



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 130 members.

CFSS has run and participated in various events eg. on Industrial Archaeology; David Allan; in and at Alloa Tower; Green Scene; Biodiversity; Local Heritage Initiative Scotland (LHIS). Our latest edition of Alloa Tower and the Erskines of Mar was jointly published with the Friends of Alloa Tower. It is associated with Stirling University's Forth Naturalist and Historian (FNH) in publishing, and every November with its Man and the Landscape annual symposium – the 30th 2004 is Landscapes of the Mines, and is the launch of the 27th annual journal as reported on in the CFSS April newsletter.

Research projects have included- Linn Mill, Mining, and Alloa Riverside; these have been published as booklets *Linn Mill, Mines and Minerals of the Ochils*, and *Alloa Port, Ships and Shipbuilding*. The recent major project is *Old Alloa Kirkyard, Archaeological Survey 1996 – 2002* has much further related work, displays and publications in progress.

The CFSS *Newsletter*, twice yearly April and October, has 5 yr indexes. The Summer Programme, for May to August, has four Saturday or Sunday outings, a weekend event in May and a series of fortnightly (on the first and third Wednesdays of the month) Evening Walks. A Coffee Morning in September links the summer and winter events. The Winter Programme, 'launched' at the coffee morning, has fortnightly lectures or member's nights on the second Monday of the Month from October to March, possibly including an Industrial Visit, and concluding with the Society's AGM in April.

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in the aims of the Society. The society has a study / council room in Marshall House, Alloa. This has a useful small collection of books, reports, maps, photographs etc.

Contacts:- CFSS Chair Mrs. EK Roy, R Snaddon, FNH Secy. L Corbett (tel: (01259) 213954, 214840, 215091 respectively).

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**Clackmannanshire
Field
Studies
Society**

Newsletter

73

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CONTENTS

Page no.		
1	Editorial	Betty Roy
2	AGM 2004 – Chairperson’s Remarks	Betty Roy
5	Forth Naturalist & Historian	Lindsay Corbett
6	CFSS Winter Programme 2004 / 5	
7	Programmes – Kindred Societies Stirling Field & Archeological Society Kincardine Local History Group The Clackmannan Society Dollar History Society Tullibody History Society	
10	Obituaries Elizabeth Crane Betty Tiplady Matthew Ure	
12	Reports Summer Outings - 2004 CFSS Weekend to Melrose	Betty Roy
15	Visit to the Clyde	Betty Roy
16	Kennet / Chapel Hill	Eddie Stewart
18	CFSS Outing to Fife	Christine Booth
22	Dalkeith & Newhailes	Betty Roy
24	Hilde Axien – a letter from Hamburg	Hilde Axien

EDITORIAL

Once again a successful events programme has been completed with the most successful Coffee Morning on Saturday 11th September. The Winter Programme has been issued and I hope you will find the coming talks to your liking. We are looking for a volunteer to take on the job of recording the talks for the local newspapers – I would be very grateful if someone could find the time to help in this way.

The Coffee Morning realised a sum of £240 on the day – a very worthwhile effort and I take this opportunity to thank all those who helped with donations of baking and other items for sale. Money from this event helps to keep the subscriptions at a low level and is much appreciated. Thanks also to the willing band of helpers whose input allows the morning to go without a hitch.

The Wednesday Walks and Weekend outings were most enjoyable even though, at times, the weather was unkind, but CFSS “amblers” turn up in spite of the weather. Pouring rain did not dampen the spirits of the 43 participants on the visit to the Clyde, all voted this bus trip an unqualified success. It may be possible to organise another bus trip next year.

Brilliant sunshine all the way was experienced on the Weekend Field Trip to Melrose in May, and, as usual, these weekends are very happy occasions.

Suggestions for outings/walks from members are always welcome, and we would be grateful to hear from you of some special places you have visited. The programme for Spring/Summer, 2005 will be discussed at forthcoming Council meetings.

Many thanks to those who organised outings and we appreciate the research and effort undertaken to make an event successful.

AOK OUTREACH PROJECT – After eighteen months of intensive effort, the Alloa Old Kirkyard Outreach Project is nearing completion.

Limited restoration work has been carried out in the Kirkyard. Unfortunately grass cutting operations still result in important stones being damaged, a fact that makes it necessary to carry out a minimalist maintenance regime. The aim was to make the area a tourist attraction, but this is impeded owing to long grass concealing much of the carving on some of the trade symbol stones. It is hoped that, in future, we may manage to convince Land Services to instigate a friendly grass cutting operation. A small booklet giving background information and a tour of important stones has been produced. These will be on sale at meetings, cost 30p.

Updated research documents into interments in the Mar & Kellie Mausoleum. Details of the earlier church were produced by Bob Snaddon, a copy of which is in CFSS room. If funding is available, the results may be published in book form. Research papers by other members of the group should be ready for publication before Christmas.

Hilde Axien, a member for 20 years has left our shores to settle in Hamburg. Hilde was an enthusiastic member and her presence at meetings and outings is missed. We all considered Hilde a faithful friend, her knowledge of Scottish landmarks, flora and fauna could put many a Scot to shame. An account, written by Hilde, of her move to Germany is printed in this N.L. Should any one wish to write, her address can be had by contacting me.

BETTY ROY.

CFSS AGM NO 34 -- CHAIRPERSONSREMARKS.

Monday, 12th April, 2004.

Welcome to this 34th AGM. At this point, diverting from normal procedure, I should like members to give serious thought to taking a more active part in the affairs of the Society. Four members of Council have expressed their intention to stand down, including the Treasurer, who after a period of six years wishes to hand over to someone else. Therefore, we shall be looking for nominations when the election of Office Bearers takes place.

This Society has seen 34 successful years and much has been achieved over the years. Without your support the six remaining Council members will find it difficult to keep up the high standard we have come to expect.

The Council has met seven times during the Session, organising events as well as discussing items of interest to the Society. In particular, Planning Bulletins are looked at in great detail and action taken if necessary. Owing to health matters, Lindsay Corbett passed the job over to Dick Clark, though for the coming year Fraser Macintosh has volunteered to undertake this task.

Throughout the year you will have heard of The Alloa Old Kirkyard Outreach Project. In spite of some problems our commitment to the Local Heritage Initiative Scotland ought to be in place by June. The Kirkgate area looks a bit messy at the moment with house building in progress and safety/remedial work to unsafe stones being undertaken by Clackmannanshire Council. Some important trade symbol stones suffered damage through careless use of grass cutting machines, but by the efforts of Dick Clark an agreement has been reached whereby more care will be taken in future. Our commitment to restore some stones in the kirkyard has not yet been done, though it is hoped we shall be able to complete our part by June.

The research area of the project is nearing completion. These findings will be published in book form later in the year. Three local walks are ready for publication - Alloa West, Alloa East, and, a Tour of the Kirkyard, a fourth of Alloa Old Town has yet to be written up.

Two plays are in the pipeline, one by Isobel Grant Stewart, entitled "Windows", this will take the form of a CD initially and, perhaps, later a Video will be produced. CFSS members are doing the readings as well as some local children being involved. The second play will be organised by Rosa Macpherson and to be performed by children of the Bowmar Drama Group. This will be a live performance and is aimed for production in September. To promote the project exhibitions and video displays have been undertaken throughout the year, as well as sessions at the Local Archives with a view to creating interest in the wider community. Thank you to the Coordinator, Dick Clark for his tireless efforts on behalf of the project. Bob Snaddon has also been involved in producing a second research document re the burials within the Mar & Kellie mausoleum, - again thank you.

CFSS possessions are growing, with LHis money a video and a digital camera were purchased and may be borrowed by members.

The final report of the Geo-physic Surveys is now to hand and was a worthwhile

exercise in that these shed new light onto this ancient site. Four temporary display boards have been produced by the IT Unit of Clackmannanshire Council - these illustrate aspects of the project and we are grateful to Alan Wilson for the sterling work he put into producing these.

CFSS is represented on some Council led bodies, eg. Orchard Project, Access Forum, Tourism, Biodiversity, Clacks heritage Trust and Sustrans (deals with Cycle Paths), all with the aim of keeping us In The Forefront.

The 2003 outings were successful and saw attendances up from the previous year. Thanks goes to those members who organised and researched these events. Thirty one members attended the Spring weekend to Domoch, an area that proved to be full of interest and well worth visiting. No doubt the enjoyment was greatly helped by the excellent weather- sunshine all the way, except on the finale at Cairngorm. The Field Trip for 2004 is to Melrose and is being organised by Elizabeth Crane and Lizanne Lumsden.

The first Wednesday Walk was the only one that fell foul of the weather. Only seven members braved the elements and experienced an informative and pleasant walk round Doune Ponds, led by one of Stirlingshire Rangers. Some outings were local and these increase our knowledge of the local environment, others farther afield, e.g., into Stirlingshire, Fife, Edinburgh and the Glasgow area. A big thank you to those members of Council who researched and organised these extremely interesting events, as well as thanks to founder member, Ken Mackay.

The Summer Programme for 2004 has been issued said I look forward to seeing many of you at these events. Various conferences have also been attended by members, - a list of these is printed in the Newsletter.

This year a reprint of Mines & Minerals of the Ochils was produced and is on sale at £2. Presently, along with Forth Naturalist & Historian, it is hoped to publish two books - Alva in Days of Prosperity and Jacobites & Bonanzas - this deals with the Alva Silver mines. Of course this will depend on the appropriate funding being accessed

This concludes my report and I extend a big thank you to all those who have helped to make session 2003/4 a success, and, of course, this includes the members who turn up faithfully at all our events.

BETTY ROY.

FORTH NATURALIST AND HISTORIAN

FNH is an informal charitable organisation set up in in 1975 for environment and heritage promotion. Its honorary secretary, Lindsay Corbett is an active CFSS member (sometime chair / sec).

The annual `Man and the Landscape` symposium, aided as usual by some CFSS members, is now in its 30th year, and the programme themed `Landscapes of the Mines – the rise and fall of coal mining and its impact on the landscapes of central Scotland` is widely available in detail. Run this year in collaboration with the Scottish Industrial Heritage Society as usual at Stirling University on Saturday 13th November, its subject is appropriate to the current upgrading of debating on Scotland's `Landscape` by the responsible authority Scottish Natural Heritage. The six authoritative presentations are augmented by a panel discussion, an exhibition of paintings on opencast mining by local artist Morag Knight, and a display to mark the centenary of RSPB (the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds). The symposium is also the launch of our annual journal (the 27th 2004), it will include - the annual Forth Bird Report 2003, and papers on – Stirling Boys Brigade, spiders, mayflies (ephemeroptera), Dunblane weather, peregrines, the founding of Bridge of Allan,.....and some book reviews. These include the two particular books of Alloa's 150th anniversary --

The Past Around US. Isobel Grant Stewart.Heather Ann Dowd. 2004. 78pp. A4 (landscape). £8.

Alloa's present writer, playwright, historian, selects some of her articles to the *Alloa Advertiser* over the years 1979 to 2001. Well presented and illustrated examples on local past and present buildings and events, blending historical facts and personal memories.

Victorian Alloa. Jannette Archibald and the Alloa Children's History Group. Illustrated by Jill McGonigle.Heather Ann Dowd.2004. 42pp. £6.

Written to commemorate the Burgh's 150th anniversary, this is an attractive `can't put it down` book about the people and events as imaginatively portrayed in the lives of two teenagers in the time of Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 - the well off Arabella of Claremont and poor Billy the Baker's boy.

LINDSAY CORBETT

CFSS WINTER PROGRAMME 2004 / 2005

Meetings are held in Alloa Town Hall (Tommy Downs Room), unless otherwise stated, on Monday evenings -2nd and 4th of the month- 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Members of linked societies and other non-members are welcome, though non-members would be expected to join for subsequent visits.

**** Please note change of venue to Alloa Bowling Club off Ludgate, Alloa
2004**

SEPTEMBER

Sat 11th COFFEE MORNING – Speirs Centre, Primrose St.,
Alloa 10am – 12 noon

OCTOBER

Mon 11th Battle of Inverkeithing 1651 – George Robertson, Dunfermline
Mon 25th Recent discoveries on the Antonine Wall –
Geoff Bailey, Archaeologist Falkirk Museum

NOVEMBER

Mon 8th Stirling Camera Club, presentation by members – Maurice Dobson
Sat 13th 30th Man and the Landscape Symposium at Stirling University.

Landscapes of the Mines

in collaboration with Scottish Industrial Heritage Society. Information from Forth Naturalist and Historian, Secretary Lindsay Corbett at University or 30 Dunmar Dr. Alloa. Programmes widely available in schools, libraries, halls ...

Mon 22nd What do you want? Restoring opencast sites
Elaine Cameron, Environmentalist

DECEMBER

** Mon 13th Member's Night, at Alloa Bowling Club, Ludgate
2005

JANUARY

** Mon 10th Secret lives of our native orchids – Roy Sexton, SWT
at Alloa Bowling Club, Ludgate
Mon 24th Recent excavations at Stirling Castle –
Doreen Grove, Principal inspector, Historic Scotland

FEBRUARY

Mon 14th Buttes and Canyons – down the Colorado
Alistair Cruickshank, former Secretary British Geographical Society
Mon 28th GUARD resistivity surveys of Alloa Old Kirkyard – Alan Leslie

MARCH

Mon 14th The stewardship of Falkland Estate: past, present, future
Ninian Crichton-Stuart
Mon 21st Industrial Visit - Tulliallan Police College (TBA)

APRIL

Mon 11th AGM Cheese & wine

PROGRAMMES - Kindred Societies.

Stirling Field & Archaeological Society – 2004/2005. – Meet in the Smith Museum, Albert Place, Stirling on the second Tuesday of the month, starting at 7.30pm.

Tuesday, 12th October – A FORAY THROUGH THE CORRIE –
Ken Slater, Forest Enterprise

Tuesday 9th November – RECENT DISCOVERIES ON THE ANTONINE WALL.
Geoff Bailey, (Falkirk Council Archaeologist)

Tuesday 14th December – THE FORTH & CLYDE CANAL – Guthrie Hutton.

Tuesday, 11th January - BEN LAWERS HISTORIC LANDSCAPE PROJECT;
RECENT DISCOVERIES – Dr John Atkinson, (Senior
Project Manager GUARD)

Tuesday 8th February - ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CRAFTSMANSHIP –
James Thomson, (Hon. President, SFAS).

Tuesday, 8th March - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & MEMBERS NIGHT.

KINCARDINE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP – Meetings every second Wednesday in the Community Centre, Glancy Lounge, Kincardine.

Oct. 6th. Excavations at Marshall, Alloa & other Prehistoric Burials
In Clackmannanshire – Susan Mills.

Oct 20th. “Sair, Sair Wark” Women & Mining in Scotland.
Lilian King.

Nov. 3rd. Kirkcaldy`s Famous Folk. – Ann Watters.

Nov. 17th. Medieval Armaments – Dr. David Caldwell.

Dec. 1st . Quoting, `Kitin` in the Kingdom – Dave Reid.

Dec. 15th. “Of Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax”
A history of the Airthrey Estate – Ken. Gray.

Jan. 12th Auld Cu`ross – Peter Bailey.

Jan 26th. How to Find Your Ancestors – Willie Anderson.

Feb. 9th. Lord Cochrane, Part 1. – Bill Wolsey.

- Feb. 23rd. History of Anstruther Lifeboats – John Murray.
- Mar. 9th. Born a Garvie – Andrew Lumsden.
- Mar. 23rd. Members Night & AGM.

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

- Sat. 16th October. An Evening of Musical Entertainment by Ochil Singers.
- Sat. 20th November. The Story of a Family – From Fordell Miner to Waggon Train. Bill Livingstone of Dunfermline.
- Sat. 15th January. Dunmore and the Pineapple – Ian Scott, Falkirk.
- Sat. 19th February. The Battle of Inverkeithing – George Robertson, Dunfermline.
- Sat. 19th March. Members Night & AGM.

DOLLAR HISTORY SOCIETY. Held in the Academy Dining Hall at 7.30pm on the second Tuesday of the month from September to May.

- Sept., 14th. Robert Adam, Architect. - Professor David King, Stirling University.
- Oct., 12th. The Paton Family of Alloa - Henry Procter, formerly of Dollar.
- Nov., 9th. Montrose, the Civil Warrior. – Robin Bell, Broadcaster & Journalist.
- Dec., 14th. Taking the Waters – Dr. Alastair Durie, Stirling University.

- Jan., 11th. An Excavation at Marshall, Alloa. –
Prehistoric Burials in Clackmannanshire. - Susan Mills.
Museum Heritage Officer.
- Feb., 8th. The Christies of Cowden – Sir Robert Stewart, Arndean.
- March 8th Local Aircraft Pioneers – Dr. Ken Mackay, CFSS.
- April 12th. Queen Margaret – George Robertson, Dunfermline Historical
Society.
- May 10th. AGM. Followed by The Tay Bridge Disaster – an audio visual
Presentation – David Byetheway, Journalist.

TULLIBODY HISTORY SOCIETY. - Since opening our doors in late March to the NEW HERITAGE CENTRE we are pleased with the comments and feedback from our many visitors. For anyone wishing to visit, the opening hours are Saturday and Sunday 2 – 4pm. Admission charges – Adults £1, children 25p. Groups can be accommodated at other times by arrangement. The Centre is situated in the end of Tullibody Civic Centre – formerly the Bowling Club.

After a very long wait the bell tower on the Auld Kirk is finally being takendown, repaired and re-erected, vegetation will be dealt with on the walls and future talks will take place regarding the conservation of the building.

Secondly we have rediscovered the site of “The Lady Well” and it is now marked ready for a plaque to be sited once the new road down to the Ditch Farm is completed.

Programme

September 30th – OPENING NIGHT GET TOGETHER – 6.30pm – WINE & NIBBLES followed by Alastair Durie – Victorian Tourism at 7.30pm.

Oct. 28th – Sir Bobby Stewart – The Christies of Cowden.

Nov. 25th – to be arranged.

Dec. 16th – Christmas Night for Members.

OBITUARIES

ELIZABETH CRANE

Elizabeth Crane, or Lumsden as she then was, joined Clackmannanshire Field Studies Society in its early days. She became a member in 1972, and so except for two short periods whilst living in British Columbia, she was a prominent member of CFSS for nearly a quarter of a century. Elizabeth served as Treasurer for a total of eight years and carried out these duties throughout her sudden last illness. She was admitted to hospital a few days before CFSS AGM on the 14th April 2004, and to everyone's surprise died a few days later. She is survived by her second husband, John Crane, her two daughters Lizanne and Julie, and by her two grandchildren, Rory and Katie.

Elizabeth was born in Dundee and had two sisters and a brother, with all of whom she kept in touch. Her early adult years were spent in nursing training, including a spell at the Hospital for Sick Children in Glasgow. A passion for computers developed through her work at Bangour Hospital, where she was engaged on a programme to computer-assist the diagnosis of abdominal pain. Never one to rest on her laurels, Elizabeth gained a Certificate in Business Studies at Falkirk Technical College and in her spare time she studied French and German. She made full use of all the Further Education opportunities that came her way. Her life was full.

All those who knew her will remember her energy and efficiency in organising CFSS outings, both great and small. We all knew that if Elizabeth had done the "rece", it had been well and truly done. She will be sorely missed by her family and colleagues.

ISOBEL WOOD.

BETTY TIPLADY

Betty Tiplady, a faithful member of CFSS for 20 years, passed away at the home of her daughter, Pat, on 31st July, 2004.

Owing to failing health, Betty had, three years previously, moved from her home in Tulligarth Park to Letham in Angus to be nearer her family. Here she settled in well to life in Jubilee Court, a sheltered housing complex, though she

often said that she missed her Alloa friends. She was a lady who had a marvellous sense of humour and a ready wit, a facility she kept until the end.

Betty spent her early days in Sunderland, later leaving there to follow a career in nursing. After marriage to Bill Tiplady, a mining engineer, she had various homes, including one of the houses at the Beamish Heritage Museum, near Newcastle. Cumnock in Ayrshire was her first home in Scotland, then to Alloa in 1963 when her husband was engaged to take part in the Longannet Project. With her outgoing personality, she soon integrated into life in Alloa. This was when I first met her and many happy occasions were spent at her home in Redwell Place. Curling, Bowling and participation in CFSS meetings and excursions allowed Betty to have a full and interesting life after the early death of her husband Bill.

Betty is survived by her two daughters, Pat and Suzanne, sons-in-law Stan and John, granddaughters Lorraine, Angela and little Amy and great grandchildren Megan and David. There is no doubt that a special place will be reserved in their hearts for that special person, Betty Tiplady.

MATTHEW URE

Matthew Ure, who died mid June 2004 was a member of CFSS for 15 years and served on the Council of the Society for most of these years. Matthew and his wife Barbara were regular attendees at meetings, excursions and walks, until ill-health made these not possible. One particular outing organised by Matthew to Lindores in Fife was long remembered by all who were there. There we were on a warm, sunny day, sitting among the ruins and listening while he read a poem about David of Huntingdon (brother of William the Lion).

Matthew`s career was in teaching, completing his career as Head Teacher of Fishcross Primary School. He had an in-depth knowledge of literature and music, was a member of the Stirling Coral Union, also a member of the West Church choir as well as an elder of that church. He was a faithful committee member of The Retired Teachers Association, a duty he took seriously.

Of an amiable disposition, it was always a delight to have a chat with Matthew when one met him in the town. It is sad to know that people like Matthew are no longer with us.

Matthew is survived by his wife Barbara and two sons, Adrian and Ramsay.

BETTY ROY

REPORTS Summer Outings – 2004.

CFSS WEEKEND TO MELROSE – 14th/17th May 2004.

On Friday, 14th May 28 members + 2 Aussies, set off for the annual discovery weekend. The weather was extremely kind, each day dawned warm and bright, a very different picture from our last visit to the Borders when the heavens opened for most of the time. Many sites were visited and a few are highlighted here.

CHANNELKIRK.

The first stop visited the Church of Channelkirk, a delightful 19th century church, re-built by Gillespie Graham, and still retaining wooden box pews with wooden snecks still in place.

The original church on the site was dedicated to St. Cuthbert (born 627 AD) whose early life was spent tending sheep on the surrounding Lammermuir hills. Cuthbert entered the monastery of Old Melrose following a vision of St. Aiden, apparently on the night Aiden died. Cuthbert entered the monastery of Old Melrose, then situated on a loop of the river Tweed. The abbey that Cuthbert knew was destroyed in 839 by Kenneth MacAlpine, King of the Scots of Dalriada. The site can be viewed from Scott's View (south of Earlston).

400 yards south of the Channelkirk is the spring where Cuthbert baptised his converts. St. Cuthbert is the "Childe" (Scots chief) in "Childerschirche" the ancient name for the Church and Parish. (Channelkirk is situated on the A68 signposted Oxten).

THIRLSTANE

Next was a visit to the fairy-tale castle of Thirlstane, where we were given a very warm welcome by the staff. From its earliest days the castle has been owned by the Maitlands, Earls of Lauderdale, and still lived in by the same family to-day. Of Norman origin, the Maitlands arrived in England with William the Conqueror, and acquired the lands of Thirlstane through marriage.

The castle we see to-day is the produce of three main periods of building – 1590, 1670 (Sir William Bruce) and 1840 by Bryce and Burn. Sir William Bruce was chief architect to the crown and it has been said that he was the greatest of all Scottish architects. Could it be possible that our Tobias Bauchop assisted in this work, he did work at Holyrood under Bruce! Much of the 1670 plaster work was created by Dutch craftsmen who, at the time, were working at Holyrood under Sir William Bruce. It is said that Thirlstane is probably the most splendidly decorated house in Scotland. I think that CFSS members would verify that statement – the work is breath taking.

BOWDEN KIRK stands south of the village of Bowden in Roxburghshire, a hidden gem that exudes an aura of peace and tranquillity. The church was restored in 1909 but still retains some interesting features, especially the Lairds Loft bearing the Ker family crest and shield. The church is still used by descendants – Riddell-Carres of Cavers Carre. Below the loft, a painted board bears the following verse:-

“BEHOLD THE AXE LYES AT THE TREE’S ROOT,
TO HEW DOUNE THESE THAT BRINGS NOT FORTH GOOD FRUIT.
AND WHEN THEY’RE CUT THE LORD INTO HIS IRE WIL THEM DESTROY
AND CAST INTO THE FIRE”.

What is the message it gives – perhaps Thou Shalt Not Kill – Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.

Here are buried the Dukes of Roxburgh, the height of their tomb has resulted in the unusually high level of the floor of the Chancel. The graveyard has many good 18th and 19th century stones – including one to an employee of John Johnstone of Alva – obviously the Johnstones had estates here.

Within the church and also the graveyard are memorials to Sir Lauder Brunton, the founder of pharmacology.

SELKIRK – In the graveyard is a plaque detailing the following – “WILLIAM WALLACE WAS PROCLAIMED OVERLORD OF SCOTLAND IN THE KIRK OF THE FOREST”. The name divides into SEL from a Celtic tribe, the Selgovae and kirk. From early times the town was part of the Royal Hunting Lodge.

The town suffered much from the many incursions of the English during the Wars of Independence, and again was burnt after the Battle of Flodden, 1513.

As late as 1540 James V described the burgh as “often burned, harried and destroyed”. We are all familiar with the story of the 80 Selkirk men who set off for the battle, only one survivor, bearing a captured English banner, returned home. There is little that is historically verifiable about the story, though it is commemorated yearly in the Common Riding – a reminder of the many in past centuries who lost their lives in pursuit of liberty.

NEWARK CASTLE situated on a bluff above the A708 was once the royal hunting seat in the Ettrick Forest and here we spent a pleasant hour before returning to our base in Melrose. No evidence is left of the dire deeds that took place there after the Battle of Philiphaugh in 1645. Here, General Leslie’s troops slaughtered the 100 prisoners captured at the battle. Three months later, a few of the followers, mainly women and children, were led from the Tolbooth in Selkirk to the market place and shot. The Covenanting wars was a time when the religion of the Old Testament ran amok, for the first time in Scottish history many cruelties were inflicted in the name of God.

LEADERFOOT BRIDGES.

Mention must be made of the Sunday visit to view the Leaderfoot Bridges and the Roman site of Trimontium. Borders Council and Tourist Board have made a splendid attraction of the three bridges that are situated at different heights above the river. The graceful edifice of the 19 tall, red sandstone arches dominates the scene and takes the breath away. Some hardy members traversed the top of the 39` high railway bridge. Then it was a trudge up the hill to view the Roman Fort of Trimontium. The display boards and viewing platforms enable the visitor to understand the extent of the fort and where buildings were once situated. It could be appreciated that here was the centre of Roman control in Southern Scotland and also the permanent quarters of the largest and strongest garrison in the Lowlands.

In conclusion it has to be said that the weekend spent in the Borders was first class. How lovely it was to be able to drive along peaceful country roads, without haste visit historic sites and no difficulty with parking. The violence, the stories of medieval wizards and the romance of the countryside inspired much of the writing of Sir Walter Scott. James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, followed much of the traditions of the Border Ballads in his poems of romance and local patriotism. The Borders is an area that has much to offer and well worth visiting.

WHERE WILL THE FIELD TRIP TAKE US NEXT YEAR?

BETTY ROY

VISIT TO THE CLYDE – Saturday 26/6/04

Forty three members and friends joined the bus trip to Glasgow. The experience was a success, in spite of the continuous rain, all voted this an outstanding event. This was certainly a day out with a difference in many ways.

The first stop was a visit to the Tall Ship at Glasgow Harbour where we were split into groups, each led by excellent guides. The Glenlee, launched in 1896, is the last of only five Clyde Built sailing vessels still afloat in the world. It represents the final development of the cargo carrying sailing ship, after 5000 years of sail. She circumnavigated the globe four times and survived, though not without incident, passing through the fearsome Cape Horn 15 times. In 1922, she was bought by the Spanish Navy for use as a sail training vessel, until being laid up in 1981 in Seville Harbour. Bought by the Clyde Maritime Trust in 1992 and, after restoration, opened to the public in 1999.

When in use as a working vessel she transported cargoes of coal, grain and guano. Guano was in use as a fertiliser and when unloaded was housed in large warehouses by the quayside. The ammonia fumes were so pungent they corroded the lining of sailor`s noses, and people living near the warehouses were plagued with the noxious smells.

In the 19th century sailors were engaged by the Captain of the ship and were usually local men. At that time, Jack Tar went to sea well provided, took on board a good sized chest, well filled with clothing, and, as he had to do his own mending at sea he was provided with a “ditty bag” containing a supply of needles, thread, buttons and worsted (for patching). Should he die whilst on board or abroad, his clothes were auctioned. The proceeds kept by the Captain, or, when necessary, to help dependents at home. Conditions on a ship such as the Glenlee were not harsh, each man had his own hammock. The most dangerous factor would be the elements. Our group were amazed at the size of the ship, and it certainly looked very substantial and spacious.

The boat trip from the Broomielaw to Braehead was comfortable and we enjoyed the commentary on the history of this part of the Clyde. Unfortunately viewing from the ferry was marred due to the steaming up of the windows.

Disembarking at Braehead we proceeded to the excellent Clydebuilt Museum covering aspects of the history of shipbuilding, importing of cotton, sugar and

tobacco, Glasgow's role in slavery and emigration. Of interest to us was the tobacco trade, because of Alloa's role as an Entreport in the 18th century. The "Tobacco Lords" became very wealthy men and as well as importing goods such as tobacco and sugar, there was a darker side to their operations. Their ships were involved in the "Triangular Trade" – goods were exported from Glasgow to the West Coast of Africa and the empty holds were then filled with a human cargo, the slaves sold in the West Indies and finally the ships would return to Scotland with their cargo of tobacco, cotton and sugar. Africans were bought and sold between 1630 and 1807, until the British trade was stopped by an Act of Parliament.

Their story and names have gone down in history and their contribution to the wealth of Glasgow and Scotland cannot be forgotten. One of these, John Glassford, is commemorated in Glassford Street – his house was demolished to make way for the street that bears his name.

All in all a good day out.

BETTY ROY.

Kennet, Chapelhill & Lookaboutye Brae
Wednesday 21 July 2004

In a summer of uncertain weather we had a sparkling, sunny evening for the Society's walk around Kennet and Clackmannan.

Starting from Clackmannan we skirted woodlands and fields to reach Kennet Hill. Although it is modest in height, reaching barely 268 feet, there are spectacular views of the Ochils, Ben Lomond and the Trossachs, the Forth and the carse, Kincardine Bridge, Torwood, the Falkirk Wheel and not least, the barges making preparations for the new river crossing. We must not forget the Royal Dockyard at Airth Pow and its most famous product The Great Michael.

Our guide for the evening, Eddie Stewart, told us that within view were the sites of nine battles. Truly the tempestuous past of central Scotland was laid out around us, from the battle of Mannan in 583, the Viking attack on Dollar in 875, and the battles of Stirling Bridge in 1297 and Bannockburn in 1314 to the Covenantors at Kilsyth in 1645, the Cromwellian army at Larbert in 1651. The

Jacobites at Sheriffmuir in 1715 and Falkirk in 1746 and finally the Scottish Insurrection at Bonnymuir in 1820.

Sadly we were denied the 360-degree view because of the telephone aerial installation on the very top of the hill. The consolation is that this has provided a good access road and so the ascent is quite painless!

At the foot of this same track is the former site of Kennet Home Farm and the stable block of Kennet House.

The stable block, built in classical style, enclosed a rectangular paved courtyard, with a small octagonal doocot rising from the range.

About 150 meters south, towards the Forth, had stood Kennet House which was built in about 1795, on a site of a much earlier house, and designed by Thomas Harrison.

It was much admired at the time, described as being “in a style of elegance and simplicity that marks the taste and judgement of the owner”. The house was faced with greystone ashlar, with two storeys on the entrance front, which was graced by a bowed “Tuscan” porch. The south, or garden side, had a main block with a central bow rising to three storeys, and two matching classical wings. The site slopes towards the Forth, giving scope for the extra basement storey, which was, in effect, the ground floor, looking on to the handsome gardens.

Fine internal finishes, including paneling, molding and fireplaces were said to have been inspired by the Adam brothers.

The house was built for Alexander Bruce of Kennet who died in 1808. Two grandsons of this gentleman served the British Crown with distinction, one carrying the colours of the Grenadier Guards at Waterloo in 1815 and the other, younger boy, as a midshipman on board “Bellerophon” witnessing the signing by Emperor Napoleon of his surrender on 15 July 1815.

The Balfour family had lost their title of Lord Balfour of Burleigh as a result of having supported the Jacobites. The descendant who fought at Waterloo decided to lay claim to the title, through his Great grandmother Mary Balfour who married Brigadier Robert Bruce in 1714. He applied to the House of Lords

but died in 1864 before the case was heard. Success came in 1869, when the act of Attainder was annulled by act of Parliament.

In 1936 the seventh Lord Balfour, who was also the eighteenth Laird of Kennet, decided to leave Kennet House and to use Brucefeild in Fife as his main residence. Kennet House was used to billet Polish Troops during the Second World War and then, in 1946, it was sold to Alloa Cooperative Society for conversion into flats. It was fascinating to learn that one of our Society's members, Mrs. Ella Murray, together with her husband, Alloa's Librarian, lived in one of the flats for some time.

The house was sold on in 1957 to Messrs. J&N Turnbull, farmers. However, its end came in 1968 when the army demolished it.

Now just the empty site remains, with barely a "rickle o' stanes" left behind. However, we did visit the extensive walled garden, which is still very much intact and can be found beside the roadway leading off eastward to the carse. To our surprise the interior was by no means overgrown, being neatly mown by sheep and horses which are kept there by a local resident.

Following a rather melancholy attempt by our group to recapture the former glories of the location, members took the footpath along the edge of the raised beach above the carse of the Forth and this led us to Lookaboutye Brae at Clackmannan.

We learn that this unusual road name comes from the time when King Robert the Bruce was residing in Clackmannan Tower. Legend tells us that he lost his glove whilst out hunting, presumably in the Forest of Clackmannan. His Knight, Sir James Douglas, was sent to look for it, particularly near the clach or ancient stone on the brae on the south side of the town. Incidentally, the stone placed on top of the upright boulder beside the Mercat Cross in Clackmannan in 1833 is said to be this actual Mannan Stone.

Brenda Jenkinson

CFSS OUTING TO FIFE

Saturday 24 July, the day of our CFSS outing to Fife, dawned bright and promising. Our leader for the day was Eddie Stewart and before we left the Alloa Health Centre Car Park we were issued with clear instructions for finding our way to our first port of call which was Monimail Tower. This is situated a

short distance from Auchtermuchty (of Jimmie Shand fame) and Collessie. As we made our way there those of us who were not driving were able to swot up the history of the tower from the copious notes provided by Eddie.

The name “Monimail” is thought to derive from the Gaelic *monadhmaol*, the bare hill. A local historian has linked Monimail with the Culdees, monks of the early Celtic church and followers of St Columba. There is later evidence that the parish had ties with the bishops of St Andrews from 1207 and that a substantial building, perhaps a place of retreat, existed here around 1319. The original structure is usually attributed to William Lamberton, Bishop of St Andrews, one of the churchmen present on the Field of Bannockburn. He must have been a warlike churchman as the story is told that he was responsible for the ambush of a band of King Edward’s soldiers near here in 1300. The canny Scots lay in wait by the old Perth to St Andrews road and routed the English at the place called Dilliecarey Knowe. At the junction where the old Perth to St Andrews road meets the original St Andrews to Stirling road lies the hamlet of Monimail.

Architect Tom Morton, who was involved in the restoration of Monimail Tower, believes that by the early 16th century there was an extensive Episcopal palace here. However, he says that the common assertion that the existing tower was built by Cardinal Beaton is mistaken. It was in fact built by the Cardinal’s uncle, Archbishop James Beaton. John Hamilton, the last medieval archbishop of St Andrews, still used it as a residence in the mid-sixteenth century. In 1552 he spent 11 weeks at Monimail and spoke highly of the “use of a shower bath and sleeping on raw silk rather than feathers”.

In 1564 the palace was sold to Sir James Balfour of Pittendreich. It was “ruinous”, apart from the tower and this controversial sale ended three centuries of association with St Andrews. Balfour apparently spent large sums repairing and improving the tower, adding his family crest and the date 1578 to the east parapet. His second son, also James, sold the property in 1592 to Sir Robert Melville, a supporter of Mary, Queen of Scots. The Melvilles owned Monimail Tower for one hundred years before building nearby Melville House. “The tower then became a romantic folly in its parkland setting”. It also became a bothy for the gardeners, who left their autographs in the leadwork on the roof. In spite of this it survived and underwent various modifications during 18th century, while the rest of the palace was quarried for other building work. This included a walled garden around 1826, requiring vast amounts of stone and extensive changes to the ground levels.

The tower was neglected for over a century until 1984 when it was bought, along with the walled garden, by John Molleson and Chris Sheok from Edinburgh. The tower was by then dangerous and uninhabitable so they lived in a cottage across the road with their two small children. Their intention was to provide respite and tuition in organic gardening, and some years later the Monimail Tower Project, with charitable status, was established.

Then came the Monimail Tower Preservation Trust, the aim of which was to restore the building, which is a Scheduled Monument, and set up a small museum and centre for schools and groups to study the area's history. This has now been accomplished with the help of volunteers. International Voluntary Service played a big part. The Trust also received grants from public bodies such as the then Fife Council who gave £3,000 in the first year. Historic Scotland gave £27,500 to replace the lead roof, repair stained glass and make the walls watertight, while the National Heritage Lottery Fund gave £60,000. The tower was formally opened in July 1998 by Dr. Simon Taylor of the Scottish Studies Institute at St Andrews University who, dressed as Cardinal Beaton, read the proclamation from the parapet.

The hamlet of Monimail has, for several years, been home to a community of people committed to self-sufficient, sustainable living. Beyond the tower there is 12 acres of orchards and woodland and behind a high wall guarding another four acres of vegetable gardens, sits the main house (which we didn't get to see). Monimail is legally constituted as an educational charity, and the year-round programme of activities — which are open to the public — includes woodland management, mosaic classes, “creative adventure” and homeopathy sessions. At Monimail the focus is on achieving a more “ecological and sustainable” way of living.

The Sunburst which is displayed at the top of the tower, adopted by the Monimail Community, is the symbol of the Earls of Lothian and was added to the Melville arms when a Melville married one of the Kerrs — a daughter of the Marquis of Lothian, surely a fitting symbol for the Community.

We were divided into two groups for our visit to the tower and while one group visited the tower the other explored the Monimail Parish Graveyard where are buried the Earls of Leven, the Balfours and Melvilles. Monimail Church further along the road was built between 1794 and 1797 to replace its ruinous pre-Reformation predecessor, and its Gothic tower dates from 1811.

We next proceeded to Melville House where we had our lunch in the grounds. Once dubbed the most important Renaissance building in Scotland after Holyrood, Melville House at Monimail dates from 1692. Built for George Melville, first Earl of Melville, who was imprisoned at Burntisland for his support of the exiled Charles II, its mile long beech-lined approach avenue was formerly considered one of the finest of any mansion. Ownership of the house and estate went out of the Melville family hands between 1938 and 1950 and the property has functioned as a private school and a Fife Council property from 1975 to 2001 when it was bought by property developers. Unfortunately, as restoration work has begun on the building we were unable to see inside.

From there we drove to Collessie Church to visit the Tomb of Sir James Melville of Hallhill which is at present undergoing restoration and then viewed several interesting 18th and 19th century weavers' cottages, in narrow roads around the square towered church of 1839.

Before returning home we went to visit The Old Washhouse, Collessie. This 18th Century Thatched Washhouse — originally the Village Washhouse, is now the art studio of Marianna Lines. The building was restored with Tay River Reed Thatch circa 1995. When Marianna was looking for a studio and bought her house the old washhouse was part of the deal. Marianna paints on fabric, pictures derived from carved stones in Celtic lands — particularly Pictish sculptured stones in Scotland.

Her work is a Natural Dye process — use of all colours as extracted direct from nature, from the fresh or wilted flower, or from the ripe berry pressed on to the fabric. Marianna entertained us to tea and biscuits before giving us a very interesting talk about her restoration of the washhouse and her fabric painting.

Our day was rounded off by a visit to the Jimmie Shand statue in Auchtermuchty on the way home.

This was a most enjoyable and educational outing and our thanks must go to Eddie for his meticulous planning, excellent directions and thoroughly researched notes.

CHRISTINA LEASK BOOTH

DALKEITH AND NEWHAILES – 28/8/04

ST NICHOLAS BUCCLEUCH PARISH CHURCH

The town of Dalkeith holds much of interest and another visit there ought to be included on a future programme.

The aim of this outing was to visit the Church when a guided tour was scheduled for 11am. With time in hand, the group immediately set off to sample the home baking provided in the café, run by ladies of the church guild. Later there was ample time to partake of homemade soup and sandwiches at lunchtime. This café is well worth visiting for the friendly welcome and low prices.

St Nicholas church which for over 800 years has contributed to the religious, social and historical development of both the town of Dalkeith and of Scotland is said to derive its name from the 8th century Culdee Christian martyr, St. Nicholas. In its turbulent history the church has been burned, subjected to the ravages of war and used for the stabling of horses and men during Cromwell's incursions into Scotland. A few years ago, the coffin of the infant son of General Monck was discovered by volunteers in the ruined apse.

The church was rebuilt, extended and refurbished through time. In 1979, after the amalgamation with other churches, it became known as St Nicholas Buccleuch Parish Church. In the ruined Apsse is housed the Morton Monument, two recumbent figures, a knight and his lady, rest on a rectangular base. It is believed them to be James Douglas, 1st Earl of Morton and his wife, Johan, the profoundly deaf 3rd daughter of King James I of Scotland. The apse is in a ruinous state, but efforts are being made to obtain funding for its restoration.

Entering the church, one is immediately struck by the beauty of this church. The height of the nave is impressive as well as the variety of style of the windows – some of the design of the 13th century. On either side of the chancel, stained glass panels are affixed to the two lancet windows. Instead of being discarded when the West Parish church was abandoned, these panels have been preserved and truly beautiful they are.

On the right hand west wall, there is an elaborate 17th century monument with angels, cherubs, sorrowing statues and grotesque mortality symbols, telling perhaps a grim story. This monument is to the Rev. William Calderwood, the

Parish Minister, who between 1659 and 1680 undertook the persecution of “witches” in Dalkeith. In all he condemned 60 women to torture and death for witchcraft.

Between the years 1660 and 1835, various lofts for tradesmen were erected in two tiers round the church. Because of the number of trades represented, space in the church must have been very crowded. A drawing in the café shows the interior of the church containing the trade lofts. The original banner of the Hammermen Guild hangs on the south wall of the church.

Placed to the right of the chancel is a beautiful, modern memorial to the Rev. Magnus J.G. Macintosh depicting a small central cross, the symbol of life and engraved on glass insets – Birth, Youth, Maturity, Death and the Resurrection.

A visit, well-worth doing, and led by enthusiastic guides.

NEWHAILES

The afternoon visit of the day was to the NTS property of Newhailes where we were given an excellent guided tour by the Property Manager, Piers de Salis, formerly of Alloa Tower. It was a delight to renew the acquaintance of Piers and also later in the afternoon to meet his wife, Stephaney, and the latest addition to the family – Maximillian James de Salis, known as Max.

On viewing the building from the outside, we were struck by the resemblance to Melville House, visited in July. There was no mystery as both houses had been designed and built by the architect, James Smith. Newhailes, built by Smith in 1686 in neo-Palladian style, comprises the 7 bay central part of the building. The extensions on either side of Smith`s house were carried out by the Dalrymple family. Smith soon found the house too small for his large family, the rooms, though charming, extended only one room in depth. Smith became bankrupt in 1702 and was forced to sell. By 1709, the property was bought by Sir David Dalrymple, Solicitor General of Scotland. His brother, Lord Chief Justice, has gone down in history for his role in sanctioning the massacre of Glencoe.

David Dalrymple was a man of excellent taste, and expanded the house around Smith`s original. His descendents followed his lead, and it was under David Dalrymple`s grandson, David, Lord Hailes, that the development of the interior

and grounds took place. The diaries of his daughter, Christian, chatelaine for 40 years from 1792 to 1832, provide an invaluable source of information.

The interior of the house delights the eye with furnishings and décor retaining their shabby elegance and giving a true picture of life in a by-gone age. Apart from cleaning, the character of the house has been kept intact. The library was designed for Sir David Dalrymple in 1718-21 and completed by his son, Sir James, in the 1740s. The ceiling of the library is higher than those in the rest of the house, a necessary factor to accommodate the towering bookshelves that line the walls. In 1976, the books were given to the nation in lieu of tax and now reside in the National Library of Scotland. Humidity and temperature controls are now in place, as well as security and fire prevention measures. Control of humidity and temperature must be `just right` before it will be possible to return the books to their original home. Dr. Johnston is reputed to have described this library “as the most learned room in Europe.”

Before leaving a quick sortee of the grounds was in order, and, we were fortunate to come across the Shell Grotto. A quick look at the exterior showed up various shells, patterns and minerals, however another, more leisurely visit to the grounds is must at a later date.

BETTY ROY.

Hilde Axien

Sülldorfer Mühlenweg 42 22589 Hamburg Tel. 0049 040 87932420

June 2004

Dear friends, neighbours, CFSS'lers, ramblers, walkers and golfers, helpers and all others, who gave me such a wonderful farewell with words and letters, gifts and parties. It was such a great help to get all those good wishes, the encouragement and to realise how much understanding there was, that this was not an easy time for me. I'm glad now I started my preparation in good time, faced with this task all on my own. You will all know from experience at some time or other, that things hardly ever go as smooth as one hopes and unexpected incidents may cause not only loss of time and additional costs but additional trouble. As a consequence changes had to be made, other ways to find.

But finally , with my nerves stretched like a violin-string (and a weight-loss of 7kg) the sad day arrived, when I had to leave my beloved Scotland. Did I say

“the day”. The removal itself was an affair of 8 full days from the first things into the van to the last things out. Although I didn’t have to move a finger for packing. Pickfords sent 4 men at the first day, dismantling the cupboards and boxing china, pictures, books, kitchenware, laundry, dresses, tools, and so on. It was chaos. The kettle was on non-stop for tea and I was on the move from one room to another to answer questions and give advice. Not much that I could do the following Sunday, parts of furniture and open boxes everywhere, cold food. My daughter and son-in-law arrived late afternoon to take ceiling-lights down and Monday afternoon the house was empty. Our B & B (La Fortuna, where you have to take your shoes off) was not accessible till later, so after a picnic on my lawn on this warm and sunny day, I invited my family to the Falkirk Wheel. When the boat in it’s “bath-tub” had arrived at it’s highest level everything was stopped because of that very heavy thunderstorm for more than half an hour. Pity, we couldn’t enjoy the view through all the rain. Two of my dear old neighbours invited us into their homes on these evenings; La Fortuna has no sitting room for guests.

Sale of my car was prearranged with Devonvale Vauxhall. I just handed it in and got my cheque in return, to take it to the bank. All that was left to do was handing over the keys for my house and get a cheque in return. Some of you know how unfortunate I was selling my house, it being a Scandinavian Bungalow mainly built of wood. The bank ceased mortgaging this kind of house, so none of the many interested viewers could make a serious offer. My very proficient solicitor/estate agent negotiated a sale to a builder, who is exchanging the objectionable parts of the house. His gain — my loss. I’m glad not to be around to see it happen. I spent 14 years there, it was the ideal house for me. The gorgeous view, the large and bright living room, the easy maintenance and my garden full of a great variety of plants and flowers. Not to forget the location in a good neighbourhood.

On Wednesday with my last personal belongings in the car we made our way to Newcastle. My son-in-law wanted to visit the castle in Rothbury, which I knew already. I was very nervous and desperate to get to Newcastle, rather waiting there for hours, than risking to miss the ferry. On both my last trips from/to Amsterdam I experienced incidents, which caused long delays. Imagine missing the ferry and the furniture van arriving before us! But we made it to Hamburg the following afternoon, next morning the furniture arrived — and chaos begun. After the big cupboards, bookcases and wardrobes were reassembled, chairs in place etc. the remaining two packers delivered box after box. We just grabbed and unwrapped things and put them, where we could

find a shelf, any space. Empty boxes out, others in. Inevitable books in the kitchen, underwear in my writing-desk, tooth-brushes among the china, this old type-writer in the cellar and so on. But the kettle was in place, working with an adapter, because it was the last thing out in Alloa, keeping the men going with their hard work. The weeks before I had already exchanged more than 25 plugs. Yea, really, there were so many, and that doesn't include TV and Video, which I had to leave behind, because the system does not work here, Same with telephones.

The unpacking went on — like the packing — for nearly 2 days; I myself had no time for a meal, just mugs of coffee. My helpers had the patience to sit down for well-deserved sandwiches and a cake, friends brought. The packers dropped everything precisely at 4pm to spend the night in the van, parked 50m from here in the woods — after sitting here for a time, watching us work and have a shower. (Not watching us having a shower! They had their own.) They liked the surroundings here and stayed on till Monday, when they had to move the parting British Consul from Hamburg to Portugal. May be such a profession has its merits.

Daughter and son-in-law stayed on till about 6pm to spend the evening with friends and I fussed around here for 2 more hours. Finally I had to walk the 2km to my friends house, where I spent my first 4 nights in Hamburg. I had no telephone, no directory here to call for a taxi or a friend. On Sunday the helping-troops of my grandchildren turned up, females trying to bring things at least to the right rooms, the men sweating and swearing and breaking several drills, to fix pictures and hooks to the concrete walls.

Next morning it was good-bye to my daughter and her husband, they going shopping to IKEA, which is about the only place in Germany, where you can buy cheaper than GB. But first they dropped me at the “einwohnermeldeamt”. What's that? A typical German word made up of three or four others made into one, meaning the Registrar Office. First thing to do here is to get an ID-card. Without that you are getting nowhere, you are nobody. My new car was due to be delivered the next day, but you can't get it on the road without an official address. Insurance, Telecom, domestic lines, Inland Revenue — they all want an official confirmed address. Since I got the telephone connection and my Skoda FABIA I am much more versatile, but still a long way from sitting down and say: I have arrived and can go back to a normal life. Apart from having no time limit now, nothing that forces me to do things today or next week, I am very tired now. If we had a normal summer and more sunshine, less wind and

higher temperature I would probably just sit on my terrace and do nothing. But the summer wasn't like I (and every body else) expected, so far. The huge old oak-trees close to this house give a lot of shade, which was a good thing in a hot summer like last years. There is not much I can — and will do to my little patch of garden. Under the oaks and with the surrounding shrubs the neglected lawn is a mess and has to be re-done this autumn. I shall be content to potter around with my colourful blue containers and carefully choose plants, that will survive the harsher winters here. This may sound a bit negative, but I am quite happy about the place here. Not the wide view I had in Alloa, but green and nature, wherever I turn my head, and very quiet. From my doorstep I can walk for a long time without passing another house. In my childhood there was a shed — I guess immediately after the war — it was landscaped with little ponds, sandy paths and trees of all kinds. Not at all looking man-made, some parts dense and inaccessible. And a few ups and downs, many seats and view points, 20 minutes walk away a playground and grill-area. And when I turn to the other side and come out from our private road here, the Sülldorfer Mühlenweg takes me along some small houses in 8 minutes to a busy main road, to railway and bus station, some small shops like baker, hairdresser, TV repair, riding gear and a Lidl-store, which unfortunately made the very good former Delicatessen shop close. There I can cross the railway and hardly anything has changed there since I used to cycle there as a girl. Its thatched houses, modernised, but still thatched and rural, lovely well tended gardens towards the road and behind the houses fields and meadows. A riding school and many stables for horse owners, horses everywhere or cattle. A bee-keeper sells honey, another house has dozens asses with rabbits. Another place has free running hens and a shop with all kinds of bio or öko food, delicious vegetables. I was there last week at an Open Day, where I learned a lot.

Otherwise I'm not doing a lot for entertainment. As I said, I am still very tired and I am trying to put some weight on again. I have nothing to wear, the old complaint of every woman. But I really have nothing that fits and I can never wear anything from a shop unaltered. Down from 14 to 10. I have a lot of telephone contact with family and friends — those who are not permanently away. Lots of plans for later. Found out, there are two walking groups in the area and will make enquiries, what, how and who they are and what kind of walks they do. All my old friends here are sadly no companions for walks for many different reasons, but at least they would come on smaller walks in parks, botanical gardens or along the river Elbe, where they find seats to rest. In a big city like Hamburg there is certainly a huge offer on cultural entertainment, museums, concerts, opera, ballet, shows. But I have to digest the prices first!

It is unbelievable, and no reductions anywhere for seniors, like you get in GB. No free TV fees, no free chiropody and certainly no free health care. The economy is in a sad state here and so far the government isn't getting any success with all it's experiments. The people have to pay in many different ways when for instance Siemens threatened to close a factory to open another one in a country with cheaper wages they came to an agreement with their employees to work 42 hours instead of 37 or 38, for the same wages. Choose between un-employment or work harder!

Enough now. One day I will write again and tell you, how I will settle in and any news, if there are. By the way since 8th June I am great grandmother of little Tom (in England).

I hope you are all well, healthy and happy. This letter goes to many people, interested in different things, forgive me it it is boring you don't have to read it. To all of you my fondest regards and many thanks for helping me to leave with kindest memories.

Hilde