.

The situation regarding Maclays Brewery buildings is disappointing; Historic Scotland has decided not to take the site into care, though it may be possible that the listed buildings will be incorporated into any new development.

This year we shall be reprinting Mines & Minerals of the Ochils, with some additions. Our marketing manager, Lindsay Corbett, has reported sales of 3000 copies since 1986. Current sales are not large, but steady.

2002 was a busy year. In May we set up an exhibition for Green Scene, held in the Equestrian Centre at Old Sauchie. Unfortunately we shall be unable to take part this year as the date falls when we are on the Field Trip. In October several members attended the Local History Forums AGM and event. This organisation is interested in publishing, from the newsletter, articles relating to local history. In August we supported Leisure Services attempt to promote an Open Bus Tour in Clackmannanshire. Interesting, but not sufficiently advertised - so small numbers. Doors Open Day in September saw members involved - Kirkyard Trail, Alloa Tour and stewarding at the Beam Engine. Along with CSA a walk in the hinterland of the Ochils was organised and led by Dave Cowley and John Harrison. In February this year two members attended the Council for Scottish Archaeology AGM at Culzean.

Members of the society are represented on Clackmannanshire Tourism Association, Access for Leisure Forum and the Council for Voluntary Services Clackmannanshire.

The horse gin, mentioned at last years AGM, has now been transported to West Kittochside Museum.

You are probably already aware that the society has been successful in obtaining funding through The Local History Initiative Scotland scheme - a pilot scheme for promoting local history and community involvement. Our project entitled Alloa Old Kirkyard Outreach is focused on further research into the history of Alloa the trade symbol stones and historical background of the personalities buried there. Several organisations are involved - Friends of Alloa Tower, Friends of Alloa Museum and Heritage Service, the Community Partnership Team of SIP and CLICK IT unit. Initially a geophysical survey will be undertaken to determine the location of buried stones and the foundations of the old church. Six stones are being repaired or re - erected by Clackmannanshire Heritage Trust. We shall look to having other stones repaired and where possible recording and re-erecting buried stones. We have already identified the topics to be researched - Alloa Old Kirk and Parish Records, industries, trades and symbols associated and earlier religious thought etc. We shall require help with this and I hope some will see that this can be rewarding work. Members with a little time to spare - looking up records and computer work especially.

Finally thanks to members of Council for support throughout the year and to the members for faithfully turning up at events.



## CFSS WINTER PROGRAMME 2003/2004

### October.

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> Military Roads & Defences of the Past – A legacy for the development of roads & landmarks in Scotland today. Doreen Grove, Historic Scotland.

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> The Stirlings of Keir 1710 – 1760. Bill Inglis, Chair, Local History Forum.

### November.

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> For the time of his Natural Life (transportation to Australia) Graham Watson, Perthshire Archaeological Soc.

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> 29<sup>th</sup> Man and the Landscape Symposium at Stirling University.

#### **Water, Life & Landscape.**

Information from Forth Naturalist and Historian, Secretary Lindsay Corbett at University or 30 Dunmar Drive, Alloa.

Programmes widely available in schools, libraries, halls.

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> The Younger Youngers of Alloa. Ken Mackay, CFSS, FNH, Stirling Field & Archaeological Soc.

### December.

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> Members Night.

## 2004

### January.

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> The Right to Responsible Access from the Ochils to the Forth .... Clackmannanshire & the New Land Reform Act 2003. John Duffy, Clackmannanshire Access Officer.

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> Scottish Snuff Boxes – A Major Scottish Folk Art. David Lamb – National Museums of Scotland. & Michael McGuinness – Smith Art Gallery & Museum.

### February.

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> Into the Snow. Alistair Cruickshank, former Secretary British Geographical Soc.

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> Farming in the Ochils. Murray Dickie, Stirling.

### March

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> Mountains & Moorlands. Ian Finlay, SWT Conservation Manager, (former Clacks Ranger).

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> Industrial Visit – 7pm. A tour of **United Glass** in Alloa to see the new bottle-making plant. *It is essential to wear sensible shoes for the visit.* Safety glasses, ear and head protection will be supplied.

**Please let Susan Mills, Speirs Centre, know in advance if you are able to attend.**

### April

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> AGM Cheese & Wine

## FORTH NATURALIST & HISTORIAN

This years symposium, the 29<sup>th</sup> is themed `Waters, Life and Landscape – with presentations on – Natural environments of the Forth Valley;  
Water power; Water and people;  
Carseland settlement and farming;  
Wetland conservation.

At the usual University venue on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November.  
Programme/applications are widely available, and from me – Lindsay Corbett.

The themes are influenced by this year being the International Year of Fresh Waters.

As usual the symposium is the launch occasion of the FNH annual journal, this year 2003 is volume 26. It includes four papers representing a part proceedings of the 28<sup>th</sup> 2002 Symposium which was on Scotland`s Weather and Climate – Living with changes, these are –

- Climate changes and the natural heritage – Noranne Ellis
- Reconstructing the last 1000 years of Climate history – Alistair Dawson
- Nature`s calendar – recording and timing national events – Angela Douglas
- Whither the weather – detecting local change – S.J. Harrison

The Annual journal will also have papers on - Fleas of Clackmannanshire, by R.S. George; A Company from Castle Hill; a history of Stirling Boys Brigade by Kenneth Scott; Mrs Hunter of Bridge of Allan by A & K Durie; Beautiful Mrs Graham (Mary Cathcart of Schawpark) by Helen Smailes; Early historic (Dark Ages) Stirling by Ron Page; Founding of Gartmore by G.A. Dixon; Heavy Metal Mines of the Ochils by J.G. Harrison; Weather records from 17<sup>th</sup> century diaries by Dawson; Lampreys of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs by Peter Maitland. Also the annual Forth Area Bird Report by Henty & Theil and some Forth interest book reviews – naturalist and historical. The Breeding Bird Atlas of Clackmannanshire by Andre Thiel. **All referenced and with a colourful cover.**

There will be the usual symposium features on 15<sup>th</sup> November – bookstall, coffee, lunch and displays of environment and history interest by various organisations. Cost for the Symposium have been held at £10 and £6 for lunch.

This year we have a Field Trip offered for Blair Drummond and Flanders Moss on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> November, cost £10. Places limited to 25 – contact Lindsay Corbett, Hon Secy FNH.

# **SYMPOSIUM – WATER, LIFE AND LANDSCAPE – 15/11/2003**

## **PROGRAMME**

**10.00** Registration, Lecture Theatre A3 foyer Cottrell Building – coffee, bookstall and displays in Seminar Room 2X. All lectures in Lecture Theatre A3.

**MORNING SESSION** – Chair John Procter, University of Stirling.

**10.30** Introduction.

**10.45** David Gilvear (University of Stirling) – Flowing Waters of the Forth: landscapes and ecosystems.

**11.15** John Shaw (Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh) – Water power in the linen industry in Central Scotland.

**11.45** Ken Mackay, Stirling – Water for people – the development of public water supply in 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**12.15** Launch of the FN&H volume 26.....

**12.30** Lunch\* - displays, bookstall and tea/coffee in Seminar Room 2X

**AFTERNOON SESSION** – Chair Murray Dickie, Stirling Assembly.

**14.00** John Harrison, Stirling – Living with the stream – a history of settlement on the carselands.

**14.30** Scott Nesbit (FWAG) – After the great improvers – farming the carseland today.

**15.00** David Picken (SNH) – Conserving the wetlands – Flanders Moss.  
Close 15.30

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2003 – **Field Trip to Flanders Moss**, leaving University by Bus at 10.00.

## MORE ABOUT THE SOCIETY'S HORSE-MILL

My last report to CFSS on the status of the horse-mill from Rennies Wells was written in April 2001. We were then awaiting an expression of interest from the new Scottish Agricultural Museum at Kittochside, near East Kilbride.

Progress has been made. The Scottish Museum of Farming Life (as it now called) has accepted the horse-mill on terms agreed with the Council of CFSS. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April this year, I accompanied the lorry-load of assorted ironmongery on its journey from Dunaverig to East Kilbride. We are very grateful to Peter Stewart of Tradestocks Ltd for his care in storing the horse-mill, and for providing the transport.

The plan of action at Kittochside was explained to me by Duncan Dornan, General Manager of the Museum. The working farmyard there contained the central pillar and gearing of an existing horse-mill, linked by underground drive-shaft to the threshing-mill in the adjacent barn. All was embedded in very solid soil and weeds, without the slightest sign of being movable. It would be necessary to conduct an excavation and a close examination of the horse-mill in place before deciding on the feasibility of upgrading the machine, using the Rennies Wells horse-mill as a source of spare parts., particularly in respect to two of the horse-frames. I was asked if I would be willing to stand by with advice and help once work started.

The next news was a delightful surprise. The Museum would be opening its arms to a visiting post-grad student on a Diploma of Museum Studies course at the University of Newcastle, who would be with them for 2 months (May and June, 2003), and whose project would involve excavating and restoring the Kittochside horse-mill as far as possible. A Report would be made on the practicability of combining parts of the two machines to produce a working horse-mill.

In response to a phone-call at the beginning of May, I agreed to pay a working visit on 14<sup>th</sup> May and duly met the aforesaid student, an even greater surprise ! Ms Mendy Miller, from Colorado, USA. We made an attempt to tackle the rampant weed growth and hard-packed soil enclosing the central gearing, but were limited by the lack of suitable

excavation tools. I took photographs of the 'before' condition of the machinery, and we retired to her office to sketch out a detailed plan of action. I was able to supply Mendy with copies of articles and references going back to 1971.

My next visit was on 9<sup>th</sup> June. I was truly impressed by the progress made since my previous visit. The central area of the main gear had been freed from soil and weeds, the horse-walk had been cleared down to the pavement, and the channel housing the drive-shaft had been excavated, though rotation of the gear and shaft looked a long way (and lots of WD40) away. Meantime, inspection of the main gear of the Rennies Wells horse-mill showed that it was of a slightly different design, and had at some time had a major repair to its anchoring legs. We also spent an hour or so looking up references to horse-mills in the Archives section of the Museum.

My most recent visit was on 25<sup>th</sup> June, when Mendy was able to show me her latest triumphs - the main gear able to rotate on its vertical shaft, and the underground drive-shaft turnable in its bearings. No work had been done on the threshing-mill, but - being indoors - it should not be so affected by corrosion.

Mendy has returned to the States, but before leaving she prepared a very impressive report for Duncan, with background text, and measured drawings of both horse-mills. I was very pleased to receive a copy, and a copy of this has been handed on to the Council of CFSS. The Museum of Farming Life has surely every reason to be grateful to Mendy for her impact on this project. Personally, I wish Mendy every success in her future career.

I understand, from a phone-call to Duncan this morning, that work on the seized threshing-mill is at a pause, though the Museum has meantime acquired a horse. He was delighted at the progress achieved by Mendy in her short stay.

**25.9.03**

**Ken Mackay**

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY** ( Programmes from Kindred Societies)

**Stirling Field & Archaeological Society.** – meetings held in Smith Museum, Albert Place, Stirling at 7.30pm.

Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> October – ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CRAFTSMANSHIP – James Thomson (SFAS Hon Pres.)

Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> November – A CROMWELLIAN SHIPWRECK OFF DUART POINT, MULL – Dr Colin Martin, (St. Andrews Univ)

Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> December – PREHISTORIC BURIALS in Clackmannanshire and Marshall in Alloa. – Susan Mills (Museum & Heritage Officer).

Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> January – FIRST STEPS IN THE HIMALAYAS – Ian Christie.

Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> February – PREHISTORIC POTS TO MODERN MANSIONS – Archaeology in NTS West Region – Derek Alexander (NTS)

Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> March – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MEMBERS NIGHT.

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**THE CLACKMANNAN SOCIETY** – Meetings held in Clackmannan Church Hall at 7pm.

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October – In The Footsteps of James Thomson – Andrew Lumsden of Kincardine.

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November – War Memorials of Clackmannanshire – Tony Martin, Dollar.

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> January – Towards the Top of the World – Sandy Jack, Kennet.

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February – Access Legislation – John Duffy – Clacks Council.

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March – The Banks of Allan Water – Ken Gray, Bridge of Allan.  
To be followed by the AGM.

**DOLLAR HISTORY SOCIETY** – Visitors £2.00 per meeting. Venue Dollar Academy Dining Hall at 7.30pm. – on 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month.

9<sup>th</sup> September – Pictish Stones of Tayside and West Fife – Norman Atkinson, Angus.

14<sup>th</sup> October – The Devil’s Mark – The Alloa Witch-hunt of 1658 – Janette Archibald.

11<sup>th</sup> November – Iona – Past, Present and Future – Mrs Doreen Grove, Historic Scotland.

9<sup>th</sup> December – Napoleon and the Stirling Archives – Dr. Mike Rapport, Stirling University.

13<sup>th</sup> January – Robert the Bruce – David Ross – Author.

10<sup>th</sup> February – Dating Castle Campbell – John Orr, Dollar.

9<sup>th</sup> March – Early Scottish Gardens – Prof. Forbes Robertson, Edinburgh.

13<sup>th</sup> April – Human Remains in Archaeology – Dick Grove, Palaeopathologist.

11<sup>th</sup> May AGM – followed by Were you there? Local Archive Film.

**KINCARDINE LOCAL HISTORYGROUP** – meetings held in the Community Centre, Glancy Lounge at 7pm. – second Wednesday of the month.

Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> Century Medicine in Scotland – Dr. Helen Dingwall.

Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> – Central Scotland Forest, Falkirk Area – Angus Duncan.

Nov 5<sup>th</sup> – Dunmore & the Pineapple – Ian Scott.

Nov 19<sup>th</sup> – The Day the Chapman Called – Dr. Kenneth Mackay.

Jan 7<sup>th</sup> - Magic Lantern & Old Glass Slides of Central Scotland – Peter Bailey.

Jan 21<sup>st</sup> – The Work of William Stirling – Ken Gray.

Feb 4<sup>th</sup> - The Scottish Lime Centre – Roz Artis Young.

Feb 18<sup>th</sup> – Local Children in the Mines – Craig Mair.

March 3<sup>rd</sup> – Plumbing Through the Ages – Andrew Lumsden.

March 17<sup>th</sup> – Members Night and AGM.

**PERTSHIRE SOCIETY OF NATURAL SCIENCE – ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SECTION** – Meetings in the Art Gallery & Museum, Perth at 7.30pm

Wed. 15<sup>th</sup> Oct – Newbridge Chariot Burial – Mhairi Hastie – Edinburgh.

Wed 19<sup>th</sup> Nov – History & Use of Natural Dyes in Scotland – Mrs Sue Grierson, Methven.

Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec – Parterres & Pavillions in Dunkeld & the Fight for Polish Freedom – Dr Shannon Fraser, NTS, Castle Fraser.

Wed 21<sup>st</sup> Jan – Insects in Archaeology – Dr Clive Warsop, Edinburgh.

Wed 18<sup>th</sup> Feb – A Traveller in the Ancient Near East – J.K. Thomson, Bishopbriggs.

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**Friends of Clackmannanshire Museum and Heritage Service**

7.30pm on Wednesday 22nd October in the Tommy Downs Room, Alloa Town Hall  
**Naomi Tarrant** *Costume 1660 – 1800: From the Restoration to the French Revolution*

Miss Tarrant was for many years Curator of Costume and Textiles at the National Museums of Scotland and retired in 2002. She still advises on the care and display of costumes and was involved most recently in the display of one of the last dresses worn by Mary Graham (nee Cathcart of Schawpark) in *Gainsborough's Beautiful Mrs Graham* exhibition at the National Gallery of Scotland.

7.30pm on Friday 7th November in St Mungo's R.C. Church Hall, Mar Street, Alloa  
**Con Brio in Concert** *Just a Song at Twilight*

Con Brio conjures up a lost world of evenings around the piano, when families entertained themselves with song. Join us as we sing a programme chosen from the rich mine of heart-easing Victorian and Edwardian songs and drawing room ballads. This will be an excellent prelude to the 150th anniversary of the Burgh of Alloa celebrations to be held next May.

**Con Brio** are Toni Roy (Soprano), Lusia Thomson (Alto), Billy Munnoch (Tenor), Alec Shuttleworth (Bass) and Alex Christie (Piano and Musical Director).

**Please note that this is a fund-raising event and tickets will be £6.00.**

7.00pm on Wednesday 3rd December in the Tommy Downs Room, Alloa Town Hall  
**The Wee County Picture Roadshow Live!**

The *Wee County Picture Roadshow* rides again, as seven Friends have chosen images from the *Roadshow*, the visual and oral history of Clackmannanshire gathered by Alec Shuttleworth, to present to you in a special talk, explaining what they mean to *them*. This will be an entertaining and unusual event and, as it is not too far away from Christmas, it will be followed by the customary buffet, to which those attending are encouraged to contribute.



## **SOME EVENTS IN 2003**

### **FIELD TRIP 16<sup>th</sup> May to 19<sup>th</sup> May 2003.**

The choice of Dornoch as a base for the annual field trip proved to be an excellent one, thanks to Bob Monk and `Shearings`.

Sites in East Sutherland and Easter Ross were explored – north to Dunrobin and Carn Liath Broch. The builders of the broch chose a wonderful site on a little headland of easy access from the land. The weather was exceptionally warm and we were able to explore at leisure. At Golspie we visited an excellent Geological Museum. The owner, Mrs Scales, was delighted with the interest and knowledge shown by our group.

As is the case in Scotland diverse peoples have come and settled here, a process still continuing today. Fact and fiction abounds, stories that fire the imagination; Maelbrigda, a defeated Pictish chief, whose severed head caused the eventual death of the victor, Sigurd the Viking leader. The story goes that the teeth of Maelbrigda`s skull rubbing on the leg of Sigurd caused infection from which he died.

Dornoch`s coat of arms depicts a horseshoe, a symbol that refers to the Battle of Embo, 1245; the protagonists being invading Norsemen and Sir Richard de Moravia of Skelbo and his men. Sir Richard, while engaging in personal combat with the Viking leader, became disarmed. Searching around for a replacement, he took up the severed leg of a horse with which he successfully slew his opponent. Certainly a gory story!

Eventually the Norse invaders settled, married Pictish women and became fishermen and farmers. Their presence is recorded in many place names – Embo, Skelbo and Skibo are examples.

The Cathedral at Dornoch, 13<sup>th</sup> century, is associated with its founders, the Norman de Moravia family and other diverse characters such as Sir Andrew Carnegie and Madonna. Tradition has it that Christian teaching was brought to Dornoch by Finbarr, an early celtic monk of Caithness origin who had attended Ninians Candida Casa. The site of Barr`s church is reputed to have been by the east wall of the graveyard. However there is no written record to substantiate the claim though his name is preserved in folk lore and place

names. St. Barr's Fair was celebrated until 1900, and the custom of invoking the blessing of the saint upon new fishing nets and boats is commemorated in the following lines:-

“From that one behind (i.e. The Devil)  
Bless the net, thou Barr:  
Bless the vessel  
Bless thou it, God the Father”

The centre of Dornoch is attractive to our eyes, though two of the historic buildings – the Castle and the Jail – have been bought over for commercial use. It is a pity that part of these could not be available for visitors.

The visit to Tain and the Tarbet Ness area provided much interest.

Tain, a town that claims to be Scotland's oldest Royal Burgh, 1066, the charter granted by Malcolm III, confirmed its status as a free burgh and a place of sanctuary. It is said that the present name could come from the Norse word for Thing, a meeting place, however the old name Baile Dubhthaich clearly refers to Duthac's town.

Duthac was an early Christian figure of the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> century, whose shrine had become important by the 11<sup>th</sup> century when the Royal Charter was granted. He became an official saint in 1419. On a knoll near the shore are the remains of St. Duthac's chapel reputed to have been built on the spot where Duthac was born.

It was to this shrine that Robert the Bruce in 1306 conveyed his wife, sisters and daughter when his family was in danger from the threat posed by the Hammer of the Scots. Nevertheless their sanctuary was violated when the treacherous Earl of Ross captured them and handed them over to Edward I. A few years later, Ross showed his remorse for his actions and gave endowments that led to the foundations of the collegiate church, still at the heart of the town today.

The Shrine at Tain became established as one of the most important places of Pilgrimage in Scotland. Here James IV was a regular visitor, at least once a year, to achieve both spiritual solace and political aims. Another reason for his regular visits must have been to visit his mistress, Lady Janet Kennedy. James had bought Darnaway Castle, near Forres, for her and her son, at the time of his marriage to Margaret Tudor.

Mention must also be made of the rich heritage of Pictish and earlier history of the area. Excavations carried out by archaeologists at Tarbet Old Church in Portmahomack revealed a sequence of early churches, burials and memorials. Fragments of earlier buildings going back to the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The artistic quality of the Pictish art excavated here is of a very high standard and verifies there was an excellent school of carving at Portmahomack. The Centre exhibits the many finds excavated and is well worth a visit. Next to the church the archaeologists also excavated the site of a medieval village reputed to be one of the most important archaeological sites in Scotland. South of the church another building was discovered, thought to be early Pictish, dated from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD.

From Tarbet Ness we visited other Pictish monuments in the area. The Hilton of Cadboll stone is a replacement for the original now housed in the National Museum of Scotland. Presently a replication of the Cadboll Stone is being carved by stonemason Barry Grove. It was an interesting experience to watch a craftsman at work.

Our tour was further rewarded when viewing examples of these stones *in situ*. The carvings are in excellent condition – Shandwick, now under glass, stands 2.7m high. Both faces are richly decorated with a profusion of symbols – double-disc, pictish beast, hunting scene, fighting men and a hunter with a crossbow as well as interlinking serpents. At Nigg, the stone is housed in the church, here the pediment of the stone illustrates an episode in the life of St Paul the Hermit, while on the reverse an illustration of David killing the lion to save the lamb.

This field trip covered various interesting areas some I have attempted to cover. The roads were well signposted and for once no one got lost.

BETTY ROY

### **NEWBURGH & ENVIRONS 21<sup>st</sup> June 2003.**

This was a first by committee member Eddy Stewart – his first as leader of a planned outing and a great success. As commented by our Chair, Betty, we have a tendency to repeat destinations but always there is a fresh look and another eye to see differently! Eddie`s version was a sure hit. A good crowd set off from Alloa on not too bright a day for our first stop at Balvaird Castle. This stronghold had passed by marriage from the Barclays to the Murrays (now

the Mansfields of Scone) in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and is memorised by a now indistinct coat of arms of Andrew Murray and Margaret Barclay over the entrance to the tower. Eddie had arranged for permission to drive up to the castle (it is a short but very steep hill) and for a representative from our good friends at Historic Scotland to be present. We all stood at the top of the hill beside the castle with the wind swirling about us and pondered on who on earth would want to build a home up here? But a look around soon showed the reasons – clear views of who was coming on all sides and the availability of water. Besides the folk were tougher in those days. The HS man explained that this Tower House must have been the “Des Res” of its day with its thick walls plastered and decorated internally, lots of loos, sufficient attached outbuildings for the work of an estate to be carried out conveniently and very pleasant gardens for recreation.

Next stop was to be Abernethy but on the way there Eddie had pointed out Pottie`s Mill but as it was a busy stretch of the road not sensible for a group of cars to pull in even though we wanted to see if the derivation of Pottie was for a deep hole in the river – a pool. Incidentally Eddie had gone to great trouble to give us derivations for the various places where we stopped. Anyway on to Abernethy with its great round tower only two of which are left in Scotland. There is a folk museum now just down from the tower, instigated and run by volunteers and very interesting it was to look at photographs of the various industries and landmarks once still extant in that area. Oh I wish we in Alloa had our very own museum, these people exhibited such a keenness for Abernethy. The sun came out as a few of us sat on a bench in the graveyard to eat our lunch whilst other hardier members waved to us from the top of Abernethy Tower. Of course there were others who had disappeared into the very comfortable coffee shop! It is such a treat that this village has not changed much in its essential centre for a long time, there are new houses being built but they are on the periphery

Eddie had received instructions from Peter of the Newburgh Historical Society that there was a `Games Day` in Newburgh and to try and be there about 1pm so that we could get parked. So off we set and parked without too much bother, the parade had just passed and we were met by Peter and Janet. As there was a goodly crowd we split up into two parts – first crowd into the Library/Museum then a walk-about and the other to do the reverse. I will just combine what must have been a joint experience. The Laing Museum/Library was founded by a native of Newburgh in 1860 and houses his collection of rare books. It also runs various exhibitions and we were fortunate to see the one about the giant linoleum factory, once down by the shore, which grew from a shed (known locally as the Pu`otty Mill) to a huge technological mammoth but

alas linoleum went out of fashion (?back in again – no carpet mites in lino). All is cleared away now but there is an enchanting view of this upper reach of the River Tay and its small islands and reed beds. What were the industries before linoleum? – the usual of fishing salmon and sprat from the Tay (40 boats in service at one time), handloom weaving (560 looms) and farming. There was of course the illustrious Lindores Abbey for which Newburgh derived its name! Although I couldn't pin any one down on Lindores being the name of the village before!

We next stopped at Park Mill on the outskirts of Newburgh – this had been the site of the corn mill for the abbey and at one time there were six mills being run from the river. The present edifice is a fine looking building but we had promised the farmer that we wouldn't enter so we contented ourselves with looking at the outside of the building with its overshot wheel and the lade system (and the ducks). The good news is that there is a conservation group who hope to restore it and put it to grinding corn once more. We parked the cars at the farm and walked the short way up to Lindores Abbey, by this time the weather was clement and we dawdled around the ruins and inspected for consecration marks and other such clues.

Time to move on but alas on the way to Abdie Church the crowd from the Games, who of course knew their way home and sped accordingly, rather upset those of us who like to think calmly and clearly and we all went off in different directions! But this is CFSS and everyone eventually reached Abdie full of chat about the area they had travelled in. Nancy and I had driven round the Golden Loch. Back at Abdie to look at the ruined 13<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> church with its history of patronage and also to view the BUS SHELTER that now houses a Pictish stone complete with V-rod, crescent and mirror. This stone had had a varied career as it had been used as an ordinance survey bench stone and a sundial, it also has had various sites from the ridge above the church near the site of MacDuff's castle and the Lindores Moot Hill to the churchyard and now is under shelter from the elements. Fierce argument raged to and fro about the `lug` marks, was it a cauldron or part of the sundial!! Also in the shelter is the recumbent figure of an ecclesiastic and a floriated cross.

We eventually turned for home having had a splendid day out in the environs of Newburgh. Many thanks to Eddie for his research into this area and also the Newburgh Historical Society and the many helpful kind people who assisted us.

ELIZABETH CRANE.

25<sup>th</sup> June 2003 – **BARONY OF PLANE & PLEAN ESTATE**

### ***BARONY OF PLANE***

On the 24<sup>th</sup> June 1314, Sir William de Erth of “Airth” was in command of King Robert the Bruce’s stores at Cambuskenneth Abbey when the Earl of Atholl, who because of his connections with the Comyns was on the English side, attack the abbey. Sir William de Erth was killed. After the battle, King Robert the Bruce, knighted Sir William’s son, John de Erth and granted him the Barony of Plane, 25<sup>th</sup> June 1314. This was a major honour, the land commanded the road from Falkirk to Stirling, i.e – the Roman Road that is situated half a mile south of Plane.

The barony of Plane changed from the de Erths when the heiress, Lady Elizabeth married Thomas Sommerwell in 1449. James Somerwell, 8<sup>th</sup> Lord of Plane, fell into debt after standing as guarantor for his cousin, 7<sup>th</sup> Lord Somerwell. In 1643 the Tower and Barony was sold to Sir Thomas Nicholson, his son-in-law. At this time, the Nicholsons were extending their house at Carnock. Plane became a tenanted farm and the Tower fell into ruins.

It was during the middle of the eighteenth century that the name was changed from **PLANE to that of PLEAN**

### **ROMAN ROAD**

This road stretches from Camelon, Stirling and Bertha (Perth) – one of many roads built by the Romans. In 78AD General Gnaeus Julius Agricola assembled an army of 30,000 at Camelon and marched north to extend the Roman Empire. The elite IX Hispano Legion of 4000 battle hardened Legionnaires also marched past here in the autumn of 117AD. Not a trace of the finest fighting unit was ever seen again, it simply vanished into the mist! *In recent years, in a certain area, different people have heard the sound of marching feet, the clatter of armour and the pungent smell of leather as well as strange voices.* So what exactly do they hear? Is it all imagination or coincidence, or do they really hear the doomed IX Legion, marching to its fate nearly 2000 years ago!!

### **BROCH AND FORTS**

One mile south east from Plean is Tappoch Broch, an Iron Age Fort lies one mile south with yet another fort one and a half miles to the north west on Common Hill. All have been dated possibly Iron Age. There is no doubt that William Wallace lived with his uncle the Priest of Dunipace at The Hills of

Dunipace. As a young boy, he would like ourselves, be inquisitive and have visited these sites. Perhaps, Alloa's own Iron Age Warrior (lately unearthed while clearing a site for housing at Colville's nursery in May of this year), would no doubt have been acquainted with this area as well.

#### ROBERT THE BRUCE (Shiltron Formation)

It was at Torwood, three quarters of a mile south east of Plean House that King Robert the Bruce had the nucleus of his army trained in the techniques of the Shiltron formation that was so effective at the Battle of Bannockburn. Also, Edward II marched his mighty army along the Roman Road on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and would have taken in views across what two days later became the Barony of Plane. Then on the 24<sup>th</sup>, to ride pell-mell back again, not to stop until they reached Dunbar, not even to make water, they just had to control their physical functions. Surprisingly, Edward and 500 knights were chased by 50 men on hobbins (small horses) led by Sir James Douglas.

#### AFTER THE BATTLE OF DUNBAR 3<sup>rd</sup> SEPTEMBER 1650

General David Leslie, commander of the Scottish army, fell back into this area and took up position at Torwood Pass, that created formidable defensive obstacles and prevented Cromwell's advance to the North on this front. However, Cromwell's Roundheads eventually crossed the Forth, hence the battle of Inverkeithing in 1651.

#### BATTLE OF FALKIRK 17<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 1746.

The Jacobite army left Glasgow on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1746. The Lowland Brigade, under Prince Charles, went to Stirling via Kilsyth. The Highland clans led by Lord George Murray made for Falkirk (96 years after General Leslie), then subsequently the Jacobite Army occupied Plean Muir and the Torwood Pass from the 14<sup>th</sup> till the 17<sup>th</sup> January.

On the morning of the 17<sup>th</sup> both armies were up early and Lord George expected the government forces to make their move. The Jacobite Foot had formed into battle order. The two formed lines were separated by about two hundred yards. The front line facing towards Falkirk, consisting mainly of the clans, with the regiment of Keppoch Macdonald in the place of honour on the right wing – comprising 4500 men in three lines. The second line, mainly of Lowland units with the Atholl Brigade on the right wing, consisting of around 3000 men.

Around midday, and learning of the government's army inactivity, the Jacobites called a council of war on the field. There two options were put forward, retreat to save distance or to advance and seize the initiative. Without hesitation the advance was decided upon. Lord George had the two lines wheel right to form two columns with himself at the head. The Royal Standard of the Stuarts was with Lord Ogilvy's Regiment. The Prince and his entourage took up position between the two columns. The order was given to advance across the fields to the west of Torwood. The remainder of the cavalry on Plean Muir was dispatched to Lord John Drummond, stationed west of Larbert Bridge. He now commanded approximately 740 cavalry. The White Ensign was given to this detachment to confuse the enemy into thinking that they were the main body.

The Jacobite army continued its march via Kirklands to Dunipace, a small village along the Larbert to Denny road and overshadowed by the two hills of Dunipace, through which was the road to the ford. On the south side of the river a small party of government dragoons guarded the ford who on seeing the Jacobite army headed back to Falkirk to report that the Jacobite army was on the march. The government troops were caught by complete surprise. They then made their way over the Carron Steps to the heights of Falkirk, by way of the modern Bonnybridge Power Station, and ascended up the hill, west of the Falkirk Wheel and about half a mile above the Wheel where the battle site is situated.

*(Acknowledgement, my sincere thanks to Geoff Bailey for unrestricted reference to his book Falkirk or Paradise*

#### PLEAN ESTATE (Robert Haldane)

Robert Haldane, fourth son of John Haldane of Gleneagles, (1685-1721) was the first incumbent of Plean Estate, purchased from a huge fortune amassed while in service of the East India Co., as a Ships Captain. From one voyage it is reputed that he made over £70,000. Purchasing the estate gave him the right to vote, and by 1752 made it known he wished to represent the County of Stirling in Parliament. At that time only 46 were entitled to vote, of these 23 supported Captain Campbell of Ardinglass with 13 supporting Robert Haldane. A lot of dirty tricks were used to gain support and to create new voters, selling off land to friends and giving bribes to others. Robert Haldane, died on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1767, he left sufficient funds to clear his estate. The estates then came into the possession of his nephew, George Haldane, who became



enmeshed in a mountain of debt, he died in 1799 and the estate sold. Compensation belatedly granted to the Haldanes for damage to the Gleneagles estate during the 15 Uprising was also used to clear up George Haldane`s debts.

#### FRANCIS SIMPSON (Plean Estate and House)

Francis Simpson was the son of a clerk at Carron Iron Company, and as a young man joined the army becoming a Lieutenant in the 94<sup>th</sup> Regiment. On leaving the army, he became a captain in the Merchant Navy working in the Far East where he amassed a large fortune. On return to Scotland about 1800, he purchased the estate of Plean, commissioned and built, around 1819, the very fine Georgian House together with other estate buildings. Francis Simpson married twice, firstly to Sophia Cadell, daughter of William Cadell of Carnpark, and granddaughter of William Cadell of Cockenzie, one of the original partners of the Carron Iron Company.

There were two children from the first marriage, a daughter who died in infancy and a son, William born 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1805. After his wife`s death in 1806, he raised the boy himself. About 1826 William`s health deteriorated and he was taken abroad by his father, but died in Malta about a year later. Francis Simpson returned to Plean, and in 1860 married Elizabeth Sutherland Dallas, daughter of the lawyer left in charge of his affairs while abroad. As part of the marriage settlement Elizabeth received £20,000 in bonds from Francis.

As the result of a fall Francis Simpson died on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1831 and was buried in Falkirk Parish Churchyard, south west of the main door. In memory of his son William, Francis Simpson founded the William Simpson Asylum for Indigent Old Men. This still exists today and is situated at the east end of Plean on the left hand side of the road to Larbert. Asylum was dropped from the title in 1836 and it is possibly better known today by its nickname – the “Sailors Home”.

#### WALLACE THORNEYCROFT

Wallace Thorneycroft bought the estate in 1894 from the widow of Francis Simpson. Thorneycroft was a Mining Engineer and took over management of Plean Coal Company that had recently sunk a new shaft at Carbook Mains (now the site of Plean Precast Company) The new pit was 250 fathoms deep (1500Feet) Wallace Thorneycroft brought his scientific mind to bear on its future development. He saw that the coal was rich in by products, and set out to obtain them. Coke ovens were built at the top of Cadger Loan on the right

hand side of the crossroads with the Roman Road. And it is largely due to this that Plean owed its prosperity.

Mr & Mrs Wallace Thorneycroft left the Plean estate and the village on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 1929, where they had resided for 35 years. Plean Hall, a well equipped and commodious building, the erection of which Wallace Thorneycroft was partly responsible in his role of village benefactor. Here a large company of over 300 paid tribute to the popularity of Mr & Mrs Thorneycroft when Mr Thorneycroft was presented with an illuminated address, while Mrs Thorneycroft was the recipient of a pair of silver salvers. Plean House and Estate continued in the family with Thomas (Tam) and his sister Jessie Thorneycroft, who managed the estate till 1972. Soon after the house was unoccupied, vandals damaged and set fire to the building.

#### PLEAN COUNTRY PARK.

Stirling Council bought the estate from British Coal in 1988. By this time the estate was in a derelict condition and since then Stirling Council with the Ranger Service has developed the 77 hectares estate, coal waste, **comprising 33 Ha woodland, 3 Ha parkland, 3 Ha meadow, 6 Ha Farmland and 32 Ha scrub covered coal waste**, and turned it into a Country Park. After developing a care network of paths much of the park has remained relatively untouched. The wildlife pond, situated between the walled garden and the house is a popular place for pond dipping. Here you will find Dragonflies, Damselflies, Newts, Frogs and many small minibeasts.

In summer the meadows in front of the house are rich in wildflowers, dotted with purple and pink orchids. In the surrounding woods there are many varied trees which are home to many woodland birds and animals. In early spring the first of the migrating Chiff Chaff can be heard and later the hysterical laugh of the Green Woodpecker.

The bings, formed by the coal waste from the pit once managed by Wallace Thorneycroft and later by the NCB, have been levelled out and the waste moved to form two areas to the south and north of the estate, now no longer barren and lifeless mounds of coal waste. Nature has worked wonders with young Oak, Birch and Pine colonizing and a rich variety of ground flora, all of which provides food and shelter for countless small birds and animals.

EDDIE STEWART

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> August. **Field Studies day out to PALACE RIGG COUNTRY PARK.**

A sublime summer's day --- warm sun --- cooling breeze --- clear blue sky --- Richard, the Ranger gave us a talk and slide show on the history of the park.

The scene is Glasgow in 1905 during a serious industrial slump – no dole money – no National Health – no work – no money for food – literal starvation – no running to the League of Nations for a handout – no help but self help.

Glasgow Corporation purchased a large farm near Cumbernauld for £7,500, and set up a voluntary scheme for married men with children, to apply to work on the farm for their food and lodging, leaving their families at home. Their wives were given 8/6d per week, plus 1/6d for each child. The men got no pay but were given one shilling for their fare home at the weekends and 6d for tobacco.

Each man worked for two months, then left, to be replaced by other volunteers.

800 men were taken by train to the farm. More than half the farm has been unproductive due to bogs, peat and heath. They drained the ground, dug out the peat, dried it, and sold it in Glasgow to help replace coal that was in short supply. Some of the peat was made into firelighters and they sold 1500 per day.

The more arable land was used to grow vegetables for their own consumption, with hens, eggs, sheep and cows to provide meat. The whole enterprise was self-financing and saved many lives. On average each man put on a half stone in weight during his stint.

After coffee, Richard took us to see the land drainage scheme and the old station site and firelighter factory. After lunch we were free to visit the exhibitions in the Visitor Centre and the Scottish Animal enclosures as well as – the old farm machinery – the tree top walk – the ducks and swans – or just to sit in the glorious summer sun.

A quiet and satisfying day out.

BOB MONK

## **REPUTATIONS IN SCOTTISH HISTORY –**

a conference held in Stirling University on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2003 and organised by The Centre for Scottish Studies & the Dept. of History. Papers presented – Mary Queen of Scots, Prince Charles Edward Stewart, Patrick Geddes, Patrick Sellar & Donald MacLeod, David Livingstone and Keir Hardie, the presentations were of a high standard, unfortunately only three are recorded here.

## **MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS – Paper read by Dr. Michael Penman.**

Reputations in Scottish History was a challenging title to choose for a series of controversial figures whose deeds so strongly depend on the viewpoint of the individual. And lo, “Mary Queen of Scots” led all the rest, as securely controversial as ever. I looked forward to the talk by Professor Jayne E. Lewis of the University of California, but, due to serious illness in the family, she was unable to be present, and her talk was read by Dr. Penman. He read clearly and slowly, but no questions were possible in such a situation, and this left several queries unanswered. But who could have put answers to the many dilemmas in Mary’s life?

I snatched a few phrases as the reading went on. “The invisibility of an extremely visible heroine.” was one such seeming to imply that, in pre-media days, you could promote your own character as you wished, leaving a blank public figure, like a statue. At one point, the “Marie en deuil” portrait was shown on the screen, cited as “the white devil” picture – was this a quote or a fortuitous comparison? No questions meant no answers.

A promising line of thought was engendered by a comparison between the girlish 19 year-old Queen Victoria, with her wise counsellors, especially the elder statesman, Lord Melbourne, and the 19 year-old widow, Mary, Queen of Scots, plunged from the sophisticated French court, into the machinations of the Scots nobility in an entirely different, more primitive life style. Mary’s early Scottish childhood may have helped her, but she was forced to depend for most advice on the Earl of Moray, her half-brother, potentially a rival.

Another of the phrases I gleaned was that “Mary Queen of Scots was the tool of fiction”. This is correct, I was told by a friend that books about her are second in number only to that of the Virgin Mary. Nouns and adjectives have been readily applied to her –Jezebel, `mermaid` as on the banner flown during her downfall (this signified a prostitute) the very slanting eyes seemed to indicate

this. On the other hand, she was a Catholic martyr, eventually responsible for the Spanish Armada.

In her life, she seems to have been generous and sustained many friendships. Her talents for music, languages, and dancing were not in doubt. Of course, Liz Lohead's play, "Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped off" took a cynical and satirical viewpoint on this piece of history.

At her execution – January 7<sup>th</sup> 1587 – Fotheringhay – Robert Wingfield was an eye-witness and gave an account; "everyone noticed how calm she was". This demeanour would make her a heroine.

Thereafter, Buchanan, James Sixth's tutor called her "the daughter of debate" with the ability to change shape, and of course, he was the tutor who influenced the young king in his opinion of his own mother. James Sixth and First only knew his mother until he was a year old. Elisabeth, Queen of England, is reported to have said, "I pity her" after signing the warrant – accidentally, of course.

Sir Walter Scott's novel, "The Abbot" was mentioned bringing out the theme of women's exclusion from political life.

I found references to other publications, footnotes and research distracting, but I suppose it is a necessity for academics. Jezebel or Roman Catholic martyr? The mystery is still unsolved.

ISOBEL G. STEWART.

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**PATRICK GEDDES** – Dr Duncan Comrie (Independent Scholar).

Dr Duncan Comrie of Falkirk ably dealt with the many aspects of the life and work of Sir Patrick Geddes. This was a difficult subject to deal with due to the many interests of Geddes. PG entered Edinburgh University in 1874, but found the system unsatisfactory and shortly moved to London where he studied under T.H. Huxley. From there spent some time at the Marine Laboratory of the Sorbonne in Roscoff, Brittany, thence to Mexico where the bright sunlight damaged his eyes. On returning to Scotland he firstly had a post at Edinburgh University and also at Dundee, even though he had never taken a degree.

His interests were far reaching and in the 1880s was known as a professional who became a cultural activist. He expounded theories such as Survival of the Fittest, Nature & Nurture and asked the question “What kind of society would emerge once basic needs had been taken care of?” – by all accounts present day society should be trouble free when it is reputed that social security targets the disadvantaged!!! Putting his ideas into practice, he proceeded to tackle the problems of Edinburgh’s Old Town that had suffered neglect owing to the development of the New Town. He encouraged people to rehabilitate the areas in which they lived. An area of PG’s concern was the condition in which students had to live. In 1887 flats were rented at No2 Mound Place and converted into study bedrooms – the first student hostel in Scotland. Later student accommodation spread – 3-10 Ramsay Gardens, Mylne’s Court, among others. Now-a-days, only Patrick Geddes Hall at Mound Place and Mylnes Court remain as students hostels.

The Outlook Tower and Camera Obscura (17thC) was taken over by Geddes at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This vantage point with its rare `living photograph` apparatus allowed him to illustrate his ideas on planning for society. The 80ft access of the tower was punctuated by galleries taking visitors in sequence from the World to Europe, Language, Scotland and Edinburgh. Today the tower is a popular tourist attraction.

His theories were later clarified by Lewis Mumford, his disciple in the USA, and formed the basis for the regional planning of Roosevelt’s New Deal. Patrick Geddes also believed in the “greening of the environment” and started gardens in the Grassmarket and on Johnston Terrace, to bring something of nature into the lives of the people around. Scottish history was also targeted though it was not until 1919 that a Chair was established at Edinburgh University.

From 1897 PG began to spread his ideas abroad, visiting Cyprus with plans to improve farming and the water supply. In 1903, he prepared a classic development for Dunfermline from which a book for planners was the result. His exhibitions startled and stimulated people into thinking about cities. He planned gardens for the rich on the Riviera, planned in 1919 the Jerusalem and Hebrew University, travelled also extensively in India, lecturing and planning improvements for many Indian cities, becoming Professor of Civics & Sociology at the University of Bombay.

Health compelled him to leave India in 1924, then he settled in the south of France where he founded the Scots College for students of all nations, to learn cultivation, philosophy and sociology. PG was knighted in 1931, and died by the Mediterranean the following year.

This was a complex subject to review – only skimming the achievements and ideas of such an original thinker. He is credited with being the first town planner and his own words sums it up – “Town planning is not merely place planning, nor even work planning, if it is to be successful it must be folk planning”. Here was a man ahead of his time, especially when one reflects on his ideas for environmentally friendly areas with congested city complexes.

A Geddes exhibition is to be staged in the National Gallery of Scotland in January 2004.

BETTY ROY.

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## THE EVICTIONS

Between 1812 and 1819 thousands of people were evicted from their blackhouses and holdings to make way for sheep.

Ever since, controversy has raged over two issues:

1. Whether life was better or harder as a result of the evictions.
2. The manner in which the evictions were carried out

Let us imagine life before the clearances. You would:

1. Live in a blackhouse.
2. Keep black cattle to sell to the drover.
3. Have a large family.
4. Grow oats, bere (a type of barley), corn, kale and potatoes.
5. Speak Gaelic at all times - though you might have a smattering of English
6. Know how to make illicit whisky: to help pay the rent and to buy meal with this cash to help your family through the winter.

You would be among the poorest peasants in Europe but you were happy with your lot. Your people served in the British Army in France, Canada and America.

You would be a tenant of Elizabeth, Duchess of Sutherland. After whom, it is said, Bettyhill is named, though an earlier version has the village named after 'Betty Cnocan', who had an inn at the top of the hill or 'cnoc'. The site of this hostelry lies behind Farr Secondary School under the whin hushes. 'Cnoc' is pronounced 'crock' and is also a pun on the earthenware 'crocks' which the beer was drunk from.

The Sutherland family owned 1 ½ million acres by the 1820's - not equalled in the British Empires. Queen Victoria, visiting them in their fabulous residence, Stafford House, is reported to have said, "I have come from my, house to your palace". The Sutherlands invested heavily also in the Manchester and Liverpool Railway and Bridgewater Canal. But the 19th Century is known as the age of improvement, time when all the landlords looked at their estates to see how they might be made more productive and financially rewarding. The new Duke of Sutherland had improved his estates in Staffordshire beyond recognition and by 1809 was ready to turn attention to Sutherland!

It was this desire for progress that three men were employed by the Duke and Duchess in 1809. They were:

1. James Loch.
2. William Young (to deal with all their business)
3. Patrick Sellar.

Their remit? To examine the Sutherland estates and to suggest possible improvements.

Their qualification to advise? In four years in Moray they had settled 300 souls on a spot at Hopeman which had been perfectly barren. They had transformed it they said and would do the same all over the coasts of Sutherland if allowed.

The advice these two (Loch and Young) gave to the Duchess was to shift the people away from the Straths: Strathnaver, Strathbrora, Strath of Kildonan etc. and to convert these regions into giant sheep farms. The people would be made to go to allotments all over the West, East and North coasts of Sutherland.

The responsibilities of being the Landlord did not end with the clearances. The overpopulation would have led to emigration for many, even if there had been no clearances. The Duke helped indirectly by waiving rents and giving good cattle and timber prices. He was by then; well aware of his unpopularity: "I do



not interfere in encouraging or preventing them but if it was known that we thought it better for them to go they would never move".

There was no effort made to win over the people to the changes. Loch was soon saying "Such a set of savages is not to be found in the wilds of America. If Lord and Lady Stafford do not put it in my power to quell this banditti we may bid adieu to all improvement".

What was ignored was the traditional Highland view that land" is the property of the community;.it all led up to:

### **The trial of Patrick Sellar, Inverness, April, 1816.**

The court sat from 10am till after midnight. Sellar was found not guilty of culpable homicide, real injury and oppression. Famous witnesses, William Chisholm and Henrietta Mackay, whose mother was forcibly evicted, spoke in Gaelic. Their evidence was translated into English for the judge and jury. The minister of this church, the Reverend David Mackenzie, also gave evidence. William Young reassured the jurors that everything was ready for the reception for the people (it should be realised that this was untrue).

By :1819 there was uproar in parliamentary debate and attacks in "*The Scotsman*" and "*Morning Chronicle*". Even Loch, the factor, was getting worried at the tide of public opinion: "Would not Lord Stafford throw out some bait to induce them to emigrate to America and carry a swarm of their dependants with them" .

The emigrants went to the slums and industrial cities of Scotland and England, to Canada, to America, to Australia, to New Zealand and to every corner of the world - to the Red River settlement, with Lord Selkirk, in Canada - to Pictou in Nova Scotia - or Dunedin in New Zealand.

A third generation Mackay whose grandparents came from Strathy and settled in New England, designed and built the first clipper ships!

The nostalgia of the emigrants:

"from the lone shieling of the misty island, mountains divide us and a waste of seas, but still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland, and we in dreams, behold the Hebrides"

- from the Canadian Boat Song.

1845 - Potato Famine: The Duke sent meal ships to Canada to buy Indian corn; barley and shiploads of biscuits bought in large quantities; ships sent to Norway for potatoes; the factors were ordered to shoot deer to provide soup and venison for the people; the young were given £1 to go South to work on the railway lines.

Eye witness accounts of the clearances:

The Rev. Donald Sage, missionary at Achness:

"To my poor and defenceless flock the dark hour of trial came in right earnest. It was in the month of April, 1819 that they were all, men, women and children, from the heights of Farr to the mouth of the Naver, on one day to quit their tenements and go – many of them knew not whither, for a few some miserable patches of ground along the shore were doled as lots without anything in the shape of the poorest hut to shelter them. They were supposed to cultivate the ground and occupy themselves as fishermen. Many had never set foot in a boat."

Donald Macleod, Rosal :

"I was an eye witness of the scene -strong parties led by Sellar and Young commenced setting fire to the dwellings till about 300 houses were in flames. the people striving to remove the sick, the helpless, before the fire should reach them. The cries of women and children - the roaring of cattle - the barking of dogs' -- the smoke of the fire -- the soldiers -- it required to be seen to be believed! "

Life after the evictions:

One view – the factors viewpoint:

1. They are transformed.
2. They have begun to cultivate their logs with industry.
3. Many of them, with great boldness, have taken to catch cod and ling.
4. They have become as expert boatmen as any in the world.

Another economic viewpoint:

1. The lots were too small to be viable units.
2. Fishing was a new art not quickly mastered.
3. Kelp failed.
4. Cattle prices failed.
5. Wool prices fell.

-MANY FACTORS COMBINED TO MAKE THE 1820'S A DISASTER!

## Donald Macleod

Donald Macleod was born in the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century at Rosal in Strathnaver, where his father William was a small farmer and a stonemason, from whom Donald learned his trade. In his early twenties he was evicted with the rest of the tenants to make way for thousands of sheep. Donald stayed as long as possible inside Sutherland, but eventually moved to Edinburgh preceding emigration to Canada, where he spent his last few years.

Not an unusual story for those days. However, where Donald Macleod was different from all others, and why his name is still outstanding in the history of the Highland Clearances, is revealed in his own words in 1857, the year before he died: 'I have devoted all my spare time and means, for the last 34 years, expostulating, remonstrating with, and exposing the desolators of my country, and extirpaters of my race, from the land of their birth... considering that I could not serve God in a more acceptable way than to help those who could not help themselves.'

He was a natural crusading journalist, and many of those evicted were his friends and neighbours. As he became known as an agitator he became also a target for James Loch, Commissioner to the house of Sutherland. In 1830 Loch "investigated" him in person on a false charge of owing £5.8s. He could not be found guilty, but he was punished all the same, through his wife and family, who were twice during the next year turned out of their house without warning. Macleod was, in the view of the hypocritical parish minister, a "turbulent character".

In Edinburgh he at least found a public forum for his accusations against the Sutherlands and their harsh policy of depopulation and "Improvement". During 1840 and 1841 the '*Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle*' published a series of twenty one of his letters of support from throughout the land; at last he was starting to stir the consciences of those who had previously not known what was going on. Nobody he accused ever brought a libel charge against him.

In 1853 Mrs Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*" had taken the western world by storm, took exception to Macleod's indictment of the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland. She had written her 'Sunny Memories in a Foreign Land.' after she had been hosted lavishly by the Duke and Duchess in their London mansion. Macleod explained to her how she had been duped by the

Duchess's hospitality, and gave his own "Gloomy Memories" of how thousands of Highlanders had suffered starvation, eviction and Forced emigration.

A third, enlarged, edition of Donald Macleod's "Gloomy Memories" was published in Toronto in 1857. It was reprinted in Glasgow in 1892, and a facsimile version of this was produced in 1981/2.

Dick Clark

### **APOLOGY**

The Editor extends apologies to Mark Nixon of Stirling University. In good faith his dissertation – The Tillicoultry Weavers Strike 1837 an abridged version of which was printed in Newsletter No 70 September 2002. A reliable source had given assurances (twice) that we had the author's permission to use the article.

It is not the policy of CFSS to use any material without consent, and the editor can only extend an apology for any distress caused.

### **OBITUARY.**

Jim Clark of Riverview, Alloa died very suddenly on the 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2003. Two members of CFSS attended the funeral, a humanist one, with interment at Logie. Jim was an outgoing person and a faithful attender at our events and meetings. He was always cheery and took an interest in what was going on around him. He will be missed by those who knew him and we extend our sympathy to his friend Bob Henderson.

Betty Roy.