

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

# Bonnyseen



The magazine from Greenhill Historical Society

Issue Number 13 November 2016



Stag do in Bonnybridge

*Photograph courtesy of Frank Walton*



# Introduction

Thanks to the generosity of the people of Bonnybridge who give us their time, memories and kind cash donations, we are able to produce another edition of our magazine. On the back page of issue twelve we left a blank space which we invited you to watch. Well now you know why! Thanks to the huge amount of work done by one of our newest recruits, Paul Cortopassi, we now have the magnificent replica mural of Smith and Wellstood's adorning the wall of the Community Centre. Paul has another superb project in mind and this one is explained on page 11.

There is another exciting project being planned at the moment, thanks to our previous librarian, Naomi Kenny. She won a magnificent grant from the Carnegie trust to implement Green Screen Technology in Bonnybridge Library which will not only inform our young people of the rich history of our village but will allow them to role play a variety of historical eras. Just like being actors in a period drama on TV or at the movies!

As GHS members are interested in history generally we have visited several sites in the last few months including Doune Castle, Culross Palace, Clydebank Library and Museum, the Scottish Parliament and we took a minibus tour of Bonnybridge, Greenhill, High Bonnybridge and Seabegs. We have several members who are not natives of the village and they are not familiar with terms such as 'the targets' and 'the pad' so hopefully they are now more aware of places of local significance.

*Please accept our sincere apologies for any errors in the previous edition of Bonnyseen.*

**P. Swierczek**



GHS visiting Holyrood

# CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Stag do in Bonnybridge	Front Cover
Introduction	2
Lance Corporal Michael McGuire DCM	3
You loved it - now see it again	4 & 5
Bonnybridge Wolf Cub awarded Cornell Badge	6
Bonnybridge, a Poem by Alex Marshall	7
A Wartime Childhood	8 & 9
Mr Rae of Greenhill Primary School	10
Heritage Garden	11
Order of the White Feather	12
St. Joseph's Primary School Mid-Late 1950's	12
Bonnybridge History & Folklore	13
Quiz Number 13	13
Profiling Bonnybridge People	14
Answers to Bonnybridge History & Folklore	15
Answers to Bonnybridge Quiz No. 13	15
Bean Geese over St. Helen's Loch	Back Cover

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Greenhill Historical Society

### WHERE TO FIND US



**GREENHILL  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**

[www.greenhillhistoricalsociety.org.uk](http://www.greenhillhistoricalsociety.org.uk) or  
[greenhillhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:greenhillhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

**Meetings** The Society meets every Friday in the Bonnybridge Library from 2pm till 4pm and all are welcome to join us. In summer months we go on historical visits on the last Friday of each month.

# Lance Corporal Michael McGuire DCM

*(Distinguished Conduct Medal)*



Michael McGuire was one of the many Irish workers from Edenderry in County Down who came to Greenhill seeking work. (He joined many others from the same Irish town – so much so that Bonnybridge was sometimes referred to as ‘Little Edenderry’.) Before WW1 began Michael worked for the Bonnybridge Silica Fireclay Company – possibly as a miner – in their clay mines above High Bonnybridge. He was 24 years of age when he enlisted as a private with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Leinster Regiment (a mainly Irish regiment of the British Army) on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1916. Only a few months later – 31<sup>st</sup> July 1916, the final day of the Battle of the Somme – Michael and his company found themselves trapped under heavy fire, with no officers to lead them as they had all been killed or wounded. He rallied his comrades and organised the attack which led to the defeat of the enemy dug-out and the escape of his company with no further losses. For this he was awarded the army’s Distinguished Conduct Medal. Michael had earlier been brought to the attention of his superior officers when he carried five wounded British soldiers to safety from the battlefield.

A real Bonnybridge hero! Michael left the army with the rank of Corporal and came back to Bonnybridge after the war to resume his working life. In gratitude for his gallantry the people of Bonnybridge presented him with a gold watch and Albert (watch chain) in the Picture Palace cinema. Sadly the commission papers were lost in a house fire but his grandson (also Michael) still has the medal and the watch and two granddaughters (one of whom is Aileen McFeat former Head Teacher of St Joseph’s Primary) both have bracelets made from the gold watch chain.

**Supplement to the London Gazette, 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1918**

**“4 / 4240 Pte. (L/Cpl) M. McGuire, Leins. R. (Edenbury). (sic)**

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. Finding his company held up by a strong enemy dug-out he organised a bombing party and attacked it, inflicting many casualties and forcing the occupants to run out. He then went forward alone, killing one officer and wounding three of the enemy.”



# You loved it then - Now U see it again!

## THE SMITH & WELLSTOOD MURAL

By Paul Cortopassi

Early on a Saturday morning in 1996 the people of Bonnybridge woke up to discover that a familiar sight had been swept away without warning. The Smith and Wellstood Mural, commissioned in 1981 to celebrate the firm's 125th anniversary, had been demolished to make way for a new housing development. Recognised as the longest outdoor mural in the UK at the time, and awarded the Saltire Prize for Art in Architecture for its sweeping beauty and detail, the mural was gone after only 15 years of existence. Local residents were furious at the time, particularly as the mural depicted the actual workers of 1981 – many of whom were fondly remembered deceased relatives and others who were, in fact, still living at the time of destruction. As a new resident of Bonnybridge (arriving in 2000) I had never seen the mural but had come across some photographs of it while doing some research into village history. I felt a real sense of disappointment I had never seen this wonder and shared the sense of loss that residents must have felt at the time. I shared these pictures on 18th August 2015 on the newly-formed Facebook page – the Bonnybridge Banter – and asked if anyone remembered the mural. The response was – as they say nowadays – mega! There were over 60 comments made and numerous shares. Then I wrote “I wonder if there's any mileage in trying to get a giant copy made to put up on the wall of the library or community centre?” Suddenly I had a project to follow through! Where to start? First to get an idea of costs.

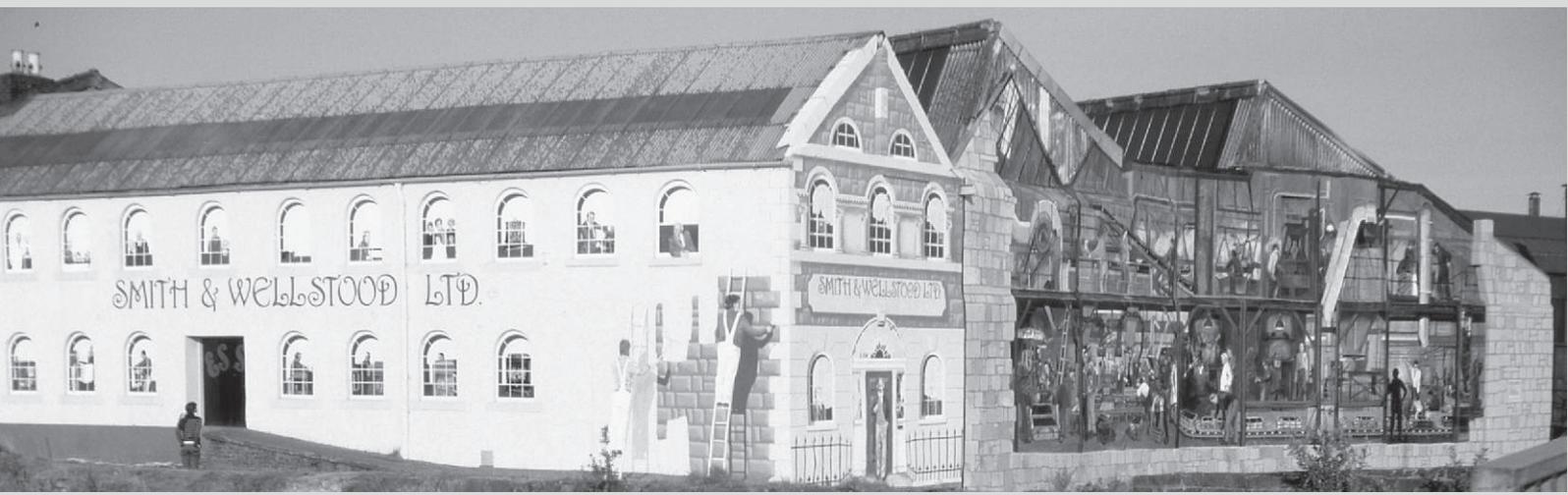


With a bit of detective work I found the name of the company who printed the primary school murals on the wall of the old bridge in Bonnyside Nature Reserve (Lasting Impressions, Stirling). These had been up for some years but still looked good. I'd measured the approximate area of the Community Centre wall I wanted to cover and discussed types of material to be used. They used both plastic and aluminium sheets (max 8' x 3' size) and I was advised to go for the plastic. I asked for a rough quote and this was provided. Later I realised that, due to its size, the bottom of the mural would be 'reachable' and open to vandalism. I then asked for a quote for the aluminium sheets which was supplied – and substantially more expensive. We needed 12 aluminium panels - four along by three up - a total of 32' long by 12' high. Undaunted I then started looking for good quality photographs which could be transferred to the panels to make a 'jig-saw' facsimile of the original. Falkirk Archives were very helpful but they only had copies of the same photographs as I had already found and these did not line up too well and also missed out bits. Then I thought about contacting the original artists – their names were on the painting – Paul Grime (who got the original commission), James Mooney, David Wilkinson and Kenneth White. With a bit of hit-and-miss research I found email addresses for three of them and

contacted them to confirm they were in fact the original artists. At first they were a bit wary – who was this guy interested in work they had done so many years ago, and what was he after? – especially since they knew it had long since been demolished; however when I explained the aim of the project they were delighted and offered to help where they could. In fact it was Paul Grime who provided the composite picture of the full mural which was used to produce the final product. Paul also provided all the slides of the workers he had taken inside the foundry in preparation for the mural itself – a fascinating insight into the working conditions of the time and now resident in the Greenhill Historical Archives. Photographs from the slides formed the core of an exhibition after the official unveiling and these rest with Falkirk Archives.

Next task was to raise the money needed to finalise the project – in the end I needed to raise about £3,500. The bulk of the cost was for printing the actual panels themselves - £2,880. There were other costs for copies of photographs from Falkirk, materials for mounting and framing the mural etc. In the end the fundraising was possibly the easiest part of the project. Local firms, organisations and individuals rushed to make donations either directly by cheque or through a Justgiving page. Several organisations were not even asked – they heard about the project and just wanted to be part of it. As the project progressed I kept Bonnybridge Banter members updated. I was getting messages naming many of the workers on the mural – both on the foundry side and what I called the ‘windows’ side and determined at an early stage I would try to get these names on the finished mural if I could. This project was never intended to be a memorial – but it could be a memory for those involved. In the end I produced a composite picture of the windows with most of the staff named and a black-and-white image of the foundry mural with individuals numbered and names listed. I knew I was getting some of them wrong but decided if someone should have been on the mural their name was going up! With the help of the two-man team at Lasting Impressions I finalised the design and gave them the go-ahead to print, and finally, on the 8th May 2016 – only 10 months after my first comment on the ‘Banter’ - the facsimile was officially launched.

Of course I have many people to thank: The Greenhill Historical Society whose members gave me great support and who allowed me to use their bank account so that all financial arrangements were transparent. Baillie Billy Buchanan who enthusiastically supported the project, facilitated links with Falkirk Council departments, and made all the arrangements for the opening day – including the reception and tea afterwards. (Thanks to Scotmid Coop for the goodies! The artists Paul, Ken and James who were immensely helpful with photographs and ideas. Moira Mann who encouraged me forward right from the start and, with her friends, helped me name many of the characters on the paintings. The moderators of the Bonnybridge Banter who kept the lines of communication open, gave me great encouragement and even ‘live streamed’ the opening ceremony across the globe. The Funders who made it all possible – Scotmid Cooperative; Moffat’s; Billy Buchanan; Bonnybridge Golf Club; Ian Craig Haulage; Central Demolition and Central Skip Hire; Sprinkletops; Bonnywood; Bake to the Future; Hoofing Horseshoes; Glazing Solutions Scotland and especially the residents and friends of Bonnybridge who dipped into their own pockets to support the project. Finally my thanks to Jim and Tony from Douglas and Thorburn Joiners (Bonnybridge) who gave their time to install the mural on the wall for free, and to Michael at MJM Detailing (Bonnybridge) who volunteered to coat the panels with a special ceramic coating to protect them from the elements.



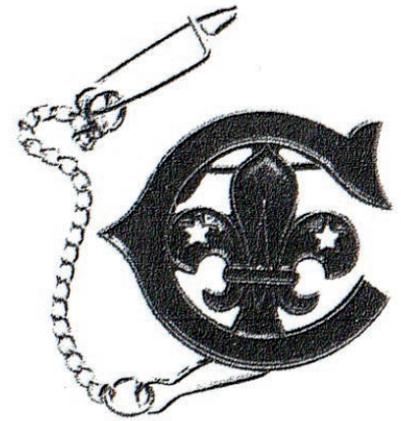


# Bonnybridge Wolf Cub awarded the Cornwell Badge

By J. Stevenson

David Scott was a Wolf Cub in the 27<sup>th</sup> Stirlingshire pack. His spirit and cheerfulness during a long and crippling illness, which confined him to a wheelchair was an inspiration to all. In 1955 David was awarded the Cornwell badge and certificate by Sir Ian Bolton, Scouting's County Commissioner, in the Scout Hall, Bonnybank. This badge was awarded to Scouts under the age of 25 years in respect of pre-eminently high character and devotion to duty with great courage and endurance. As a special treat, David was taken for a flight aboard a BEA plane from Renfrew Airport, Glasgow to Turnhouse in Edinburgh. In 1957 David, by then a Scout, was invited to a rally in Callendar Park where he meet Lord Rowallan who was the Chief Scout at that time.

This special Scout award was named after a young Scout, Jack Cornwell, from London who joined the navy, aged 16 years, at the outbreak of the First World War. His ship was the HMS Chester and Jack was a gun sight setter which put him in a very exposed position during gun battles. At the battle of Jutland they came under heavy fire and many on board were killed or injured, including young Jack. In spite of his wounds, Jack stayed at his post as long as he could under very difficult circumstances as the battle progressed. Eventually he was transferred to hospital but his wounds were so severe that he died on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1916. For his bravery, Jack was awarded the Victoria cross and the Scouting Bronze Cross. The Cornwell badge was developed in his memory and the first one was awarded in November 1916. One hundred years on the Scout Association still honours young people who embody the same core values as Jack; selflessness, devotion to duty, commitment to others and strength in the face of adversity.



*The Cornwell Scout Badge is awarded in respect of pre-eminently high character and devotion to duty, together with great courage and endurance to Scouts under the age of 25.*



*Cub David Scott's Presentation 1955*

*Presentation of Cornwell Certificate to Cub David Scott, 31/5/55, Scout Hall, Group Scout Master D. A. Leitch District Commissioner R. F. Maxwell Scout Master Larry McLaren County Commissioner Sir Ian Bolton Cub David Scott.*

Here at hame in Bonnybridge  
Frae Falkirk toon it's over the ridge  
A mile or two frae Denny Cross  
And Allandale is just as close

The things that's changed throughout the  
years  
At times wid bring about the tears  
Yet ither things wid make ye proud  
And make ye want tae shout out loud

In days gone by the works were fu'  
There wisnae many on the 'Burroo'  
The foundries smelt o'castin' sand  
And plenty neighbours aye at hand

The cigs were made and sent afar  
You stood on sawdust at the bar  
Polis walked an' could be seen  
An' knew where everyone had been

Clay was dug an; bricks were made  
Mines were sunk an' lines were laid  
Whit a sight tae see afloat  
Horses strainin' tae pull a boat

The Wellstood then wis world wide kent  
Lockhart's garage came and went  
Trains that used tae come wi' steam  
Noo are just a schoolboy's dream

Re-chem came an' caused a stink  
And council folk they did re' think  
We dinnae want yer awfu; smell  
So pack yo'r bags an' go tae ----

The store is still doon at the toll  
The Terries hivnae got a hall  
Errol Flynn ur Mickey Moose  
Ye cannae see---nae picture hoose

Oor weans they huv a school that's new  
There's nae such thing as outside loo  
The auld school's noo the social club  
An' Hardie's run by Russell Clubb

Petale's wis there for fish an' chips  
Ice-cream cones an' lucky dips  
But it's pizza fur us noo  
Across the road there's vin-da-loo

Moffat's men wi' stainless steel  
Makes the stoves that make the meal  
The pie, the roast, the wee lamb chop  
They maybe came frae Malcolm's shop

Ruby brought her arm tae bear  
An' trained them a' till they were sair  
The wee man's walked the Heilan Way  
The clock, the pend, the fun run day

Falkirk District's yard is here  
Vans an' trucks wi' a' their gear  
Blackpool ? Oban ? Ayr ? Tiree ?  
A' ye dae is ring Jay-Be

There's golf and bowlin', fitba' tae  
Doos an' fishin' an' Gala Day  
St Helen's shut for ever more  
Surely a part of our folklore

So a' oor yesterdays are spent  
An' maist o' a' the works hae went  
Wi' rhyme an' verse I'd like tae say  
For future folk, "IT'S BRIG O.K."



*Alex Marshall, born in 1932, has written poems all his life. He entered this one titled 'Bonnybridge' in a competition organised by Bailey Buchanan. He won the first prize and we are delighted that his wife has asked us to publish it in this edition of Bonnyseen.*



## *Allandale Women*

Our home was one of the fifty red sandstone terraced cottages in Allandale. The village was built on the Roman wall and housed the families whose fathers worked in Stein's brickworks. Prior to us living there, my father cycled a good all round sixteen miles each day from our farm cottage in North Lanarkshire. This was fifty years prior to Norman Tebbit's advice of, get on your bike so father was overjoyed when he was offered a Stein's house, where he brought his wife and six children in 1940 and a further two children were added to that number before the second world war ended.

In the dark days of the Second World War, we Allandale children, grouped together on our mile long walk to Castlecary Infants' school. The four classes from aged 5 to aged 9 were taught by one teacher, a Mrs. Chalmers, who travelled by bus each day from somewhere in Glasgow 20 miles away. She was a very kind old lady. I remember she was teaching us to knit a scarf and my work was full of dropped stitches. I had disregarded any dropped stitches and to keep the count correct I added more stitches. If I had been allowed to carry on, it would have turned out a lacy Jumper. She was horrified when she noticed my work and proceeded to rip it all out. I was humiliated and wouldn't stop wailing so she tried to comfort me by telling me she would take it home and knit it all up again and she did!

Mother had to give us 2 old pennies for bus fare when we advanced to Greenhill School, a penny there and a penny back. One girl used to spend her penny for her return trip, so frequently, that the conductress, who was like a warden from prison camp, put her off the bus and made her walk home. The victim's mother was waiting at the bus stop the next night, with her fists ready for a fight but Miss Warden terrified her, so she meekly gave in. The girl always had her return penny after that.

Greenhill School was on the edge of a moor and during the summer the back gate was opened to the heath. We had great days roaming the moor or playing in the burn at dinnertime. There was a traveller's camp at the top of the hills and it always made me think of Meg Merrilies in the poem we were taught in class, "Old Meg she was a gypsy and lived upon the moor." The last day of the school term found us walking home as the school bus' time was 4 o'clock and to our delight we were out for the summer at 1 o'clock. I walked with my sister Janet, my friends Nan and May, though those of us from our village kept within sight of all the rest.

We straggled up Glenyards Road where fruiterer, Alec Pollock, lived and sold chipped apples for a penny from his boxes in the garage; on past the farms and crofts on to the path that ran alongside the railway to a row of cottages beside the junction of LMS and LNER railways. On one occasion a Mrs McLean came from her cottage looking for her son. She called, Campbell, your soup's out on the table! A hungry boy called Bobby Baxter from Woodend, did his Goldilocks and went in and ate it all up. We continued via Dalnair up the brae to home where my mother greeted us with, "Where have you been? Do you know what time it is? It's nearly time for the school bus." Sometimes I would call on my schoolmate, Nan and we would skip down to the pend and play in Skipperton burn which ran through the Forth & Clyde Canal pend. The burn was bridged by two broad pipes which were embedded in precast blocks, one on either side of the stream. Nan would have her wee house on one and I on the other. This morning I stood on top of my block to enable me to see the road away in the distance. Terror tore at my heart! I saw an open jeep with soldiers approaching and their headgear wasn't the familiar beret or chip poke hat. I had never seen an army jeep before but for the German vehicles in the Pathe news at Harris's where they rounded up the Jews or so called enemies of the state and sent them to concentration camps. I darted to the upper road to rush home to warn my mother and siblings they were advancing. Nan was running at the back calling. What's wrong Hannah? I, thinking the Germans had come in by the back door via the North of Scotland, shouted back. Here's the Germans coming. Of course I couldn't outrun a jeep but I ran up the steep bank away from the road as the jeep drove past. On hindsight, the vehicle held four young commandos and I can still recall the eyes of the young soldier who was sitting beside the driver. He met my petrified eyes with a bemused look.

At the outcome of the Second World War Pipe Major Malcolm McLachlan marched the Allandale Pipe Band, which included his two brothers, Ian and Kenneth, to the Territorial Hall so the whole band could enlist. Early in 1942 word went around the village that the troop train, including the McLachlan brothers would pass the village. When the train steamed into view, I'm sure it stopped for a few minutes enabling the men to throw out scribbled notes wrapped around stones to their wives and mothers. My brother, Jim found one of the notes and it was quickly delivered to Mrs Campbell on the next landing. Mrs Campbell's son Colin was one of the Allandale Pipers who was travelling with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders' battalion. Although we never knew it at the time, their destination was North Africa.

At El Alamein Pipe Major Malcolm McLachlan and brother Ian were to die in the victorious Battle and a third brother Kenneth was severely wounded. A fourth brother Finlay, spent four years interned by the Japanese. A plaque to commemorate our heroes is erected on the wall of one of the red brick houses where Malcolm McLachlan had resided.

When the last all-clear sounded, I can remember the jubilations. All the street lights went on again and you could see right over to the Haggs, Dennyloanhead and you could even trace the lights on the Denny road. Two great bonfires were built on the canal side of Allandale, one at the top end and the other at the end nearer the brae taking you to the Dairy. An uncle of the Whites, Bells, Buchanan, Rollos and Towers's and father of the Wilson's, we knew him as Tug Wilson, had come from the pub and he led us in the singing. In my mind, he was as good as any TV star of nowadays. Tug strutted with his cane and tilted his hat as he sang *When the war is over and the fight is won and the flags are waving free. The bells are ringing and the boys are singing songs of victory. We'll all gather round the old camp fire and the old mother kisses her son. A' the lasses will be kissing a' the laddies, the boys who fought and won.* We joined in his rendering and we all danced round the bonfire.





# Mr Rae of Greenhill Primary School

By Rae Wilson

**Mr Livingston A. B. Rae 1877 – 1953 Headmaster of Greenhill Primary School 1920 -1930**

A native of Falkirk, Mr Rae was a well-known and respected member of the teaching profession. Schooled at Northern Public and Falkirk High Schools, proceeding as Kings' Scholar to the Church of Scotland's training College and Edinburgh University. Thereafter, he became Assistant Master at Larbert Central School then First Assistant at Lauriston School. In 1920 Mr Rae took his first headship at Greenhill Public School. Subsequent headships came in 1930, at

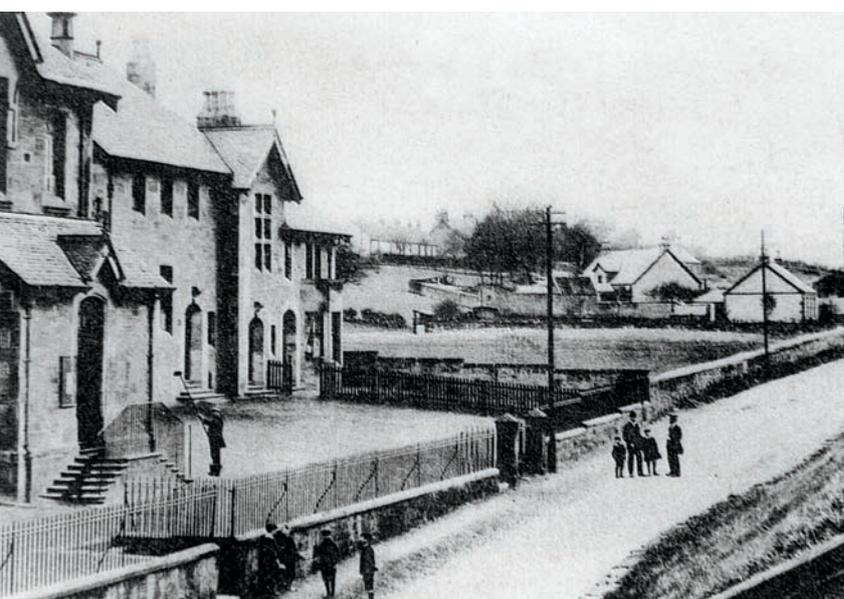


*Mr Rae seated in the middle of the front row*

Laurieston Public School and in 1935, at Carmuir's School. In 1941 he retired from active duty. Mr Rae's outstanding ability was invariably reflected in the annual reports on the schools under his care and in the affection and esteem in which he was held by pupils and colleagues. As a young man he was a fine footballer, playing for Falkirk Amateur's and as an amateur for Falkirk and East Stirlingshire. He also played Cricket for East Stirlingshire Cricket Club. On the administrative side of sport he was for fifteen years founder member and chairman of the Falkirk and District Schools Football Association and one time vice-chairman of the Scottish Elementary Schools Football Association. He was also an ex-captain of Bonnybridge Golf Club.

A keen musician, he trained at Glasgow Athenaeum in the art of singing, he was a member of the Glasgow Orpheus Choir and as a member of Falkirk and District Choral Union he sang the baritone solos in Handel's "Messiah" several times. He was a founder member and for a period chairman of the Stirlingshire Musical Festival Association. School Choirs trained and conducted by him won many certificates and trophies at the festival. He was an ex-president of Falkirk High F.P. Club and of the Falkirk Burns Club. For eighteen years he was founder member and chairman of the East Stirlingshire Falkirk Branch of the Scottish Country Dance Society. During the war he was founder member and secretary of the Falkirk branch of the Scottish-Polish Society. For many years he had been identified with the savings movement throughout the central counties of Scotland. He was appointed an honorary manager of the Falkirk and Counties Saving Bank in 1938 and was nominated to the management committee in 1943. In 1950 he became vice chairman and chairman in 1952. In 1945 Mr Rae undertook

the writing of the Bank's history. This involved much research covering a period over the past century. The vigour and ability with which he pursued his professional career in education and the founding and participation in the various Clubs and organisations were of inestimable value to the community and to the Falkirk and Counties Saving Bank. In particular Mr Rae's service is note-worthy in that it covered the difficult war and post war years. This valuable work was a fitting climax to a lifetime of public service.



*By Paul Cortopassi*

Preserving history in a way that is visual, enjoyable and at the heart of the village is the aim of our next project. The photograph gives an outline of the plans we have for installing a timeline of panels on the wall within the grounds of the library and community centre. These will illustrate the long and varied history of Bonnybridge in a place which is accessible for all the community and which will enhance an already vibrant area which has a unique mural on the library wall and the wonderful depiction of Smith and Wellstood's on the Community Centre Wall. The intention is to use the wall that supports Bridge Street as the backdrop for panels similar to the ones used in the Smith and Wellstood's Mural but of different shape and size. The panels will form a timeline of Bonnybridge's rich history and will include the story of the unusual sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects over Bonnybridge and its surroundings! The stone plinth that is there could be used for some kind of monument in the form of a statue or maybe even a model of an S&W stove! There will also be a double width path constructed to accommodate wheelchair users or parents with prams and push chairs.

As you would expect, such a venture will require significant funding and an application has been made to the Aviva Community Fund for help with this. The reward of a grant involves a voting system where everyone who registers has ten votes. As the closing date is noon on the 18<sup>th</sup> November we may well have news of the result before we go to print but too late to be included in this issue. We will publish any news on our web page, in the press and on Bonnybridge Banter. So once again 'Watch this space'!

## Bonnybridge and District Heritage Park/Wall Concept



Location





# The Order of the White Feather

By Irene Ryan



The giving of a white feather to men not in uniform was set in motion by Admiral Charles Fitzgerald, with the help of many women in Britain at the outbreak of World War 1. The army relied on volunteers enlisting to supply sufficient forces to fight at the front and many young men who did not volunteer were sadly treated as cowards. Many young men, who were tall for their age but too young to enlist, lied about their age and did join up as a result of being targeted in their communities. The women would approach men and boys in the street who they deemed to be 'fit to serve' but 'not in khaki' and handed them a white feather. Sadly many men who were home on leave and out of uniform or who had been medically discharged also fell victim to the 'Order of the White Feather'.

The actions of these women became very vocal and they often caused public disturbances, especially in the large towns and cities. When conscription was introduced in 1916 the Government decided that they had to take action to protect men who were engaged in vital work on the home front. They designed a range of badges that were worn by employees in reserved occupations whose contribution was as equally important to the war effort as was fighting at the front. Many companies took the initiative themselves and made badges for their own workers who were not allowed to leave their vital work at home.

Thankfully this disgraceful behaviour was not repeated in World War 2 as it was made quite clear that reserved occupations and those who worked in them were highly valued in the communal war effort.

"ON  
WAR SERVICE"  
Badges



## St. Joseph's Primary School Mid - late 1950's

Are you in the photograph?

Do you have any stories to tell from your time in St. Joseph's?

Do you remember Mrs O'Brian and Mr Flynn?

Please get in touch and we will include your stories in one of the following issues of Bonnyseen.



# Bonnybridge History and Folklore

Model by Hazel Wyle



This model is an amalgamation of many of the facts, myths and legends surrounding the history of Bonnybridge.

There are **ten** references to bygone Bonnybridge illustrated in the model.  
How many can you spot!

Answers on page 15



## What do YOU know about the history of Bonnybridge and District?

By William Parker

- 1) Who asked for, but was denied permission to land his aeroplane in Bonnybridge?
- 2) Behind the Hills of Dunipace Cemetery there is a small tower. What was it used for?
- 3) How many of the original old schools buildings in the Bonnybridge area are still standing?
- 4) Who was the actor who lived in High Bonnybridge who appeared in over fifty films and many television programmes?
- 5) How many of the original Police Station buildings are still standing?
- 6) How old is Bonnybridge Parish Church?

QUIZ 13



Do you know the answers before you check them on Page 15!



## Profiling Bonnybridge Folks

Kevin Schofield Editor Politics

Home T: 07785 388217 Twitter: @PolhomeEditor



***We are profiling Bonnybridge folks who have reached the heights of their careers. If you know anyone please give us the details for future issues of Bonnyseen.***

It all began, according to my mum, when I came home from St. Joseph's one day and announced that I wanted to be a journalist. A reporter from the Falkirk Herald had come to our class and explained what his job entailed. From that moment, I was hooked. If anyone asked me what I wanted to be, I replied: "A journalist." In fact I wanted to be a sports journalist and specifically a football journalist. The idea of getting into matches for free – and being paid to be there – seemed like the greatest job in the world and I was determined to get it. By the time I got to St. Mungo's, my desire to become a journalist had become even stronger. The school helped arrange work experience at the Falkirk Herald in 1989. The reporters all seemed so cool, barking down the phone as they tried to check out their latest scoop and I was hooked! The highlight of the week came on the Friday evening, when sports editor David McCarthy took me to the press box at Brockville to watch a pre-match friendly. Every teacher I told about my ambitions said the same thing – journalism was a good trade, but devilishly difficult to get into. The most popular route involved doing an HND in Journalism Studies at Napier Polytechnic in Edinburgh. The only snag was that hundreds applied every year, and there were only 25 places on the course.

I gave it a go, and after a gruelling day of interviews and tests, I was accepted. Now there was no looking back. I graduated in 1994 and, after a few unsuccessful job applications, my big break came at the Berwickshire News in Berwick-upon-Tweed. As a junior reporter, I tried my hand at everything – from court cases to district council meetings, from sheep shows to community fetes. It was everything I hoped for and much, much more.

Fifteen months later, the chance came to come home and work for the Falkirk Herald. I didn't need to be asked twice. Four years there saw me climb the ranks and, by the time I left, I had reached the giddy heights of senior reporter. Local papers are great, but I was desperate to write for the nationals. After a few aborted attempts to get onto the Daily Record and the Sunday Mail, I got a job with Newsflash Press Agency in Stirling, where my job was to write stories and try to sell them to the daily papers. It was tough, but seeing my by-line in The Scotsman, Sun, Express and Mirror made it all worthwhile. The next stop on my career path was the Press Association, where I worked at the Scottish Parliament providing political coverage for the nationals. It was gruelling, but great fun – allowing me to rub shoulders with bona fide Scottish journalism legends like Murray Ritchie and Robbie Dinwoodie at the Herald, Dave King at the Record and Angus MacLeod at the Express.

If you're still keeping count, job number 5 came in 2004, when I was appointed education correspondent at The Scotsman. This allowed me to work in a daily paper newsroom for the first time. I had an expense account which let me take top contacts to lunch, and a boss who used to work in Fleet Street and loved taking us to the pub to reminisce about the good old days! In 2007 I found myself back at Holyrood covering Scottish politics for The Herald. This was a short-lived posting though, as I was approached by the Daily Record, who were looking for someone to cover Westminster. Moving to London was a big deal – especially as I was about to get married and my fiancée and I had just bought a house in Edinburgh! Eight years later, we're still here (with the addition of two daughters). The job-hopping theme has continued – first with The Sun and now at the website PoliticsHome.com, where I am the editor. I also pop up from time to time on the BBC and Sky News talking about politics.

## Bonnybridge History and Folklore



### Answers to quiz on Model by Hazel Wyle

Doctor's Pend ~ Seabegs Wood (Doctor's Wood) ~ Doctor Grindlay and the grave robbers  
Damhead Distillery (barrels) ~ Black Aggies Tomb ~ Mary O' Castlecary's tomb  
Date stone from Seabegs Farm ~ Romans (date stone in Roman numerals)  
Torc bracelet found near Cowden Hill ~ Spade (Spade manufacturer in Seabegs Road in 1829)

### Answers to What do YOU know about the history of Bonnybridge and District?

- 1) John Rollo was refused permission to land his aeroplane in Bonnybridge.
- 2) The small tower was a Doo'cot.
- 3) Only one original school building is still standing and that is Castlecary Primary School which has been converted into a house.
- 4) The actor was Ronald Fraser.
- 5) Only one old Police Station building is still standing and that is in High Bonnybridge. It is a house on the left just as you go through the railway bridge just past the Broomhill Inn.
- 6) Bonnybridge Parish Church is 159 years old having been opened on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, 1977.

William Parker

### AMENDMENT

In the last Issue it was stated that W. Dow was the first Scoutmaster when in fact it was T. Wardrope. Thank-you to Mr J. Stevenson for this information.



Bean Geese at Sunset on St. Helen's Loch

*Photography courtesy of J Swierczek*

