

Exploring the effects of the past on the present and future of our community

Bonnyseen

The **free** magazine from Greenhill Historical Society

Issue Number 6 DATE April 2013





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Introduction

Phil Swierczek

Welcome to the sixth edition of the Bonnyseen Magazine. We hope you enjoy the range of stories, memories and photographs we have included this time around. Grateful thanks to all who have contributed to what we hope you will agree is another interesting journey through Bonnybridge's past.

The outside covers of this edition commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the opening of the Community Centre which was celebrated in March 2013. The front cover has a photograph of the site as it originally was with the Smith and Wellstood huts in view and the back cover shows the display that the Historical Society prepared for that day. The banner in the background is from the Greenhill Community Resource Centre which closed several years ago but, as this is where the Greenhill Historical Society had its roots, we thought it was an appropriate backdrop.

Our thanks are also extended once more to the Awards for All Big Lottery fund as they have generously sponsored two editions of Bonnyseen.

Corrections

In the last edition it was incorrectly stated that Margaret MacDougall's sisters went to Broomhill School when in fact they went to Greenhill School. Also that the cigarette factory was in the now vacated council office building but was in fact located where Clan Storage is now. Please accept our sincere apologies for these errors.

Obituary

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Annie Strand at the age of 101. Annie kindly gave us permission to publish her fascinating memories of Bonnybridge which were published in a previous edition of Bonnyseen. Our sincere condolences to her friends and family.

WHERE TO FIND US



**GREENHILL
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

www.greenhillhistoricalsociety.org.uk
or
greenhillhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Meetings The Society meets every Friday in the Scout Hall at the Community Centre from 2pm till 4pm and all are welcome to join us.

DO YOU KNOW ...

WILLIAM PARKER

We are looking for all types of information regarding the following:

1. Anyone who participated in or has any memories and for memorabilia regarding the Fox Hunt which went across the Bonnybridge district countryside.
2. Any memories etc of women who served in the Forces or who worked in Bonnybridge district during the Second World War.
3. Photographs of individual or family tombs, tombstones, and graves, graveyards, statues, plaques, plinths etc. and also old buildings in the Bonnybridge area, which are now demolished.
4. Any sporting memories/ memorabilia, cups, medals, awards, photos, etc. for team or individual activities. Golf, tennis, table-tennis, cricket, fishing, athletics, etc especially football. Any information relating to Bonnybridge Star, Bonnybridge Amateurs, church and school teams particularly Bonnybridge Juniors F.C. would be greatly appreciated.
5. Films, Videos, Cassettes, D.V.Ds, Photographs etc about Bonnybridge – any aspect.
6. School photos – class or individual, prizes, dux medals, awards, certificates etc., from schools, colleges, universities. School teachers' names are also sought especially from Castlecary Primary and Broomhill Primary (High Bonnybridge) Schools.
7. Any information about either the River Bonny or the Forth and Clyde Canal bursting their banks and causing flooding in the area.
8. Photographs of the wooden hutted houses in Paterson Place and any prefab houses in Bonnybridge.

RATS' FLITTING

THOMAS RINTOUL

Following on from the questions in the last issue we have this interesting reply-

What would you consider to be the most frightening sight that you have every seen?

I'll tell you what my experience was:

In the mid 1960's, probably 1965 or 1966, I was a young policeman on night shift in Denny. About four o'clock one morning I was driving south on Glasgow Road near to the junction with Little Denny Road when I saw what appeared to be the whole width of Little Denny Road moving. Glasgow Road started to move from side to side and the movement extended up towards the corner of Cruickshank's Foundry and down toward the town.

No I had not been drinking!

I stopped the van but did not get out. I looked at the road and realised what was taking place. It is something that very few people will ever have seen – it was a RATS' FLITTING. The reason that I knew about this was that I came from a farming background and had heard my father and grandparents speaking about this situation.

There was and still is a row of four houses on the east side of Glasgow Road at this point and entrances at either end of the wall at these houses. The rats moved forward and split into two groups and went either side of the block of houses. They then went over the wall at the back of the houses and on to the farmland beyond, possibly to set up home in the stack yards at these farms. There must have been several thousand rats in the flitting because it took some time; possible 15-20 minutes for all the rats to cross the road and go around the houses.

When a rats' flitting takes place no one is left behind and if the old, young, ill, and infirm rats are unable to walk they are carried on the back of other rats while blind rats take hold of the tail of another rat in their mouth and it is led on its journey to another place.

Whilst the colony of rats move en masse nothing will stop its forward movement but if the colony is split for some reason, such as a physical obstruction, like a building, they will join up again once they have passed the building.

At this time the houses for the 'Glasgow overspill' families were being built at the top of the spine road and it necessitated the demolition of Blaefaulds Farm and stack yard there and I believe that this is where these rats came from.

CARONNA TERRACE

MAE BLACKWELL

The following picture was taken of the children at Caronna Terrace, Bonnybridge in 1936 or 1937 :



LEFT TO RIGHT - BACK ROW

Duncan Wilcox; Tommy Wilcox;
John McKeever; ? Hawthorn;
Allan Cairns

MIDDLE ROW

Winnie Gibson; Peggy Connor;
? O'Donnell; Sarah Wilcox;
Irene Cairns; Kathleen McKeever

FRONT ROW

Edith Grinlay; Tom Grinlay (in
pram); Mary McKeever,
Allan Ogilvie

Can anyone help us to identify the missing names?

RECIPES

SUGAR FREE FRUIT CAKE IN LARGE SAUCEPAN

500 grams Mixed Fruit
425 gram Tin Mangos (Crushed)
½ Cup Water

Mix and boil for 2 minutes, allow to cool then add 1½ Teaspoons Bicarbonate of Soda. Cover and leave in fridge overnight. Then add 1½ cup S/R Flour and 1½ Teaspoon Mixed Spice and mix well. Bake 190C for 1 hour in 8" Loaf Tin.



QUEEN BUNS (Bake as Scones)

¼ lb. Butter Unsalted
¼ lb. Sugar
3 Eggs
7 oz. S/R Flour and 1 Teaspoon Baking Powder
Pinch Salt



Cream Butter and Sugar, add Eggs (Beaten) then dry ingredients, add Milk and mix in Currents and Peel. If liked Bake 180C for 20 mins. or till Golden.

FRANK'S FACTS

FRANK WALTON

- 1751 TURNPIKE ROAD ACT**
As a result of the passing of the Turnpile Road Act in 1751, toll keepers had to be employed at the tollbars; one at Bonnybridge Toll and one at Seabegs on the road to Castlecary.
- 1770 MINING**
Carron Iron Company was mining iron ore in the valley of the Bonny as early as 1770.
- 1768 FORTH & CLYDE CANAL**
Work on the canal began on 10th July, 1768 and opened from the Firth of Forth at Grangemouth to the Firth of Clyde at Bowling on 28th July, 1790.
- 1836 DISTILLING AND CHEMICAL WORKS**
Broomhill Distillery was mentioned in the Falkirk Almanac in 1836. As early as 1836 – James Binnie had a chemical works at Broomhill Road, Bonnybridge.
- 1863 BONNYBRIDGE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY.**
The Co-operative had its beginning at a public meeting on Monday 6th April, 1863.
- 1870 POLICE**
By 1870 a policeman had been stationed in Bonnybridge.
- 1870 SHOOTING**
Before 1870 there was a group called the 6th Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteers in Bonnybridge.
- 1870 BANDS**
The Bonnybridge Band was first formed in 1870 and it was called The Bonnybridge Foundry Band.
- 1875 BOWLING**
The oldest Bowling Club in the Vale of Bonny is Bonnybridge Bowling Club which was opened on 3rd September, 1875.
- 1875 FOOTBALL**
The first senior association football club in Stirlingshire was the famous Bonnybridge Grasshoppers Football Club which was formed on 6th September, 1875.
- 1884 GREENHILL SCHOOL**
The school was opened on 9th September, 1884.

THE SHOEMAKER

HAZEL WYLE

Whilst looking for information on Charles Grindlay of Seabegs, I came across another man with the same name. This Charles Grindlay was a shoemaker. Since I heard the group members talking about 'the Victorian boot' I decided to find out more about this man as he seems to have been the only shoemaker in Bonnybridge, at least from the 1841 through to 1871 censuses. In those days, shoes and boots would have been made to order.

Charles was born about 1795 in Falkirk but since the family were in Bonnybridge a long time, I think he must have been born here. I discovered he had a sister called Christina, who was born in 1797 and never married. She was living with her father, Walter, and brother, William, both farm labourers, and the address is merely 'Bonnybridge Village'. Walter was born about 1766 and William about 1796. By 1851, Christina is still with Walter but they are both receiving Parish relief.

Meanwhile, Charles is living with his wife, Jane Drummond whom he married in 1819. This was probably after he had finished his apprenticeship as he was 24 years old. Charles and Jane had about 10 children, however, Jane died on 13th March 1859 and Charles' sister Christina moved in to look after him, their father being deceased by this time too. Christina died on the 14th November 1868 in Bonnybridge. Her death record shows that her mother was Elizabeth Young and her father had been a 'carrier'.

(Walter Grindlay and Elizabeth Young married on the 13th May 1787 at Falkirk)



Illustration of an 18th Century Shoemaker

In 1871, Charles is residing at the Toll Bar and still working as a shoemaker at the ripe old age of 76. He now has his widowed daughter Margaret, living with him as well as Margaret's daughter Marion who was born in Cumbernauld, Dunbartonshire and is about 10 years old. There is also a man called John Renton boarding with them. He is 76 and from Auchtermuchty, Fife, and working as a 'points man on the railway'.
(Margaret re-married a John Renton Adams who was also from Fife and was the Stationmaster at Killin).

Charles died 15th September 1877 in Bonnybridge; he lived a long life and made shoes all of his working days. I have not found any other shoemaker in Bonnybridge. He must have had a reasonably successful business although he never left a will.

Whether or not he made the boot which was discovered will, perhaps, never be known but since he was the only shoemaker in Bonnybridge and spanning decades within which that shoe would have been made, it is entirely possible that he did make it.

DO YOU REMEMBER?



BROOMHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
(High Bonnybridge)

Head Teacher
Ms. Thorburn

Teachers/Staff



BONNYBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Head Teachers
Mr Stark, Gray, Tait, Spence

Teachers
Miss Ross x2 (Wee and Big) Welsh,
Learmonth, Ms Paterson, Brodie,
Alexander, Kelly, Mr Beveridge

Janitors
Mr Proffit, Mr Petrie



CASTLECARY PRIMARY SCHOOL
(Nr. Allandale)

Teachers
Miss Stark, Miss Lovie



DENNYLOANHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL (from the Air)

Head Teachers
Mr Hunt, Mr Cook

Teachers
Ms Davies, Wilson, Tamer, Bennie, Davey,

Dinner Lady and Auxiliary
Munn x2

Lollipop Man
Mr Jim Hamilton

these old Schools and some Teachers and Staff

WILLIAM PARKER

GREENHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL (from the Air)

Head Teachers

Mr Ireland, McGregor, Binnie, Kinghorn, Deans

Teachers

Ms Thomson, Adams, Buick, Dowie, Fulton, Batchelor, Irvine, Gillies, Graham, Mathieson, Arkinson, Hamilton, Mr Monkman



ST JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL (High Bonnybridge)

1950's STAFF

Head Teacher

Mr Flynn

Teachers

Ms Reilly (Dr. Riley's sister), Durkin, Notrey, Linah (O'Brien)

Lollipop Man

Mr McOmish



1960's/63/64 STAFF

Head Teacher

Mr Healy

Teachers

Ms Reilly, Armstrong, Herlihy, Moonan, Hudson, McFarlane, Clarke, Docherty, O'Brien

Today's Janitor – Mr Jim Miller, shares his duties between Antonine Primary and St Joseph's Primary Schools

DENNY HIGH SCHOOL

Many pupils from Bonnybridge and District went to the Denny Public School (Secondary) which is shown here before the new High School was built.



*We are looking for any Teachers, Staff, Head Teachers, etc. for all Local Schools especially Broomhill and Castlecary Primary Schools. Any information about any School within the District and Catchment area – Primary or Secondary, would be greatly appreciated and used, **Thank-you.***

Residents in Bonnybridge



According to the records available, there seems to have been 86 individuals residing in Bonnybridge in 1841. There may be other people however but the town is not actually recorded as a town but falls under the Parish of Denny. Bonnybridge was only found, using that name, as a street address.

The 1841 Census has very little information and the indexes are often misspelled which makes searching rather difficult. There will, in all likelihood, be omissions from the following.

Surnames in the area:-

Aitken, Baird, Barnes, Barie, Bayer, Brown, Burns, Clark, Forrest, Forrester, Gibb, Grindlay, Lamb, Lean, McAlpin, McInzie (*sic*), Miahie (*sic*), Muir, Reddugh, Reid, Robertson, Smillie, Thomson, Ure, Walker.

Occupations listed:-

Wright, Lab C W, Miller, Labourer, Housekeeper, Carter, F S (female servant), Mason, Publican, Brick Maker, Agricultural Labourer, Shawl Weaver, Shoe Maker, Smith, Labourer L W.

The "C W" and "L W" after the labourer possibly refer to them being weavers, perhaps cotton and linen.

George Miahie and Agnes Burns were both publicans so it looks as if there were two public houses in Bonnybridge in 1841.

There were 24 residents who showed up under the address of Greenhill. These were living at Easter Greenhill, Wester Greenhill, and Shawfield Greenhill. The occupations were farmer, female and male servants and a manager at a coal work.

Nothing showed up under Allandale.

More research will be undertaken to build family trees for those mentioned above. From further census material, it will be possible to discover where these people were actually born but most were only listed as being in Stirlingshire or Scotland in 1841 and from a brief look at 1851, most of the people in Bonnybridge were incomers. There would also be an influx of migrant workers due to the canals and railways but a lot of these folk would have "been and gone" before 1841 and they fall in between the 10 year gap in the censuses.

Statistical tables will be produced from the information and, will hopefully, be available at some point in the archives of GHS.

- 1841 Census

HAZEL WYLE

CHARLES GRINDLAY – Horse Thief

Another Charles Grindlay from Bonnybridge has been found due to his dubious life.

This Charles was convicted for horse stealing on the 20th April 1812, in Stirling and was sent to Australia for fourteen years. He was a Millwright and his address was Bonnyhill, Stirlingshire. His age was given as 34 which means he was born c.1778. On another document he was recorded as being 32 and, therefore, born 1780. He was further recorded as being a Millwright and Carpenter.

He was received on board a ship moored at Woolwich, England, called Retribution on the 24th August 1812. He arrived in Sydney, Australia, on board the Earl Spencer on the 9th October 1813.



Convicts on board ship

He obviously survived the journey but did he survive penal servitude in Australia?



Did he remain in Australia or did he return to Scotland?

Perhaps he died or moved to another country. What became of him from his arrival is unknown.....for now!

Panto “The little Minister”

The picture below was taken of the cast, during the performance held in the Bonnybridge Public Hall. Please contact Greenhill Historical Society if you have any further information on this photograph. Do you know any of the characters?





WESTER MILL EVICTION

HAZEL WYLE

Wester Mill Eviction

The Petitioner was Charles Grindlay and the Respondent was Andrew McAra. In 1852, the infamous Charles Grindlay, of Seabegs, petitioned the Court of Session to have Andrew McAra evicted from the Wester Mill. McAra was a wholesale grocer of 8 & 10 Main Street, Gorbals, Glasgow.

Charles wanted him ejected from the Wester Mill and to have it put back to its original condition as a Barley Mill. He also wanted permission to break in and take possession and to have all of McAra's possessions 'laid by public road'.

Andrew McAra took possession of the Mill shortly after Martinmass 1851 on lease from Charles Grindlay and McAra used it as a 'teasing mill'.

'The petitioner is tenant, under the Earl of Zetland, of the Wester Mill, at or near Seabegs Place'.

By the time this went to court, one of McAra's arguments was that he was not in possession but a Mr. Smith was at the time the action was brought. Stated in the court documents (SC66/7/1852/1) Fact 1 – Defendant entered possession 3rd or 4th February 1852 as a subtenant of Pursuer. Fact 2 – No written lease but tenancy was for 1 years and repairs to roof, 1st floor and mill lead were to be made. Fact 3 – that it was a barley mill until it was used for teasing rags.

McAra was to carry out the repairs at his own expense at the expiry of his lease as well as returning it to its former use as a barley mill. This seems to be where the argument began! McAra wanted Charles to repay the costs of repairs as he had 'conveyed his whole interest in the mill' to Mr. James Smith, rag merchant in Glasgow.

The mill, held by 'the pursuer' was on lease from the Earl of Zetland for £35 per annum, including a small house attached. Charles had used it as a Barley Mill previously.

McAra was a tad miffed and inserted a statement in the Falkirk Herald dated 21st October 1852:

“ NOTICE ”

**“The subscriber ceased, on 20th September last,
to have any interest in the
WESTER MILL, Bonnybridge by Denny.
Andrew McAra, 68 Surrey Street, Glasgow.”**

GOLD BRACELET FOUND AT BONNYSIDE in 1852

SHEENA LAMBIE



In 1852 the Cowden Hill area and Bonnyside Road would probably have been known as Bonnyside Moor. Working here as a labourer on the new tramway being built from Bonnyside Brickworks to the Forth & Clyde Canal John Duffie or Duffin was toiling away at his work when he found a Gold coloured bracelet. I wonder how he must have felt when he found it and could he have known that it was real Gold dating from the Bronze Age and over 3000 years old? I doubt it.

He would not have known that it was Treasure Trove belonging to the Crown and that he should have reported his find. But others did know and, according to stories, his find was reported to the authorities some months later and Mr Duffie was sent to prison for not reporting it. I have done some research to see if this is true and as of yet I have found no proof one way or the other, but will update if I find out more.

As nothing is known about the actual spot where the bracelet was found, we can only guess how it came to be there. Present-day Bonnybridge would probably then have been an area of farmland with small farms of timber round houses set among the fields. It is just possible that the bracelet was lost or mislaid. However, what we know of other finds suggests that it is much more likely that the bracelet was placed in the ground deliberately. In the days before banks and safe-deposit boxes, property was often buried for protection against thieves and enemies. But some objects were probably never intended for recovery and may have been buried as offerings to the gods. Another possibility is that the bracelet was with a burial, which simply wasn't noticed at the time of discovery. Gold ornaments are not usually found with burials, but similar bracelets and rings are said to have been found, in the early 19th century, with an urn and burnt bones near Duff House at Banff.

This type of ornament is usually known as a pen-annular bracelet. The term pen-annular simply means that there is an opening instead of a complete ring. Various forms of bracelet are known. In this case, the bracelet has been made from an unusually thick bar of gold, which has been worked into the required shape after casting. The hoop is round in cross-section and plain at the ends.

During the later Bronze Age, communities in some parts of Scotland appear to have had far-flung geographical links. There was a network of contacts between Scotland, England, Ireland and continental Europe. Personal ornaments of many different types are found all over Europe at this time: they vary from region to region. What we can say is that the Bonnyside bracelet is of a form best known in Ireland. It may very well have been made from Irish gold and manufactured there. However, we cannot rule out the possibility of gold from a Scottish source. Although the source of the gold used in the bracelet is not certain at present, future research may be able to throw more light on its origin. The bracelet, shown above, is currently on display in The National Museum, Edinburgh.

Colonel ROBERT SMITH

MICHAEL McMAHON



Colonel Robert Smith



James Smith



President Jefferson Davies

Colonel Robert Smith, the brother of James Smith, one of the founders of Smith and Wellstood Iron Foundry in Bonnybridge, was a distinguished colonel in the 10th Mississippi Infantry. He and his brother James were also friends of Jefferson Davies the President of the Confederate States during the American Civil War which was caused by the southern states seceding from the Union.

One of his first company's assignments was to take Jefferson Davies to Montgomery Alabama for his inauguration as President of the Southern States. Colonel Smith fought in quite a few battles and skirmishes and had been promoted to colonel before the regiment fought in the battle of Shiloh in 1862 where he was conspicuous for his gallantry. Then came that fateful day of September 14th 1852 when he was involved in a battle to take the fortified position at Munfordville Kentucky. During the battle he was shot several times and died a few days later from his wounds. His sister Herriot (Mrs Charles Dudley) took a wagon across Federal lines and brought his body back to Jackson Mississippi where he was buried. His brother James later travelled from Scotland to the site of his death on the battlefield and had a monument erected in his memory. There is also a monument to his memory in the Dean Cemetery in Edinburgh.

After his release from custody in 1869, President Jefferson Davies came to visit the Smith family at Benvue, their home at 12 Dowanhill Gardens, Glasgow. He was very well received there by his good friend James Smith and his family. Sadly, it is not known if President Davies ever visited the Smith and Wellstood Foundry in Bonnybridge.

OBITUARY

FINLAY MacLACHLAN



The last of the MacLachlan brothers, celebrated in song and story as The Pipers of Allandale, has died within weeks of his 93rd birthday. Finlay MacLachlan, whose health had declined in recent years, passed away peacefully in an Australian nursing home.

It was half a world away from the humble red sandstone cottage that was home to Finlay, his parents and their 13 other children in the 1930s. His father Malcolm and some of Finlay's eight brothers worked at nearby Stein's Refractory brick factory. Allandale is a site of special architectural and historic interest for its two rows of cottages purpose-built to house the workers.

The MacLachlan parents kept up the ceilidh tradition when they moved to Scotland's central belt from Argyll. Finlay's elder brother Malcolm, nicknamed "Pipey", taught his brothers and other young men in the village to play the bagpipes, forming the backbone of the Allandale Pipe Band. In 1938, they triumphed as world champions at the Cowal Games.



When war broke out, the band marched as a body to Bonnybridge to sign up – even though the occupation of brickworker had reserved status, exempt from conscription. Three of Finlay's brothers, Pipey, Kenneth and Ian, were called into active service with the 7th Battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. Finlay, however, was posted to Malaya with the 2nd Battalion of the Argylls. Early in 1941, they were at the forefront of the battle against the invading Japanese army. When Singapore surrendered in 1942, the Argylls were cut off by Japanese tanks and many who survived were captured – Finlay among them. He was to spend three years as a prisoner of the Japanese.

Family members say Finlay never spoke of his ordeal until he finally had time in his retirement to meet up with other veterans. Then it became his passion. Finlay lived to tell of his wartime experience, but two of his brothers made the ultimate sacrifice. Pipey played at the vanguard of the Allied assault to launch the 2nd Battle of El Alamein, but within days lost his life to sniper fire on a mission behind enemy lines. Ian, youngest of the four brother soldiers, had a chance meeting with Kenneth on the battlefield – a brief respite from the heat of combat before a shell killed Ian and left Kenneth badly wounded. Kenneth's letters home from hospital to his brother Donald recount this poignant episode at the height of the assault and its terrible aftermath.

Mary MacLachlan, the mother of these remarkable young men, was at this point facing the loss of three of her four sons to warfare since no-one would then have known Finlay's fate. Though her health broke down, she lived to see him come home to Scotland and to hear her sons' sacrifice, commemorated in songs and poems along with other band members who perished in the conflict.

Finlay married the late Nellie Sinclair, mother of Finlay and Andrew, who still live in the Bonnybridge area. After his wife's death Finlay emigrated to Australia and remarried. He is survived by his sons and second wife, Barbara.

Greenhill Historical Society remains grateful for the family's support when staging the 2010 exhibition, The Pipers of Allandale.

Historian John Reid's research into the band of brothers provided the impetus for a weekend of GHS events. Coincidentally, his moving presentation about the Pipers of Allandale fell on the eve of Finlay's 90th birthday. At the end of the evening, more than 100 people present sang "Happy Birthday" to Finlay at the other side of the world.



Greenhill Historical Society



The Display from Greenhill Historical Society
commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Community Centre



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This edition is kindly sponsored by:

