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EDITORIAL

The short days and long nights will soon be upon us. In a few weeks time the clocks will “fall back” --a very apt way of expressing the changing of the clocks at the end of the month. Already the leaves are falling from the trees. The car park at Tower Square was cleared of leaves, but within two days the area has again been covered with leaves. However, the foliage on the trees will be there for some weeks yet I am sure!

The summer is now well over and the Society enjoyed an interesting series of events, Beginning with the annual Field Trip in May when we enjoyed four days of glorious sunshine.

The summer of 2005 did not live up to its early promise. Unfortunately it was the Wednesday Walks that were beset by periods of heavy rain and inclement weather. This fact contributed to the low turnouts on most occasions. However the annual bus trip is proving popular with members – 36 members and friends visited the Scottish Parliament and Canongate. Weather was good and all voted the outing a success.

All these outings require the leaders to undertake a great deal of research and I would like to thank them for making these outings so interesting.

The Annual Coffee Morning held in the Moncrieff Church Hall on the 10th September did not suffer from lack of support due to a change of venue. £271 was collected from tickets, sales and donations. Thank you to all those members who give so generously to make this annual fund raiser a success.

May I take this opportunity to thank my family, members of Friends of Alloa Tower and CFSS for organising for me a most unexpected “Birthday Bash” at Alloa Tower. Thank you for the many cards at that time, as well as those that have been received during my recent illness.

Betty Roy

Chairpersons Report – AGM 2005.

I am happy to present the Chairpersons Report of the Society's progress over the past year and to put on record that we have reached the benchmark of 35 years since inception. In that time 74 issues of the Newsletters have been published and I thank the contributors, past and present, the Secretary who attends to getting it printed and, this year Sadie Archibald who so kindly typed some of it. There is always room for improvement, articles from members dealing with some of their experiences, present and days long past as well as places of interest they have visited.

The aims of the Society are to educate the public in most disciplines, such as Local and General History, environmental matters, and to secure the preservation and protection of features of public interest. We keep a watching brief on planning matters, these are dealt with by Fraser Mackintosh who will present a short report later dealing with these matters where representation has been made.

When making up the two yearly programmes these aims are adhered to as far as possible. Attendance averaged 15 and throughout the weather was kind with two exceptions. The Bus Trip to the Clyde unfortunately experienced continuous rain, though the outing was voted a huge success. The last Wednesday walk, Alva & Environs, was damp, even though umbrellas were never lowered, the evening was mild thus the light rain did not interfere with enjoyment. The Melrose Weekend was absolutely fabulous, an excellent hotel and sunshine all the way – 28 members attended.

Having organised these outings over so many years, one is amazed at the diversity of places to visit. On occasions some areas have been re-visited. But, with different organisers there is always freshness about them. Thanks to members of Council and others who have given of their time and knowledge to make these outings an experience to remember.

The Winter Lecture series was well attended with an average of 40+ at the meetings. As usual these were interesting and varied and covered a

variety of topics. History: – The Battle of Inverkeithing. Recent discoveries of the Antonine Wall, James V Palace Excavations and The Stewardship of Falkland Estate.

Environment :- Restoring Opencast Sites, Botany: – The secret lives of our Native Orchids. Local Studies: – GUARD Resistivity – part of the Kirkyard Project and of General Interest – Stirling Camera Club Presentation and Rafting Down the Colorado. For Members Night – Ken Mackay presented slides on the Society's events and Eddie Stewart's topic was the Kennet Estate and House.

CFSS members attended and supported, where necessary, the Man & The Landscape Symposium. The theme, Landscape of the Mines provided an opportunity for Clackmannanshire to display local mining history. One panel the personalities responsible for the Alloa Coal Company, was produced by Eddie Stewart, and much interest was shown by the attendees.

CFSS members, Betty Roy, Fraser MacKintosh, and Eddie Stewart were Bus Tour guides at the Victorian Fair in June and again in September during Open Doors Day and also provided a Guided Tour of the Alva Kirkyard. During the Scottish Archaeology month, also in September, a Guided Tour of the Alloa Kirkyard and Mar & Kellie Mausoleum was led by Betty Roy, Bob Snaddon and others.

Guided walks for local groups, was also a feature in the summer. We are also approached by local groups to deliver talks on aspects of Clamannanshire – four in all this session. It gives a boost to know that CFSS is so highly regarded.

2005 has been a busy year. The kirkyard project is now finished and all accounts have been paid. Certain stones in the kirkyard have been repaired and re-erected, as well as a dedication plaque to John, 6th Earl of Mar, d. 1732. The Dedication, followed by a reception in St John's Episcopal Church marked the end of this Outreach Project.

Some of the work of the Research Group has been published and is available from members of the partnership – CFSS, FAT and FAMHS. These include the CD “Windows on Alloa’s past” that contains cameos of incidents that happened in Alloa in days gone by. It is hoped that members will obtain these for their friends for a small donation of £3.00. The booklet “Memento Mori” features a guided tour of the Kirkyard, keys can be had from Limetree House and can provide a pleasant pastime on a pleasant summer’s day.

Two local walks, Alloa East and West, have been edited and should be available shortly. These booklets will provide the opportunity for a leisurely stroll through Alloa and learning more about the town in past days of prosperity.

Unfortunately there was not enough funding available to produce the research papers and it is only natural that those involved were disappointed. However it is the intention to secure funding and get this work published. The publication will cover the Kirkyard and some personalities interred there.

The Council has begun preparing the Winter Programme. Once again the Tommy Downs Room is unavailable for the Members Night in December and the first January Meeting. It is hoped we shall be able to hire a room at the Alloa Bowling Club – this has to be confirmed. Unfortunately the Speirs Centre is unavailable for the Coffee Morning on September 10th. The Moncrieff Church have kindly allowed us the use of their hall for this purpose. The Church is situated a short distance along Drysdale Street and hope the change of venue does not cause too much inconvenience.

In conclusion I would like to thank members of Council for their hard work during the year and also to you, the members, without whom the society would not exist.

Betty Roy

OBITUARY - Dorothy Wright

Dorothy Wright, long standing member of CFSS, passed away on Tuesday, 11th October, 2005 at the young age of 59. Dorothy faced a long illness with courage and great determination. When the effect of her treatment began to set in, she did not give up, but attended functions and meetings whenever she was able.

The care given by her sister Norma and her friend Mike made it possible for her to undertake visits to places she hadn't got round to when she was well.

Unfortunately she was unable to attend the Portpatrick Field Trip – an event she had attended over the years. Many of us will miss her lively presence.

She was endowed with boundless energy, and, when well gave of her time to many organisations in the local community. For 25 years she was a member of Alloa Operatic Society (now Alloa Musical Players), and also served for 30 years as an Elder at St Mungos Parish Church, as well as being the Property Convenor.

When the conservation of Alloa Tower was well underway, Dorothy was one of those who attended early meetings to put forward ideas for the future of the building. Needless to say, she was part of a group that set up the now successful organisation, Friends of Alloa Tower and served as Chairperson.

As well as the foregoing, she was a Trustee of the Community Orchard Project and took an active interest in its affairs. She was a lady of many talents, and along with her friends, Bernadette, Roberta and John, was part of the entertainment group – The Dolly Mixtures.

Dorothy was a well adjusted person who derived pleasure from the simple things of life. Her faith was a great comfort to her during her long illness which she dealt with in a courageous manner. Her passing leaves a gap in the lives of many who knew her and she will be missed by many. We extend our sympathy to her sister, Norma, Brother-in-Law Alf, and her friend Mike.

Betty Roy

CFSS WINTER PROGRAMME 2005 / 2006

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**

2005

SEPTEMBER

Sat 10th COFFEE MORNING – Moncrieff Church Hall, Drysdale St.,
Alloa
10am – 12 noon

OCTOBER

Mon 10th Sauchie Tower Excavations – Susan Mills, CFSS, Local heritage
&
Museums Officer

Mon 24th Research Project, Alloa Inch – Roy Sexton
(Joint meeting with SWT)

NOVEMBER

Mon 14th William Wallace, The Falkirk Connection –
Ian Scott, Falkirk Local History Society

Sat 12th 31st, Man and the Landscape Symposium
at Stirling University.
Landscapes by Design
Information from Forth Naturalist and Historian, Secretary
Lindsay Corbett at the University or 30 Dunmar Dr. Alloa
Programmes widely available in schools, libraries, hall...

Mon 28th Digital Mapping Techniques – Lachlan Renwick, SNH Perth

DECEMBER

** Mon 12th Member's night, at Alloa Bowling Club. Off Ludgate, Alloa

2006

JANUARY

Mon 9th Completion of Coville Gardens Excavation – Susan Mills,
CFSS, Local Heritage and Museums Officer.

Mon 23rd The Lands and Lairds of Loss 1500 – 1800 – John Harrison,
Freelance Historian

FEBRUARY

Mon 13th The Vikings – Dr. Andrew Jennings, Bridge of Allan.

Mon 27th Queen Margaret – George Robertson, Dunfermline

MARCH

Mon 13th In the Furthestmost Hebrides – Ken McKay, CFSS

Mon 27th Industrial Visit – (TBA)

APRIL

Mon 10th A.G.M. Cheese and Wine

Dates for Your Diary

Dollar History Society

Meetings held in the Academy Dining Hall, Every 2nd Tuesday of the Month, at 7.30pm £2.00 per meeting, for visitors.

September 13th 2005

Scottish Heraldry: Speaker The Lyon Clerk, Mrs Elizabeth Roads.

October 11th 2005

Scottish Suffragettes: Speaker Mrs Lillian King, Benarty Antiquarian Society.

November 8th 2005

Union of the Crowns 1603 & 2003: Speaker Professor Michael Lynch
Edinburgh University.

December 13th 2005

Bringing Wallace Home: Mr David Ross, Hands on Historian and writer.

January 10th 2006

A Cultural Tapestry Four Generations of the Lorimer Family: Speaker
Dr. Tony Martin Dollar

February 14th 2006

Stepping into the Past: From tracks to roadways in Clackmannanshire. Speaker:
Mr Murray Dickie

March 14th 2006

The Scots College Paris – 1789: Speaker: Dr. Mike Rapport, Dept. of History,
University of Stirling.

April 11th 2006

The Myth of Rob Roy MacGregor: Speaker Dr. Tom Begg, formerly of Queen
Margaret University College, Edinburgh.

May 9th 2006

Annual General Meeting, followed by Research on the Old Kirkyard, Alloa,
The Alloa Kirkgate Outreach Project: speaker Mrs E.K. Roy.
Clackmannanshire Field Studies Society.

The Clackmannan Society

All meetings are held in Clackmannan Church Hall at 7pm. Visitors welcome.

Saturday October 15th 2005

‘Plumbing Through the Ages’ (Andrew Lumsdon of Kincardine).

Saturday November 19th 2005

‘The Glass Works’ (Jim Bank Jnr. of Clackmannan)

Saturday January 21st 2006

‘The Thistle of Scotland’ (Ken Gray of Bridge of Allan).

Saturday February 18th 2006

‘History of the International Rescue Corps’ (Speaker, to be advised)

Saturday 26th March 2006

‘Members Night and AGM’ (A relaxed evening providing an opportunity for members to show slides from their own collections)

Kincardine Local History Group

**Meetings every second Wednesday in the Community Centre – Glancy Lounge
Kincardine**

October 5th 2005

‘The Forth in the 17th Century ‘ (Sue Mowat)

October 19th 2005

‘The Secret History of Alva Silver Mines’ (Dr Ken McKay)

November 2nd 2005

‘History of Anstruther Lifeboats’ (John Murray)

November 16th 2005

‘People and Places of Dunfermline Over the Last 100 years’ (George Robertson)

February 8th 2006

‘Lord Cochrane, Part 2’ (Bill Wolsey)

February 22nd 2006

‘The Celts in Central Scotland’ (Craig Mair)

March 8th 2006

‘Kincardine No More’ (Andrew Lumsden)

March 22nd 2006

‘Members Night & A.G.M.’ A relaxed evening providing an opportunity for Members to show slides from their own collections.

PORTPATRICK SPRING WEEKEND – 13th/16th May, 2005.

Twenty Six members undertook the long journey to the southernmost tip of Scotland. Once again a Shearings Hotel provided a comfortable stay. From its position on a cliff, the Portpatrick Hotel commands wonderful views of the harbour and beyond. We have come to expect good weather for the weekend and 2005 was no exception, it was a case of glorious sunshine all the way.

As usual various sites were visited en route, the first of those to the gardens at Drumlanrig, presently the home of the Duke of Buccleuch. The Head Gardner treated us to an excellent tour of the gardens. Unfortunately we were unable to visit the interior of the house, it is a private residence and only open on Saturday and Sunday during the season. Notwithstanding we were able to view the exterior of this interesting building. In its present form it dates from 1690, designed by architect James Smith, whose work C.F.S.S. had observed at Melville and Newhailes. From 1695 it was the home of the Second Duke of Queensberry, the Union Duke, so called because of his role in the 1707 Treaty of Union. John 6th Earl of Mar of the Alloa Estate was also involved in supporting the passage of the Treaty through Parliament.

Queen Anne's representative was Daniel Defoe, below I quote his description of Drumlanrig.

A PALACE SO GLOURIOUS , GARDENS SO FINE AND EVERYTHING SO MAGNIFICENT – ALL IN WILD MOUNTAINOUS COUNTRY, THE LIKE WE HAD NOT SEEN BEFORE.

Moniave was the next stop, where we had hoped to visit the James Paterson Museum – a founder member of the “Glasgow Boys”, school of painters. Unfortunately the museum is no longer operational, the Trustees do not have sufficient funds to undertake improvements needed to comply with the Disability Act – a pity.

After a stop at Clatteringshaws Loch (to draw breath), we arrived at our hotel in the late afternoon.

The Rhins of Galloway, long renowned for its beef and dairy cattle, presents a pastoral landscape and is renowned for its mild climate, as evidenced by the many sub- tropical gardens. The coastal scenery on the south and west presents a different picture of some spectacular cliffs. It has been said that the Romans on Hadrian's Wall received much of their fresh produce from this area.

We had entered the ancient Brittonic kingdom of Novantae, that stretched from the Clyde, towards today’s Dumfries, across the Solway, as far south as the Lake District. Here was the British kingdom of Rheged, one of their kings “Urien” is commemorated in Welsh poetry. His exploits are recorded by the Welsh bard Taliesin.

The name Galloway, (Gall Ghaidhil) originated in the 10th century, brought in by Irish incomers.

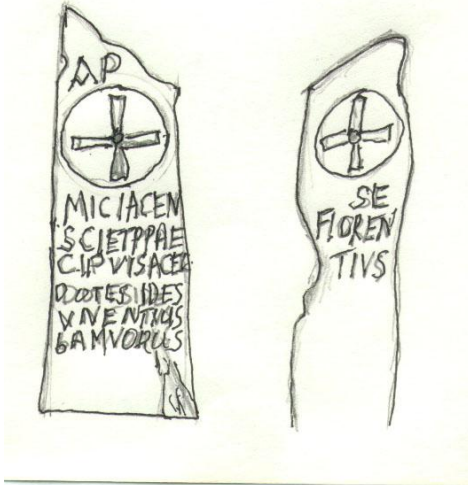
The origins of Christianity in Scotland, began in Galloway and even predates the arrival in the first half of the 5th century, of Bishop Nijenea (Ninian).

The first visit by the group was to the ancient site of Kirkmadrine, a site that rivals Whithorn as the earliest Christian centre in Northern Britain, its significance lies in the collection of Early Christian sculptures. These are displayed under glass, in the porch of the 19th century mausoleum, and include two 5th century Pillar Stones, one of late 6th century and others dating from the 8th to the 12th century. The oldest stone bears a latin inscription that translates:-

**“HERE LIES THE HOLY AND CHIEF PRIESTS (Bishops)
IDES VIVENTUIS AND MAORIUS”**

Above the circled cross are carved A O (Alpha and Omega)

The inscription on the other 5th century stone is badly eroded – S AND FLORENTIU



When first discovered in the 19th century, the three oldest pillar stones were serving as gateposts in the churchyard wall. The presence of these stones, indicate a Christian settlement of an early date. Kirkmaiden on the Mull of Galloway is another early Christian site (visited also on the Saturday). St Medena, after whom the parish is named, has another church of the same name across Luce Bay. Traditionally, the saint crossed to the Mull on a floating rock. Before the Reformation, this church, was served by the monks of Soulseat Abbey, (sited near Stranraer). After the Reformation, revenues from the dissolved abbeys were granted to local landowners. Part of the revenue from Soulseat was detailed for the building of new churches at Kirkmaiden and Portpatrick. An interesting note in the Kirkpatrick guide book mentions a monastery attached to the parish church. These monastic buildings stretched from the church steeple eastwards, across the road to the Downshire Arms Hotel. It is probable the monastery was served by monks from Soulseat.

By the 12th century, the great border abbeys were being built. Glenluce, founded by, Roland, Lord of Galloway, in 1190, was visited by the group on the Sunday morning. Of interest here are the impressive remains of the Chapter House with its ribbed vault that springs from a central shafted pier. Part of the original tiled floor still survives and stone benches are situated round the walls. Of interest to our group was examination of the medieval water pipes, including junction boxes, drains and tiles. These were protected with sheets of glass that allows the visitor to view this most interesting function of medieval plumbing. Our building experts delighted in imparting knowledge of the system, as well as pointing out how those early masons had fitted stones together.

A classic case of disposal of land after the Reformation, was the Glenluce Abbey

Lands of Park, situated south of the abbey. These lands were granted to the last Abbot of Glenluce through the patronage of the Cassillis family. The L - shaped tower house was built by a grandson of the last abbot towards the end of the 16th century. Stone robbed from the abbey was used in its construction. A stone plaque over the door says that work began in 1590 and that Thomas Hay of Park and his wife Janet MacDowell were responsible for it.

Sunday the 15th May was an Open Day at the Castle of Park, of course, C.F.S.S. members were obliged to take advantage of the opportunity to visit a rarely opened building. Needless to say we were given a very warm welcome.

From 1991, the Castle of Park has been leased by Historic Scotland to the Landmark Trust for holiday lets.

The whole of the 2005 weekend presented a range of different sites to visit and it was definitely a must that we should visit the Mull with its spectacular cliff scenery, newly opened RSPB Information Centre and the Lighthouse, (opened on Saturdays). Only two hardy members were brave enough to climb the stairs to the top for which they were rewarded with a certificate. The café, with its environmentally friendly grass roof was well patronised by the group.

The Sunday afternoon was earmarked for a walk round Portpatrick.

PORTPATRICK EARLY HISTORY- (gleaned from Portpatrick through the ages, R.R. Cunningham).

Portpatrick derives its name from St. Patrick, who according to legend, crossed the channel from Ireland in a single stride and left a deep footprint on a rock. The imprint was removed during construction of the harbour.

St Cuthbert is also reputed to have passed through Portpatrick, when as a babe, he is said to have crossed from Ireland with his mother, Sabina, in a currach and landed in Galweia.

The earliest known settlement was in stone-age times. Occasionally flint sherds have been found, often below the present-day seafront buildings on what was probably then the shoreline. A complete stone-age ring factory was found showing the whole sequence for making rings from the imported shale to the final polished product.

The early church, now a ruin, is a cruciform structure, with a round tower at the West end and it is reputed to have been built upon the site of the Celtic Chapel Patrick. The date 1629 is carved on one of the gables at the East end of the Church. The tower resembles a watchtower, and may also have been used as a light to guide boats into the harbour.

An unusual gravestone in the old churchyard bears the following inscription:-

“HANE DOMUN GUIELMUS DONALDSON
EXTRUXIT ANNO DOMINO MDCCLI
I THANK MY GOD FOR PO
VERTY FOR RICHES AND FOR
GAIN FOR GOD CAN MAKE
A RICH MAN POOR A POOR
MAN RICH AGAIN”.

The village, originally known as Portree (Portpatrick) in the 17th century, then belonged to the family of Adair of Kilhilt. Traditionally, Adair is said to have fled from Ireland and acquired the Portree estate in the 14th century. At that time Dunskey Castle was the stronghold of an outlawed pirate called Currie and the king said that whoever brought him Currie’s head would be granted the land and castle. Adair ambushed Currie, killed him with the sword, took the head to the King and thus gained Currie’s land. Adair built a castle at the place where the pirate was killed and called it Kilhilt. Adair administered his estates from Dunskey Castle.

DUNSKKEYCASTLE accessed from a footpath from the old quarry at the south end of the waterfront. Perched on a sea cliff, the ruins of this castle occupy a most spectacular coastal setting. On the landward side is a 15m. wide rock cut ditch. The ditch may have formed part of the earlier castle of the Adair family. The promontory on which the castle stands is enclosed with the remains of a circuit wall: vestiges of a watchtower lie at the western extremity, and foundations of a building, probably including a kitchen, adjoin the south angle of the tower. The nucleus of the tower was built in the 16th century, by William Adair of Kilhilt. By 1648 the castle began to fall into disrepair. Late in the 17th century it was decided to build a new residence and to abandon Dunskey Castle. The old building was robbed of cut stone, timber and other valuable materials.

From the 17th century the Blair Family ran the Dunskey estate. In 1770, Jane Blair, heiress, married James Hunter, M.P. for Edinburgh, who took the name Hunter-Blair. Their son succeeded to the estates in 1875, embraced the Roman Catholic faith and then handed the estate over to the Benedictine Order. From 1900 the ownership changed to C.L. Orr Ewing, whose second wife was a niece of David Hunter Blair. Orr- Ewing was responsible for many improvements in Portpatrick.

On the homeward journey a visit was made to the Creetown Gem Museum. The Museum has been much extended since our last visit and now includes an excellent tearoom. A Museum, that is well worth a visit.

As is usual on these occasions the group is provided with sites that may be visited should they so desire. A few members were fortunate enough to be in Girvan when the Paddle Steamer “The Waverley” entered the harbour and were fortunate enough to take advantage of a sail round the Ailsa Craig.

The group all arrived home safely, all voting this an excellent weekend.

Betty Roy

OVERTON CHURCH & SURROUNDING AREA

On Wednesday 18th May 05 the first walk of the summer season, the C.F.S.S. travelled to Tulliallan Farm, where we were met by Bill Wolsey, of Kincardine Historical Society, who was our guide for the evening.

The first place we visited was the memorial to Sir James Sivewright, a local, of the Victorian era, who made his name in South Africa. He became commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works in Cape Colony. The monument is an impressive structure, in the middle of a field, far from the road.

We then visited industrial workings of a bygone era in the Tulliallan estate. From there, another trek through a field to the Monks Well, a medieval watering hole, which is still in working order.

Highlight of the evening was a visit to Overton Church, a place of sanctuary in the middle of a wood. Unfortunately there is no roof on the building and the ingress of water has destroyed some of the stonework, and made some of the lettering on the tablets difficult to read. There were some very interesting gravestones in the yard including two believed to be Vikings.

We cannot express enough of our thanks to Bill Wolsey and Willie Anderson, giving of their time to make this a very interesting visit despite the inclement weather.

John Archibald

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT & ENVIRONS- 29th May 2005

Our visit to the Scottish Parliament was voted a success, but, like other groups, opinions as to the building's merits were mixed. After 300 years Scotland did require a building that would stand out among all others. This is certainly the case, it is different and embodies many designs and materials that are Scottish. To many of our group, the use of so much concrete in its construction did not please.

Our visit included a walk round the building, here we were able to assess the impact Mirallis' ideas would have on a group of ordinary people. There were lots of "wow", factors especially in the window patterns and the use of wrought iron that looked like trees. The amalgamation of the old with new (Queensberry House) added value to the whole.

QUEENSBERRY HOUSE – built in 1681, came into possession of the Duke of Queensberry. James, the Union Duke, was one of the Commissioners who conducted the Treaty of Union through the House of Commons. He was known to have accepted a bribe of £12,000 to push through the Treaty.

The signing of the Treaty of Union was not popular with many Scots, especially when they saw some of the leaders lining their own pockets. An extract from an old book reads – "In a cellar below the National Bank, at 179 High Street, immediately opposite the Tron Church, the Articles of Union between England and Scotland were finally signed. The Ceremony was commenced in an arbour behind Moray House, pursued by the infuriated mob, the Commissioners rushed up the High Street, and after one or two ineffectual attempts succeeded in signing the articles in this cellar.

An interesting feature is the Canongate Wall, part of the boundary wall that runs down to the foot of the Canongate. Set into the wall are stones from around Scotland, some with fossils, and some with quotations in English, Scots and Gaelic.

The Canongate, once a burgh in its own right, has many older buildings that are worthy of a visit. The Canongate Kirk, built in 1688 to house the congregation expelled from Holyrood Abbey when it was taken over by James VII (II of England) to be used as the chapel for the Order of the Thistle. Unfortunately we were unable to gain entry to the building as our date clashed with the meeting of General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. However the

Churchyard held many interesting burials, including Adam Smith father of political economy, Robert Fergusson, Poet, whose headstone was donated in 1787 by Robert Burns. Fergusson died at the tender age of 23 after being forced into the local madhouse during a bout of depression. Here, too, is buried Mrs Macle hose, Burn's "Clarinda".

The Canongate Tolbooth now houses THE PEOPLE'S STORY MUSEUM and was the original Headquarters of the burgh of Canongate's administration as well as the Courthouse and prison. The museum offers a fascinating insight into the lives of ordinary Edinburgh folk from the 16th century onwards. Opposite is the 16th century Huntley House, now a local history museum. Among the highlights is the original copy of the National Covenant of 1638 as well as the original plans for the building of the New Town. Both these museums have free admission.

Betty Roy

SIR JOHN DE GRAHAM OF DUNDAFF & CARRON RESERVOIR **25TH June 2005-11-04**

The June outing to Falkirk and the Carron area was ably conducted by Eddie Stewart.

In local parlance one often hears Falkirk pronounced as "Faw Kirk". The word "FAW" refers to the speckled appearance of the early Parish Kirk. The first stop of the day was the Parish Church where we were given a most interesting guided tour and where we sampled an excellent lunch. Being of an inquisitive and determined nature the CFSS group climbed to the top of the steeple. The unique organ and the bells took up our attention for some time. Installed around the 1920's and of American design, we tried our hand at manipulating the lettered rods to sound the appropriate bell above. With practice, we may have managed to produce a tune worth listening to.

The Churchyard retains some interesting monuments. Most of the stones here were transferred to Camelon in the 1960s on occasion of redevelopment of the town centre, leaving only a handful of stones of historic significance. The grave of Sir John de Graham who died at the Battle of Falkirk in July 22nd 1298 is surrounded by a decorative iron structure placed there in the 1860s. His son, Sir David, received the lands of Montrose for faithful service to Robert the Bruce. Two of Scotland's greatest generals have been provided by the

Grahams of Montrose – James Graham, 1st Marquis, led the war in Scotland on behalf of Charles 1st and John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, led the campaign for James VII. He fell at the Battle of Killcrankie in 1689. And it was the Marquis of Montrose, later Duke of Montrose, who moved the motion in Parliament to repeal the Act of Proscription of the Highland Dress passed in 1782.

Other monuments erected in commemoration of that fateful day in 1298 – a flat stone to Sir John Stewart of Bonkill and a tall granite cross, situated near the gate to the High Street, is dedicated to the men of Bute who fought alongside Sir John Stewart.

The afternoon part of the outing took us to the Carron Valley Reservoir and places of interest in the area. The reservoir was created in 1935 by flooding of the upper valley of the River Carron. The reservoir now provides a haven for wildlife and provides outdoor pursuits for visitors. Of interest, the dam contains a large population of Powan, a saltwater fish that is a relic of the last Ice Age, trapped within a fresh water lake when the ice retreated.

After a brief stop at Kirk o' Muir cemetery we continued westwards, at the head of the dam, we joined the unclassified road from where a short walk takes you to the site of Dundaff Castle. Little remains of the 13th century Motte & Bailey castle, except for the impressive mound and surrounding ditch. Some evidence of stonework also remains.

Dundaff was once the stronghold of Sir John de Graeme (Graham) who fought at Stirling Bridge in 1297, died fighting along side Sir William Wallace at the Battle of Falkirk in 1298. Sir William Wallace is said to have found refuge here after the Battle of Falkirk. The castle would have been virtually impregnable due to its situation high up in the Carron valley and terrain surrounding of bogs and rough ground.

C.F.S.S. Saturday outing to ST. SERFS' CHURCH DUNNING and PERTH GARDENS 30th July 2005.

On a fair morning we left the car park at the Alloa Medical Centre at the usual time for the first part of our journey to Dunning and St Serfs' Church and Tower. Of course the leader of the pack took the wrong turning at Fishcross. Fortunately it was easily rectified and no big detour was necessary. It was quite amusing really as we had everything meticulously planned and on paper and we still got it wrong. Any way we all arrived at St. Serfs' church on time.

Paul Jenkins of Historic Scotland gave an in depth talk on the building and, the focal point of the church The Dupplin Cross. The Church of St Serfs' was first mentioned in 1219. It came under the Abbey of Inchaffrey (near Madderty), which was founded by Earl Gilbert of Strathearn and witnessed by Anechal, Thane of Dunning and founder of the surname 'Dunning'.

The present tower was probably built mid 13th century and a single storey medieval church with nave and chancel built on to it. There was probably an older church or chapel on site because the remains of an older doorway (Saxon style) on the north wall. The altar would be at the East end of the chancel – all churches were built on an East – West orientation with the altar in the East.

The Church remained the same until after the Reformation. In 1687 saw a gallery built over the chancel and alter (the Lairds' gallery). The date can be seen above the doorway at the head of the stairs on the east wall. The initials are of Lord Andrew Rollo and Lady Margaret Balfour, his wife and daughter of the third Lord Burleigh. The Altar or pulpit was moved to the West beside the tower.

Early 1700's saw a move to increase the size of the church. This did not happen until 1780/90 when a plan was produced, at the behest of Lord Rollo, for a new villiage, as Dunning had been burnt to the ground by the Jacobites in 1716.

In the mid 1800's a Pictish stone was unearthed from the floor of the Church during repairs. The stone dates from around 900 A.D. and is on display in the church.

The Tower has a chime of two bells, the oldest, 22 inches in diameter was cast in Belguim in 1526. The other more modern is larger at 38 inches in diameter

given to the Parish Church of Dunning, by Mark Howard Drummond of Kelty, Major of the 72nd Regiment, or Albany Highlander, August 23rd 1825.

The Dupplin Cross:- The focal point of the visit to the Church. The Cross stood in a field on the North side of the Earn, overlooking the ancient Pictish capital of Forteviot. It is freestanding of old red sandstone 8ft.7ins.high and 3ft.1ins.wide across the arms. It is heavily ornamented on all four sides with spiral work, square and diagonal key patterns and interlaced work, surrounding figures of men animals and birds.

The cross was estimated to date from the 9th Century. A cast was made in 1990 for an exhibition in Edinburgh and the blank panel on the west face reveals seven lines of Latin which connects the Cross with Constantine rather than Kenneth MacAlpine as had been previously thought. It is now thought that the Cross may have been erected by Kenneth or one of his sons as an apt dedication to Constantine, a Pictish King, who like Kenneth himself had ruled both nations, the Picts and the Scots.

It was ruled by the Secretary of State for Scotland, that the stone should be taken into care of Historic Scotland, due to its deterioration, where it was restored. After a stay in the new Museum of Scotland it was returned to Strathearn in St. Serf's Church in Dunning in the care of Historic Scotland.

After a tour round the Church Graveyard we embarked for our next port of call, Cherrybank Gardens home of the Scottish National Heather Collection.

When we arrived the first stop was the visitor centre for a coffee and a scone. A very interesting walk round the garden followed, claiming 50,000 plants and over 900 varieties of heathers. A game of putting ensued with members trying out their skill with a club and a ball. After the putting, a trip round the stepping – stones at the acoustic pool without any mishaps. The aviary came next to view the budgies, cockatiels and finches etc. Finally a few members tried their musical talents on the tubular bells. A very versatile lot, these C.F.S.S. members! We must not forget the juniors, who were with us, who participated in the competition to find various flowers with the reward of a packet of sweets at the end.

All assembled, we made off through Perth to the other side of the Tay, to the Norrie Millar Park, Rodney Gardens and Bellwood Riverside Park. On arrival it was a case of having lunch in the beautiful setting of Bellwood Park enjoying

the sunshine. Lunch over it was a case of meandering along the many paths which formed the sculpture trail which blended with the setting out of the beautiful gardens. Norrie – Millar Park, was originally sponsored by the General Accident Insurance Co. in memory of the founders of that company. In these pleasant surroundings is the remains of Kinnoul Aisle, which was unfortunately closed when we were there. Of course there was a graveyard, which attracted C.F.S.S. members. There was no move by the members to try out the Rodney Fitness Centre, which was next to the graveyard.

The fourth and final part of the day out was a visit to the Branklyn Gardens. A comparatively short distance from our previous stop over. Owned and managed by the N.T.S. for Scotland it was a myriad of colour and contrasting foliage. According to one of the brochures it describes it as the finest 2 acres of private garden in the country. An oasis of peace and colour is a real urban haven. Created in the 1920's by husband and wife John and Dorothy Renton from an old orchard. There foresight in design was an outstanding creation.

After a good look round it was a case of returning to the shop to look at the plants for sale and thoughts going through our minds, can I have a garden like this?

Around 4.30pm it was time to say farewell to the gardens of Perth and make our way home having had a very enjoyable day. The weather was very kind to us also.

Jack & Sadie Archibald

C.F.S.S. visit to LOCH LEVEN on Saturday 27th August 2005

KINROSS HOUSE

The House was built by Sir William Bruce between 1686 and 1693. Bruce owned Loch Leven Castle but wanted the very latest in architectural fashions. He was the designer of The Palace of Holyroodhouse for Charles the second. He planned the House so that the view down the main avenue gave a vista straight on to the ancient castle on the island. The castle was a ruin at this time. This was near the beginning of the period when buildings were being sited to give a view onto a ruin.

Unfortunately, the Montgomery family who own the house do not permit visitors inside.

LOCH LEVEN CASTLE

It should be appreciated that the Loch level is now much lower than was the case before 1826. The lowering of the level was done by means of a man made scheme. The water used to come up nearly to the outer castle wall. The island is now about three times its original size. The old stone in front of the steward's office was once used as a post to tie boats up to. It is not known who built the original castle. Possibly, the English built the first fortifications on the island during Edward the first's invasion of Scotland in 1296, the year before Wallace decisively defeated them at the battle of Stirling Bridge.

Robert the Bruce stayed on the island in 1313. He had prisoners held there in 1316.

After King Robert's death, the English were at it again, invading Scotland. Loch Leven was one of only five castles in Scottish hands for King David the second. In 1335 the English governor of Edinburgh castle, led a determined attack on the castle, but was beaten off by the Scottish defenders, under constable Alan Vipont. In 1368-9 King David imprisoned two of his nephews at the castle. They were Robert Stewart and his son Alexander.

Loch Leven castle ceased to be a Royal castle in 1390 when Robert the second granted it to Sir Henry Douglas (who later became 6th Earl of Morton), the son of Sir John Douglas who had been one of the garrison who saved the castle from the English in 1335. The Douglas family remained in charge of the castle until the 1600's.

It was the 4th Earl of Morton (Regent of Scotland) who spent much time at Loch Leven castle. He was executed in 1581.

In 1672 Sir William Bruce of Balcaskie bought the ruined castle and then built Kinross House on the mainland. After several owners, the castle came into the State in 1939.

Loch Leven Castle is best known as the one time prison of Mary Queen of Scots. Her jailer was Sir William Douglas and she spent nearly a year there before being helped to escape by Willie Douglas, who looked after the boats. She fled to the west of the country but after her followers were defeated at the battle of Langside, she went to her cousin, Queen Elizabeth of England who imprisoned her and eventually had her executed.

VANE FARM NATURE RESERVE

The centre and reserve are owned and managed by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

At the time of our visit we should look out for the ducks on the wetland and ospreys over the loch. Also pink footed geese and whooper swans are returning to the loch from Iceland. We should see wading birds on the mud

and wetlands. The rowan trees will be laden with berries and a large variety of butterflies are all around the centre.

The large island out in the loch is St. Serf's island.

Should you be feeling hungry, breathing in all the fresh air here, food is available from the café in the observation room.

Bob Snaddon

C.F.S.S. visit to PRESTON ISLAND on Wednesday 17th August 2005

The last event of the summer was to Preston Island on the river Forth in the Torry Burn, Valleyfield area organised by Eddie Stewart with one of Fife Council Rangers being the guide and Scottish Power supplying the transport.

We journeyed by car to the Scottish Power site at Torryburn (where the Fife Rangers Service have a cabin) and met with our guide for the evening. After explaining plans for the evening we boarded a minibus to Preston Island. As we had to travel through the P.F.A. recovery area (P.F.A. being Pulverised Fuel Ash) where Scottish Power has reclaimed land by utilising the waste from Longannet Power Station. Quite a fascinating place, we were given the know how of the operation.

On reaching Preston Island (which is no longer an island due to the land reclamation) we found a very well kept site.

In 1800 Sir Robert Preston inherited the Valleyfield Estate on the death of his brother, the Prestons being a prominent family in the area, since 1534. A self-made man, who had made his fortune with East India Company, also the captain of the trading vessel Asia. His brainchild, being the development of coal mining and salt panning on Preston Island.

Fife Council has recently excavated the site, which consisted of a sea wall, three coal shafts and a triple salt pan complex with great chimneys. There are four stone built houses arranged in pairs one above the other to provide permanent accommodation for the workers. The remains are still visible on the island of steamed powered winding engine houses associated with the George and Lady Ann Pits. It was noted that the remains of the buildings were built of

first class stone and no expense seems to have been spared in their construction.

The project at Preston Island only lasted 50 years. Sir Robert died in 1834 credited as being one of Scotland's first industrialists with Preston Island being a monument to his vision. He also spent a lot of money refurbishing Valley Field house the family seat.

We must thank Fife Ranger Service for giving us an insight into a bygone industrial age.

Jack Archibald

SNIPETS FROM WARTIME HISTORY, 1939—1945 –William McLaughlan

THE BLACKOUT

Every house in the country had to have blackout blinds or curtains, not even a glimmer of light was allowed to escape. Lights had to be switched off in the home before opening the door. Wardens patrolled the streets, if they saw a light of any kind they would shout "PUT THAT LIGHT OUT". The few vehicles on the road had to mask their headlights and the buses had to have blinds on the windows. Conductresses collected the fares, they peered out the front window through a hole in the blind which was covered with a swivelled patch and shouted out the next stop.

I was an apprentice joiner with a wage of ten shillings (50p) a week, I cycled five miles, twice a week to attend evening classes in the town. Our bicycle lamps had to have a mask whereby the light shown down onto the road a yard in front of you (914 cms). One night I forgot to switch off the lamp when going into the class and when I came out the battery was poor and the light dim. When I reached our village, the light was pretty dim, so the local policeman stopped me a hundred yards (the length of a football pitch) from my house, he knew who I was and where I lived and where I had come from but still charged me with cycling without lights. I had to attend court in the town and was fined two shillings and sixpence (12.5p) – a quarter of my weeks wages.

NATIONAL SERVICE

In 1942 when I was eighteen I had to report to the Recruitment office as I was being conscripted into the Forces for National Service. I was asked if I had any

preference as to which branch of the services I wished to join. Having no preference I was informed that Signalmen were required for the Royal Navy. I was IN after having passed the test.

I had to report to “HMS COLLINGWOOD”, the Naval Signals Training School near Portsmouth. The normal course was three years but for War Time training it was condensed into six months.

As this was a visual signals course most of the training was out of doors in all weathers. During a hot summer, I being red- haired, got severe sunburn. After two days in sick bay I was back in class, though requiring to wear full uniform and even had a piece of white gauze, (like the French legionaires), under my hat to protect my skin from the sun. Full uniform was uncomfortable in the hot summer sun, how I envied the others dressed in shorts and short-sleeved shirts.

D-DAY

D-Day was planned for 5th June, 1944, on the 4th we loaded up with five self-propelled 25 pounder guns, mounted on tank chassis. We tied up to a buoy in the middle of the Solent to await the signal to move out. The signal to move out finally came on the afternoon of the 5th. As we were sailing down stream, a Cruiser near the mouth of the harbour signalled to each craft as it passed “GOOD LUCK”. We signalled back “WE DON’T RELY ON LUCK”.

Our orders were to proceed to a rendezvous south of the Isle of Wight and there open sealed orders detailing where we were to go. We sailed into the English Channel in convoy heading for France.

We sailed all night, the sea was pretty rough and the poor army guys were sick all over the place. Just before daylight, about a mile off the French coast, the signal came to open fire. Our five guns opened fire, pounding the beach, there were two Destroyers also firing on the beach and two rocket ships (these were converted landing craft loaded with hundreds of rockets). All these created a lot of noise and pyrotechnics. We continued firing until we were about half a mile or so from the beach then turned and came back out to sea. This was to allow the Beach parties to land to clear the beach and also to allow the self propelled gun crews time to unshackle their guns and prepare for landing.

On the second run an enemy gun was giving us bother and I was ordered to signal the destroyer – “Enemy white house half way up the hill”, a couple of minutes later there was a flash from the destroyer, a puff of smoke at the white house and the gun was silenced. About two hundred yards from shore we dropped anchor, these were special anchors that allowed us to anchor in shallow water. Of the four other

craft, the one on the extreme right was hit by a mortar, or blown up by a land mine. Our orders were to off load as soon as possible and return to Southampton, load up and head back to France.

The R.A.F. had black and white stripes painted on the underside of their planes, Spitfires etc., for easy recognition (like a zebra crossing). On our second visit to France we were on the beach when enemy aircraft came over with black and white markings on the underside of their planes and started shooting. We and every other craft fired back, luckily we had no casualties but after that any aircraft that came near was shot at. We travelled back and forth for two or three weeks, delivering various Army and R.A.F. units to their allotted beaches, then the storm came.

At this time “Mulberry Harbour” was being created, they towed old ships and huge concrete structures across the channel and sank them in an arc about a mile off shore to form a breakwater. Merchant ships were able to anchor behind this breakwater and unload into small landing craft, which took the goods ashore. We were told to join this operation, as it was too rough for the small craft. Our fresh rations soon ran out and we were on emergency “Compo Packs” – these were mostly tinned meat, dried milk etc., but no bread. Instead there were tins of “hard tack” biscuits, each in the shape of a “Scottie” dog and had Spratts stamped on it. We assumed they were made in a dog biscuit factory and hoped the formula was different. We tried biting them, we soaked them over night, we tried boiling them – all no use, still hard. We tried crushing them with a hammer, but cook got “tennis elbow”, we gave up on the biscuits. We did manage to get the ingredients to make bread from a passing merchant ship. Needless to say no one knew the correct amount of yeast to flour required. We only required a few loaves, though the recipe was for two hundred loaves, so we decided to guess the amount. We put the flour into the Dixie with the yeast and waited for it to rise, it did, but kept on rising. We divided into another Dixie, but both amounts kept on rising, no matter what we did the dough kept on rising. Eventually we gave up and ditched the lot over the side, we didn’t get a loaf but I bet there were a lot of French fish with indigestion for a few days.

Our craft was damaged beyond repair during the storm and decommissioned, the crew dispersed and it was back to barracks for me. From then on I was transferred from place to place doing mainly menial tasks. I was eventually demobbed in 1945 under “class B”, being a joiner I was required in the rebuilding of Britain.

It was then that I found out that because of the bad sunburn during my early training my papers were marked “Unfit for Foreign Service” and that was the reason for all my unusual jobs.

William McLaughlan