

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

Bonnyseen

The magazine from Greenhill Historical Society



Issue Number 16 May 2018



Introduction

Worry about where the money will come from for each edition of Bonnyseen has been put on the shelf for the immediate future. Thanks to tremendous support from the community of Bonnybridge and our indebtedness to the following sponsors.

Naomi Kenny, our former librarian, obtained a magnificent grant from the Carnegie trust to establish and use Green Screen Technology to further the preservation of our local history. (Green Screen is used in Television so that the presenter in front of the camera can be anywhere in the world thanks to backgrounds created using Green Screen). When Naomi applied for the grant she included a bid for the printing costs of one edition of the magazine and we were delighted to be able to use that in November 2017 to pay the printing company.

The Grand Masonic Lodge of Stirling held a charity bowling competition in Bonnybridge and GHS were the grateful recipients of a donation towards our funds. This money will be used to supply an engraved salver for each of Bonnybridge and St Joseph's Primary Schools as a local history award. Last session, in conjunction with Bonnybridge Golf club, we donated a salver to Antonine School and had planned to rotate the award round the schools on an annual basis. Now we are able to ensure that each school has its own individual award for the best local history project. We will also use some of this donation to erect a plaque in memory of Henry Harris, who created one of the earliest cinemas in Scotland in Bonnybridge. (More information to follow)

Last, but certainly not least, we received a magnificent award from the **Falkirk Schools Charities Board** to pay for both editions of Bonnyseen in 2018! We would like to offer our sincere thanks to all these amazing sponsors and the local community for helping to keep our efforts of preserving the history of Bonnybridge very much alive and thriving.

We hope you enjoy edition sixteen!

Phil Swierczek

Front Cover:

Clifford House (always known as "The Nurses' Home")
(see Page 14)

Back Cover:

The Check Bar, Roadends, Bonnybridge

CONTENTS

| | <i>Page</i> |
|--|-------------|
| The Nurses' House | Front Cover |
| Introduction | 2 |
| Bonnybridge Boy Scouts Trip to London | 3 |
| Bonnyseen Quiz Number 16 | 3 |
| The Luck of the Draw | 4 |
| Recycling Railway Sleepers | 5 |
| What's in a Name | 6 |
| The Brides of Paterson Place | 7 |
| Greenhill Primary School, 1954, Primary 7 | 8 & 9 |
| Answers to Bonnyseen Quiz Number 16 | 9 |
| Foundry Apprentices Exhibition | 10 |
| 1918 What a Year | 11 |
| St. Joseph's School, 1920s | 12 |
| Ochils Mountain Rescue Service | 13 |
| Clifford Memorial Home | 14 |
| Obituary, Rita MacLaren | 14 |
| Masonic Lodge, Wellpark Terrace, Bonnybridge | 15 |
| Golden Eras of Old | Back Cover |

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Greenhill Historical Society

WHERE TO FIND US



**GREENHILL
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

www.greenhillhistoricalsociety.weebly.com
or greenhillhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Meetings

The Society meets every Friday in
the Bonnybridge Library from 2pm till 4pm
and all are welcome to join us.

Bonnybridge Boy Scouts Trip to London

By Peter Gardner

GHS

There was great excitement when a party of 30 Boy Scouts and their leaders boarded a special bus to take them to their annual camp. The year was 1951.

Most of the boys had never been in England, so going to London was like going to the moon. There were no motorways and very few dual carriageways so our journey took us almost 15 hours to reach our destination: the Scout Hut at Clapham Common, where we were to be billeted for the next two weeks.

We were a motley crew when we arrived, but in true Scouting traditions we soon freshened up and settled in to be welcomed by our hosts. A full programme of events had been arranged. Travel was mostly by the London Underground, so it was quite a feat to keep everyone

together. As far as I know, due to great organisation, no one was ever lost!

I cannot recall all the sites we visited but some I shall never forget. The visit to St Paul's Cathedral was awe inspiring but we managed to get some fun hearing our voices resounding round the whispering gallery.

This was the year of the Festival of Britain, promoted by the government to instil in the people that, after the war, there was still a great future for our country. We visited the Southbank with its spectacular demonstrations of what Britain could produce. The Sylon was an amazing feat of engineering and the Dome of Discovery took up a lot of our time.

Then there was a visit to the Royal Mint. Our eyes goggled when we saw pennies, threepennies, sixpennies, shillings and two shilling bits and half-crowns come spewing out of the machines at a rate of knots! Unfortunately, seeing was as far as we got!

Another great outing was to Madame Tussauds. We could not believe that the figures we saw on display were not real. We entered the House of Horrors in great trepidation, which turned out to be quite justified.

As shown in the photograph, we were given a conducted tour of the Houses of Parliament and met our local MP, Arthur Woodburn, who is shown in the photograph with us in front of the House of Commons.

I have never returned to Central London as I saw so much during our stay at Clapham Common. Much of the success of our trip was due to the fabulous arrangements made by our Scout Leader, David Leitch, Scout Master, Arthur Billingham, as well as the Leaders and Scouts at Clapham.

I left Bonnybridge in 1960 and now live in Kelso but always remember my good upbringing in the village. Scouting played a large part of this and another highlight was the time we won the County Flag at the Barrowood in 1950.

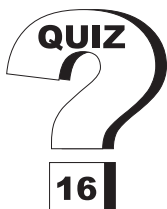
I would like to wish the troop every success in the future.



What do you know about the History of Bonnybridge

ANSWERS ON PAGE 9

By P Swierczek



1. How many Bonnybridge street names begin with the letter 'D'?
2. What is the substance commonly called which evaporates from the barrels of whisky at the Bonded Warehouse?
3. What is buried under Steins football pitch in Allandale?
4. What is the connection between Bonnybridge and the Isle of Skye?
5. The building on High Street next to the memorial Park is called the Smithfield Building. What was its original purpose?



The luck of the Draw

By P Swierczek

Sheena Lambie, of Greenhill Historical Society, submitted a request to be one of those selected in the ballot to be allowed walk over the Queensferry Crossing before it was opened to traffic. Never expecting to be one of the 250,000 plus hopefuls, Sheena went off on holiday and came back to find a beautiful souvenir invitation on the doorstep. The invitation was in the form of a card with a pop up representation of the bridge worked in a silver colour which she says she will cherish.

Sheena reported that the day was superbly well organised with the successful participants being instructed to take the train to Edinburgh Park where a fleet of buses were waiting to escort them to and from the bridge. She also said it was a wonderful experience full of laughter and friendliness with everyone in awe of the beauty and scale of the structure. Her only disappointment was that the wind shear additions to the bridge prevented her taking photographs of the other two magnificent bridges in relation to the new one. However, this in no way spoiled what was a once in a life time experience and one in which only a small proportion of those who applied having the luck of the draw that Sheena had. A truly historical event!



Recycling Railway Sleepers



By Frank Walton

The recent article relating to the Caledonian Railway Greenhill Creosote Works, described the significance of timber railway sleepers in facilitating the growth in the railway network and in particular, the significance of the Greenhill Creosote Works in treating the sleepers to preserve them and ensure their durability. Sleepers from Greenhill were exported across the country and the anticipated track life of such sleepers would range from 5 years to 50+ years dependent upon intensity of use. Regular maintenance of track systems, which included replacement of sleepers, resulted in a steady supply of second hand sleepers which became available to purchase from the yards of maintenance companies. In some areas, closure of rural rail lines resulted in localised availability. Many of these areas had limited supplies of affordable building materials, whereas sleepers could be purchased locally at a reasonable price. The combination of affordability, local availability and durability, resulted in the emerging use of sleepers as an alternative construction material. The stout, rough sawn timbers were put to many uses, some obvious and others perhaps more surprising and ingenious.

You may immediately recognise some of those uses and given their initial purpose, it is a small leap of the imagination to take sleepers supporting a rail track and use them as a temporary road base to support vehicles across soft ground, or to bridge a narrow ditch such as on a golf course. More imaginative uses have been historically recorded and some fine examples remain in use within the Badenoch and Strathspey area close to the highland rail line. Sleepers stood on end and set partially into the ground, to form a fence, is a common enough sight in many gardens within the vicinity. The remains of an historical example of this use can still be seen by rail users near Dalwhinnie, where it was used to protect the track from snow drifts in vulnerable areas. Slightly further north, the river Spey benefited from embankment reinforcement in at least one area, where an erosion susceptible bend in the river between Newtonmore and Kingussie, was protected by vertical sleeper posts driven into the river bank at regular intervals to support horizontal sleepers stacked between them and forming a wall like structure. This became locally known as "The Sleeper Pool" and developed a reputation for producing some fine fish. Similar structures have been utilised to damn rivers, act as retaining structures and even form cesspools! These structures have remained stable for decades due to the protection afforded them by the initial creosoting treatment that was carried out at Greenhill.

At Kingussie, in 1927 a former railwayman purchased two hundred redundant sleepers at a cost of one shilling to one and sixpence each, with the intention of constructing a new home for his mother and father, the first recorded in the area. He placed the sleepers vertically on a felt damp proof course on a concrete foundation and nailed them together with nine inch (225mm) nails tying them at them at the top with a sleeper ring beam and measuring nine feet floor to ceiling. Openings for windows and doors were simply formed by leaving out sleepers, in the case of a doorway, or fitting cut length sleepers below window openings. Internally the walls were lined with Tongue and Groove boarding to provide a more acceptable surface and protect the householders from the potentially irritating smell and touch of the remaining creosote. Externally, the joints were covered by smaller vertical timbers to prevent weather penetration. In many similar "sleeper" buildings, this was felt to be sufficient protection, however, in this first house the walls were then covered with chicken wire which supported a final layer of harling. The original house, though significantly extended, was still in family use when surveyed in 1986 by Derek Kerr, author of "Railway Sleeper Buildings" (Scottish Vernacular Building Group). Due to harled walls and tiled roofs it is difficult to identify some sleeper buildings, but there remain sufficient numbers of houses, workshops and other buildings to testify to the durability of this recycled material, much of which may have passed through the sheds at Greenhill.

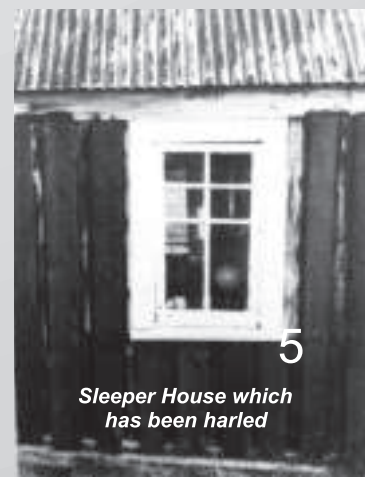
Source material courtesy of Derek Kerr, Author: *Railway Sleeper Buildings* (1986).



A Sleeper House



Detail showing Construction



Sleeper House which has been harled



What's in a Name?

By Irene M Ryan

Ever wondered how places, rivers, hills, get their name, who first used the word Bonny for the river? Usually the reasons are lost in the Mist of Time.

The book, 'The Vale of Bonny', written by the Rev. Waugh states it was Sir James Douglas, second only to Edward Bruce, in Robert Bruce's army, who stopped at the river to drink and said "this is Bonny Water" and the river was called Bonny from then on. Fanciful, yes, but I thought "could there be any evidence, however little, of Sir James Douglas in this area." There is also a story that Robert Bruce stayed in the Motte Castle at some point. So, could any of these epic statements, however vague, be a little right.

It has been suggested that Robert Bruce met William Wallace before the Battle of Falkirk, 1298, in the Great Tor Wood and perhaps stayed at the Motte. Unfortunately there is no evidence of Bruce even being at the battle; at that time in history Bruce was wavering in allegiance, more concerned about his own claim to the throne. An early Scottish historian suggests King Robert Bruce was out hunting one day when he was almost killed by wild white bulls. These bulls were only found in Stirlingshire, and it was suggested it was the Castlecary Woods where the bulls ran wild. Again, unfortunately, just a legend with no basis of truth, but they make good stories.

So if Robert Bruce was not in our area could James Douglas have drunk from the river? There are a few times, I think, the Good Sir James could have passed through, possibly with his friend and fighting companion Edward Bruce, brother of Robert. One of these times was when Robert Bruce called a Parliament to be held in St. Andrews in March 1309. Every noble, bishop and commander of the army had to attend. James Douglas and Edward Bruce were fighting in Galloway and had to make their way north during the winter. As experienced campaigners they would know safe places to stay overnight and knowledge of reliable crossing points over rivers. They could have passed through our area staying at the Motte, then crossing the Carron at Dunipace on the way to St. Andrews.

It is known that Robert Bruce, James Douglas and the Scottish army were in our area, well sort of, just before the Battle of Bannockburn, June 1314. The army was drawn up in the Great Tor Wood before moving to the New Park. But it is believed James Douglas stayed in the area to spy on the English Army which moved into the Tor Wood after the Scottish army moved out. Who knows where Douglas went to avoid notice? There is another story that the Baron of our Motte was part of the Bruce army, nothing we can prove but, well, maybe.

After all that speculation, with a little known information sprinkled about, what is in a name? Most places names in Scotland can be traced to Gaelic or a corruption of Gaelic, French, English or Viking. Bonny is thought to be derived from Middle French 'bonne', meaning good, leading us back to the Norman-French-English quiet takeover of our country in the 1100s and adding their language to ours. The descendents of these knights were, for the most part, the men who fought for freedom for our country in the 1300s. They changed our words, we changed their names.



The Brides of Paterson Place

GHS

By Sheena Lambie

The following poem was in the possession of Mrs. Susan (Susie) Black and was given to Greenhill Historical Society by her son-in-law, David Johnstone. I found it intriguing as I am very interested in ancestry as well as local history. I wanted to find out who were 'The brides of Paterson Place'? Were they all married in the same year? What were their surnames and who did they marry? So began a long search through archives and the memories of locals to answers some of these questions. It is still a work in progress and if anyone has any information that they can add to help me in my quest it would be much appreciated.

The Brides of Paterson Place

Auld Ayr may speak of their lassies braw
Perth says their maids are abune them a
But I will speak while I breath
About the brides of Paterson Place
Their fame has spread both far and near
For each was indeed a star
And villagers stand and look amazed
As they hear of the brides of Paterson Place
The street itself is not so big
It is in the village of Bonnybrig
But if you'll listen to me apace
You will hear of the brides of Paterson Place
We have Ina, Margaret and Ann
Their grooms were the proudest in the land
Each one so glad to take his place
Beside the his bride from Paterson Place
Then Netta, Jessie, Betty and Mary
And Helen, Nan, Annie and Mamie
Those were the girls with the smiling face
Who became the brides of Paterson Place
They grew up before us glad and free
Happy in life and full of glee
And we saw them goon and lace
The beautiful brides of Paterson Place
And now here's Ann so shy and sweet
Tom says her equal you'll never meet
While Beth and Maureen attend with Grace
These beautiful brides from Paterson Place
We will toast our ladies long and loud
The sweet twelve brides have done us proud
Worthy of all our toast and praise
The beautiful brides from Paterson Place.

*Submitted by
Mrs Susan (Susie) Black*

*James Cordiner,
husband of Jessie McPhie*

*The McPhie sisters
of Paterson Place*

Jessie, Mary and Ina McPhie





Greenhill Primary School, 1954, Primary 7

By Danny Deans

Greenhill Primary School opened on 9th September 1884 with 70 pupils on the role. The first Head Teacher was Miss Jessie Syme.

When the photograph below was taken, the Head Teacher was Mr John McGregor, who was in post between 1944 and 1959. For some unknown, or unremembered, reason Mr McGregor was known to the pupils as 'Froggie' but obviously not within his hearing! Can anyone provide an explanation of the source of his nickname?

Teachers

Primary 1/2 Miss Thompson; Primary 3-Miss Munro; Primary 4- Miss Curry; Primary 5-Mr Monkman; Primary 6-Miss McLaren; Primary 7 Mrs Adams.



School photograph

Back row-left to right - Jim Gallagher, Ian Ritchie, Billy West, Jim Mitchell, Hunter Browning, Robert Burns, Jim Urquhart, Danny Deans, Tom Bell

Second back row - Sandra Mochrie, Phoebe Donaldson, Jean Haldane, Marlyn Drysdale, Sheena Gillespie, Pamela Mc Pherson, Wilma Templeton, Margaret Brown, Irene Dobbie, Ruby Watson, Mrs Adams

Second front row - Ross Buchanan, Jack Halliday, Jim Wilson, Alec McArdle, Merle Watson, Betty Mochrie, Elizabeth Wren, Graham Smith, Alan Robertson, Ian Fraser, Jim Martin.

Front row - Bob Buchanan, Conrad Miller.

17 pupils in this photograph were from Broomhill and High Bonnybridge area, 5 from Allandale and 10 from Greenhill/Seabegs area.

School Dinners.

These were prepared centrally and delivered in a blue Nimmo's van. The containers were carried to the dining room, by the driver and two willing P7 pupils, who were delighted to have been chosen for this important job-nothing to do with being out of class for a time of course!

Menu-None! Choice- Take it or leave it! The food was ladled on to your plate whether you wanted/liked it or not. Some teachers would let you empty what you couldn't eat into the bin but others would insist you cleared your plate before you could go out to play. The result was that the food became colder and less appetising as time went on. Stalemate resembling the Gunfight at the OK corral ensued. Only when the staff were in danger of losing the whole of their lunch break would they reluctantly allow the slow coaches to dispose of the unwanted food.

Favourite Meals

Tatties and mince with grated carrot, Sponge Cake and Hot Runny Custard.

Hated Meals

Tatties and steamed fish in watery (usually cool/cold) sauce. Urgh Revolting!
Sago Pudding with a dollop of Jam in the middle! The hated meals often resulted in a visit to Thomson's shop to buy one of the following: Penny caramel/sherbet dip/ bag of broken crisps/gobstopper liquorice stick, in fact anything to kill the taste of steamed fish! After much pleading and argument, my mother allowed me to take a 'piece' to school, which I happily ate sitting on a swing when I could get one. You had to run fast after the dinner bell to get to the swings before they were all taken, usually for the whole lunch break! A compromise could be reached though when someone occupying a swing allowed you to 'beam them up' long before Star Trek made the phrase famous.
(Please note. I now like steamed fish but it bears no resemblance in appearance, taste or texture to the 1950's school meals version!)

Milk Delivery

Each pupil received a one third bottle of milk at morning interval. As with the lunch delivery, two pupils from primary 7 were chosen to take the crates to each class. This was a much sought after responsibility as it kept you out of class longer than helping with the lunch containers did! I don't know where the milk was stored before being brought to school but during winter it wasn't unusual for the milk to be frozen and pushed up like an Ice Pole, rising from the bottle, with the silver top perched on top. The bottles were often then put on top of the heating pipes that ran all-round the room to defrost the milk before we could drink it. *(By the way the silver top could be held in the forefinger and middle finger and spun across the room like a mini flying saucer long before reported sightings of UFO's in Bonnybridge).*

Hymn Practise

At the end of each school term, the Reverend James Malcolmson would attend a whole school service. This required numerous rehearsals with the whole school present in the assembly hall. Miss Thomson was the infant mistress but she played a mean piano and struck fear into one and all. The hall was not designed to hold over 200 pupils at a time and it soon became stuffy and claustrophobic. Pupils often felt sick/were sick/or fainted as a result. If a pupil was sick the proceedings were not stopped; a bucket of sawdust was produced and scattered over the resulting mess so that we could carry on rehearsing. Unfortunately, the overheated atmosphere only intensified the awful smell and caused even more pupils to throw up! We didn't mind all this discomfort though as the attendance of the Reverend signalled the approaching joy of a holiday from school.

The Primary 7 Party

In your final year in primary school, you were given the privilege of a class party. The whole staff, including the Headmaster attended the event. For weeks in advance the 'drill' lessons were taken up with dance practise. Dances such as the Dashing White Sergeant, Eightsome Reel and Strip the Willow gave the 'Macho' boys the chance to show their strength by 'burling the girls off their feet. At the party, all the boys lined up on one side of the room and the girls on the other. It was a long walk to select a partner and excruciatingly embarrassing if you were turned down!

Teachers

I can honestly say that I have no memory of disliking any of the teachers at Greenhill School. The one I respected the most was Mrs Adams of Primary 7 who was confident, competent and had good communication skills. She gained our respect and good behaviour without having to resort to raising her voice or unnecessary use of the dreaded belt.

1. Seven. Dickburn Crescent. Drove Loan, Duncan Street, Dunure Street, Dunrain Avenue,
Dunvegan Place, Drummond Place.
2. The Angels Share 3. The Roman Wall 4. They both use the name Dunvegan.
5. Hostelry for the canal boatmen, and Carters.

ANSWERS





Apprentices Exhibition

By Phil Swierczek

Foundry Apprentices Exhibition in the Public Hall

In 1952/3 Alex Burns was an apprentice with Smith and Wellstood when they mounted an exhibition, in conjunction with Mitchell and Russell's, of foundry processes in the Public Hall in Bonnybridge. Stalls and bays were set up round the hall and the apprentices demonstrated all the trades that were carried out in the two works. These included: Laboratory Processes; Drawing Offices; Pattern Making; Moulding; Sheet Metal Working; Fitting; Polishing.

Alex served his apprenticeship between 1950 and 1955 when he passed all his City and Guild exams at the top of his class. The photograph on the right is a magnificent display of all the apprentice pieces he made to demonstrate his skills at all the processes involved in Sheet Metal Working.



Alex Burns' Apprentice Pieces

Alex and Colleague demonstrating Sheet Metal Working



1957: Retiral of George Irvin, S & W, Sheet Metal Worker



Apprentices from Smith & Wellstood and Mitchell & Russell's Foundries



Smith & Wellstood Apprentices (highlighted is Alex Burns)



1918 What a Year



By Irene M Ryan

In February 1918, all men over 21 were given the vote and some women were given the vote for the first time, but not all women. It was only women over 30 who owned a property or their husband owned a property with a rateable value of £5 or more (about £1250 today).

After all the campaigning by working class women, and even the deaths of some, they were still denied the right to vote.

M.P.s decided to limit the votes for women as they were now in the majority in the population and could change the balance of power if women decided to stand for election; so younger women had to wait till 1928.

In October 1918, 'Julian The Tank' came to Bonnybridge. It stopped at the Central Station on its fund raising tour of Scotland. Large crowds came to see this war machine from the front line and listen to Captain McIntosh, the tank commander, Dr Young and other officials asking for donations for the war effort.

There was a great gathering around the tank all day, some people buying bonds and certificates from the 2 women who were sitting in the tank. The total investment for the day in Bonnybridge was £8000, a huge amount for 1918, (today's value over £525,000).



Of course, November 1918 is remembered for the end of the Great War, which saw vast loss of life and affected almost every family in the country.

However, what is seldom remembered is the "Flu" pandemic, which raged across the country and touched everywhere. Very little was reported about the deaths from "Flu" as it was thought the public could not take any more tragic news. This "Flu" mostly took the lives of young, fit men and women.



The saddest of all was the men returning home who had survived the trauma of war to be cut down by the 'Flu Pandemic. By the end of December 1918, the worst of the 'Flu was over but there were still fatalities into 1919.

On a lighter note, March 1918 saw an unofficial womens' football match between Scotland and England at Celtic Park. During the war years the S.F.A. had encouraged woman's football as leisure and distraction for the public, resulting in this informal match.

The game was played to raise funds for the war effort; a crowd of 8000 people came to see the game. Despite a strong showing from the Scottish team the game ended with a final score of Scotland 0 England 4.

This picture is Lily St Clare, she was one of the leading women footballers.



St. Joseph's School, 1920s



Centenary of the
1918 Scottish Education
Act and the implications
for St Joseph's School,
Bonnybridge.

St Joseph's, Bonnybridge, is possibly the most talked about and most written about school in the whole history of Scottish Education. It was talked about all over the country and written about in local and national newspapers - even the London Times: It was talked about for days in the Bars of Court, the Outer and Inner Houses of the Court of Session in Edinburgh and in the House of Lords at Westminster. Final written judgements were given by no less than ten learned judges - Lords of the Scottish Court of Session and the House of Lords at Westminster. This happened simply because the parishioners of St Joseph's wanted their children to be educated in the unique atmosphere of their own school and they were prepared to fight for their rights through the law courts of the country. Between 1918 and 1920, following implementation of the 1918 Act, nearly two hundred Catholic schools had been given into the new state system lock, stock, and barrel at no cost to the state. Nobody expected any difficulty in the transfer of already existing schools, but what about new schools? In 1920, the first of a series of petitions went to Stirling County for a School for the 200 Catholic children around Bonnybridge. The reply was to become monotonous - there is ample space in existing state schools. Parents were getting nowhere with Stirling, and when another appeal had been turned down it was decided to go ahead with the existing plans to build a new Church and school in High Bonnybridge.. On August 12th 1925, Bishop Graham came to bless the completed church and the nearly completed school. A week later the school was opened with a headmaster, four teachers and 245 children. The school was inspected by the Scottish Education Department and was given a glowing report. On the 18th November 1926, the Department gave consent to the transfer of the school to within the state system. Sub section 7 of Section 18 of the Education Act of 1918 said that, with the consent of the SED, a voluntary school may be transferred to the Local Education Authority. Stirling, however, put a different interpretation on the word "may". They said you may offer to transfer but we are not bound to accept. In April 1928 an action was brought against the County, in the Court of Session in Edinburgh, which decided that the Trustees of St. Joseph's school were at liberty to offer their school for transfer. They may or they may not offer to transfer, but if they did, the County had to accept it. The County appealed against the decision before the Inner House of the Court of Session, which decided by a majority of three to one, that the County need not accept the transfer, and so the case went to the House of Lords. On the 16th December 1929, the House of Lords, by a majority of four to one, upheld the case that the clause "may be transferred" in the context of the whole section, meant that when it was offered for transfer, the Authority had no option but to accept it, providing the Scottish Education Department agreed to the transfer, and on March 13th 1930, Stirling County Council accepted the transfer of St. Joseph's and all the financial responsibilities involved into the state system.

Edited by Paul Cortopassi from a talk by

Monsignor Donal Foley, son of Mr Dan Foley, former Headteacher of St Joseph's School.

Ochils Mountain Rescue Service



The Ochils Mountain Rescue Team was founded in 1971, by a group of local people who resided in the Hillfoots area of Clackmannanshire, following incidents in the Ochil Hills that required specialised experience in rough terrain. Initially they were donated items that could be used to “rescue” stranded walkers in the hills, but soon turned to fund raising to buy the best possible equipment for the team.

As time passed by, they became experienced in searching for missing hillwalkers and subsequently became involved in searching rural and lowland areas for missing people. Whilst they were founded in the Hillfoots, they started recruiting from further afield, including the Falkirk, Denny and Bonnybridge areas. They were not just a group of people only interested in the hills, but specialists in searching across the 3 counties that Central Scotland Police cover. The police were responsible for mountain rescue and the callout of the teams.

Currently they have over 35 members and, in addition to the 3 counties, they now cover Fife, with membership spread across the area. They have been involved in a number of searches in the Falkirk District area over the last 40 years from Bo'ness to Banknock, Denny to Carronshore and will continue to serve the area for the foreseeable future.

As recently as the end of February and into March, they assisted on the M80 with stranded motorists and the transportation of important medical staff by 4x4 vehicles from patients homes to hospital and return.

They now average 20 incidents per year and are heavily involved in the Scottish Resilience Group where they attended as Volunteer members, as well as doing mountain rescue.

From the humble beginnings of sharing a police cell in Alva, they have progressed to today's state of the art building in Fishcross, with underfloor heating, a classroom, showers and drying rooms. They also have 2 double garages containing 2 fully kitted out Land Rovers and a communications vehicle with internet access for their mobile control.

If you are looking for further information, please visit our website www.omrt.org.uk or search for us on Facebook.

Tom Lockie, *Team Member & Search Co-ordinator*



OCHILS MOUNTAIN RESCUE TEAM
Ochils Mountain Rescue Post, Alexandra Road,
Fishcross, Alloa FK10 3AN www.omrt.org.uk





Clifford Memorial Home

By Irene M Ryan



The photograph on the front cover of this edition of Bonnyseen features Clifford Memorial Home.

Did you know that is the name of 'the nurses' house'? It was built as a memorial to Sir James Brown Smith, the son of James Smith of Smith and Wellstood.

Just like his dad, he had an interesting life; born in America in 1845, he was the first man to set foot in India from a steamer that was the first to pass through the Suez Canal. When his father died he took his position in the company until 1888.

He lived in Stirling with his wife and 5 children; his own house was called Clifford Park. Sir James B Smith got his knighthood in 1907 for his charitable works. He was director of Stirling Royal Infirmary, on the board of Boys & Girls Industrial School and President of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. He was also a very good friend of the Prime Minister at the time, Henry Campbell Bannerman, M.P. for Stirling.

When he died in May 1913, his wife wanted to mark the Smith family's long connection with Bonnybridge, by building the memorial home in his name. It was to be erected on the Main Street at the corner of a new Street, still to be laid out. There was to be a cart entrance off the new street, convenient for deliveries to the back of the house.

The nurses' home was to be fully furnished and equipped with a large bathroom and an area for sterilising clothing and equipment. There was also a washhouse, a scullery, the maid's room, a coal cellar, bicycle store and tools store. All mod cons and more for 1913!

Many residents have fond and foreboding memories of the many nurses who stayed at the 'nurses' house'. If you remember some of their names why not get it touch and tell us your stories and memories.



Obituary

RITA MacLAREN (McPherson)

All the members of the Historical Society were saddened to hear of the death, in Wheatlands Home, of Rita McLaren (McPherson) who grew up in Bonnybridge and attended Greenhill Primary School. Rita kindly loaned us her precious photographs and memorabilia of her family and their experiences during WW1. These were gratefully recorded in Edition 9 of Bonnyseen. The retiral collect at her funeral realised the magnificent sum of £850. Parkinson's research was donated £600 of this and £250 went to Wheatlands as a starter fund for a miniature Crazy Golf Course for the enjoyment of the residents.



Masonic lodge, Wellpark Terrace, Bonnybridge

By Thomas Rintoul



A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BONNYBRIDGE MASONIC LODGE.

Prior to 1900, there was no Masonic Lodge in Bonnybridge, and persons wishing to partake of the activities of the Masonic Lodges had to travel to Denny, Larbert, Falkirk, Cumbernauld and Stirling or further afield. In those days of no real public transport, the members of the Freemasons who resided in Bonnybridge, decided that they would try and form a Masonic Lodge in Bonnybridge. A meeting took place on 24th October, 1900 in the Royal Hotel at Bonnybridge and it was resolved to form a Lodge in Bonnybridge.



This required suitable premises and the only place which met the requirements was the local Co-operative Hall on Main Street, Bonnybridge. A meeting was held at the Hall on 22nd November, 1900, and it was agreed to go ahead and pursue the founding of a Masonic Hall in the village. This was supported by the Provisional Grand Lodge of Stirlingshire. The name chosen for the Lodge was Lodge Dolphin, which has close connections with the Smith (Smith and Wellstood) family crest. There was also the story told of Mr James Smith, of the aforesaid firm, having been shipwrecked and being kept watch over by a group of dolphins while in the sea. The petition was sent to the Grand Lodge of Scotland at Edinburgh and at their meeting on 3rd November, 1900, they considered the petition. On 8th December, 1900, they granted a Charter allowing Lodge Dolphin to hold meetings and confer degrees and the Lodge was given the number 911 on the Roll. The Provincial Grand Lodge met in the Co-operative Hall at Bonnybridge, on 22nd December, 1900, to consecrate Lodge Dolphin and install the Office Bearers.

In 1905, a committee was set up to look at the possibility of obtaining ground and building a Masonic Lodge. It was agreed to implement the proposals but many circumstances, including the Great War, delayed the proposals coming to fruition. However, by 1923, a suitable plot of land had been identified and it belonged to Mr Ure also of Smith & Wellstood. He was a member of Lodge Dolphin and he was approached regarding the purchase of the ground. He gave it as a donation to the Lodge, "in so far as time permitted, that a Masonic Lodge to stand on the ground." The plans were drawn up and the cost came to £2,500 which was raised through donations and fundraising activities. The foundation stone was laid and the building was completed and opened and consecrated on 4th October, 1924.

Centenary celebrations were held in 2000. The Lodge continued to grow in membership and supported many causes within the community through their charitable work. This culminated, as far as we are concerned, with a charity Bowling match being held at Bonnybridge Bowling Club on 13th August, 2017, under the auspices of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Stirlingshire, to raise funds for local good causes. On Sunday 12th November 2017, members from Driving Force, the Bonnybridge Gala Day, Bonnybridge Youth Football Club and Greenhill Historical Society all received cheques for the sum of £500 each. The Greenhill Historical Society was represented at the presentation by Sheena Lambie and Tom Rintoul. The Society is deeply indebted to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Stirlingshire for this presentation.



Golden Eras of Old



The Check Bar, Roadends, Bonnybridge