



Carsphairn Heritage Group

Newsletter No 38

April 1997

Carsphairn
Pastoral and Horticultural Society.
ESTABLISHED 1875.

The Forty-Eighth Annual

COMPETITION

- AND -

SHOW

- OF -

Sheep • Dogs • Poultry • Pigeons
Butter, Flowers Rhubarb, and
Industrial Work.

WILL BE HELD IN THE

HALL @ ADJOINING FIELD,
CARSPHAIRN,

- ON -

FRIDAY, 3rd JUNE, 1927.

Open in all Classes unless otherwise specified.

USUAL SPORTS
FOOTBALL 5-a-side.

Petticoat Rule - The Women of Carsphairn The 1997 Exhibition

The exhibition this year caused a great stir among not only the women on the Heritage Group Committee but also the men. One in particular brought forth the most lovely ivory wedding dress from the 1870's from 'the boxes in the attic' and, he claims, there are more where that came from.

The excitement finding of so many dresses to be displayed set off a search for suitable models. Two have been very kindly loaned by Dr Devereaux from the Museum in Kirkcudbright although, it must be admitted, one is a male model! None of the tight bodiced creations could be fitted to him but finally a suitably loose-waisted dress turned up for him to wear and now the only giveaway is his rather chunky arms. A dress-makers dummy called 'Dorothy' with the number 46 stamped on her throat was found in the attic at Holm; and Sybil Gray found another in a charity shop in Castle Douglas and kindly bought it for us.

Stories abound and many women of Carsphairn, more past than present, are featured. Among them the MacMillans - Jean, the sewing mistress; Jane Abel, now in her nineties, daughter of Robert MacMillan, who, in her book includes lots about being here in Carsphairn on holiday with her MacMillan relations; a MacMillan dress is featured with 1925 photographs of it being worn. Mrs Wilson of the Shiel of Castlemaddie and the wonderful tale of how, after her wedding, she travelled from her own home near Newton Stewart, to the Shiel.

Mrs Murray, who at 87, still plays the bagpipes. Mary Cathcart, who, as a child around the WWI period, spent summers with her family at the old schoolhouse at the mine and in her fifties wrote about her childhood. Although she mentions writing about it sadly nothing was found relating to the mine, but she did write with humour about childhood visits to her grandparents' country house in Yorkshire. The day Mrs Hunter, living at the mine, fell down the well. The Colonel has contributed a lovely poem comparing a Dresden shepherdess with Lennie Bateman. And of course he writes about Lettice Clark Kennedy who was married in 1870 in the ivory wedding dress.

There is an abundance of bits and pieces relating to the lives of women from bodices (those tightly laced ones), glove stretchers, feather finery and fur wraps, christening robes, babies'

high chair and cradle together with a children's corner where hats, furs and things can be handled and tried on.

All in all we think the resulting exhibition is well worth a visit and hope, when you come in and have a look around, you will think so too.

by Carol Cathcart as our chairman
Hugie Adamson is busy lambing

MY WORLD OF POSTCARDS

On Friday 16th May at the Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn
we are holding our popular
SPRING BUFFET SUPPER

Our guest speaker this year is **Mr Tommy Henderson** who has been chairman of the very successful Dalbeattie Museum since it first opened eight years ago. Not only is he a highly entertaining speaker but he has a wonderful collection of postcards from the 1890's to the 1950's including local scenes, some of which he will be showing us.

7.30 for 8pm

Tickets £3.50

Children £1.50

What shall we do with the Chairperson?

I was taught, at school, and I expect that you were too, that all nouns, relating to males, were masculine, all relating to females feminine, and all the others neuter. Of course this nice simple rule only applied to English, where gender is not so important since adjectives and articles do not have to "agree" with their nouns. It is certainly not true of Latin or French, where they have feminine doors and tables nor of German where a young woman (Das Fraulein) is neuter until she marries and becomes feminine (Die Frau). Well, Romans, Frenchmen, and Germans are only foreigners and we all know that foreigners are a bit odd.

But what about pronouns? Here gender comes into its own and we find that a ship, always referred to as "She" must surely be a feminine noun. Even if it is a Merchantman, or a Man-of War, or even a Mail (Male) Boat. Here is an exception which we are told, "Proves the Rule". But I'm sure I don't know how.

The Shorter Oxford Dictionary defines Chairman as "The occupant of a chair of authority. The person chosen to preside over a meeting, company, a corporate body, etc." No reference you will note of the sex of the person. Despite this there are those who seem to think that a chairman must be a male; presumably because of the word man included therein, and have invented a singularly ugly, and unnecessary word "Chairperson". What they do not seem to realise is that "Man", like "Dog", can relate to the whole species as well as just the male. The male is said to "Embrace the Female". (And not only grammatically, when he gets the chance).

There is nothing new in the rejection of perfectly good words to satisfy the current fashion. When I was a boy "Belly" was thought to be a "Rude Word" and usually "Stomach" was substituted, thus sacrificing anatomical accuracy to social acceptability. We've grown out of this kind of nonsense, as I hope we shall grow out of this sex/gender muddle. If not we shall end up by replacing "Man" in all words not relating specifically to the Male. We might even see a "Woperson flying from Personchester Airport to the Isle of Person", perhaps to avoid a charge of Personslaughter".

What, you may ask, has all this to do with Heritage? Well, our language is not the least important part of our heritage, and is a very rich and beautiful one, which I do not like to see marred by a few well-meaning people, who seem to me to be woefully ignorant of their Mother Tongue, and who, incidentally, damage their own worthy cause by bringing ridicule upon it. I hope enough of my readers will agree with me to vote out the ugly Chairperson and elect in her place the euphonious Madam Chairman. This was how a one time chairman of the L.C.C. chose to be addressed. I believe that she was the first Lady to hold the office and what was good enough for her should be good enough for any of her sisters.

Arthur S Pook March 1997

Carsphairn Show 1927

Last year, Mrs Dalton from Dalmellington gave the Heritage Group a copy of the 1927 Carsphairn Show Programme. Seventy years on, the show is still held on the first Saturday of June, this year on 7th June.

FOR A PLEASANT HOLIDAY VISIT CARSPHAIRN SHOW

ON THE 3RD JUNE.

Buses leave Dalmellington at 10.15 a.m.

Castle Douglas 9.30 a.m.

COME AND ENJOY A MOTOR RUN

Through Bonnie Galloway right
in the Heart of the Crocket
Country.

POULTRY & PIGEON EXHIBITS CONVEYED FREE OF CHARGE.

In 1927 there were classes which no longer exist in 1997. Gone are the nineteen poultry classes and the seven pigeon classes. Hampers in which the birds were kept were conveyed free of charge on the special buses put on from Dalmellington and Castle Douglas for the Show. Gone are the classes for fresh butter, powdered butter and a butter class confined to shepherds or cottars.

Gone are the special prizes for the pigeon section which included a roast of beef from Mr James Burns, butcher, Dalmellington and an ox tongue from Mr Malcolm Ross, butcher, Dalmellington.

There were no cattle classes but seven sheep classes. One of the special prizes in this section included "an artistic brass mounted mirror" for the Blackface sheep with the best fleece for manufacturing purposes and there was a consolation prize, a silver mounted jelly pot, to be awarded to the most unsuccessful exhibitor. The dog section included classes for any sort of shepherd's collie, any collie male or female which must belong to a farmer or shepherd, having charge of not less than 200 sheep, any variety of terrier and any variety of gun dog. The flower section shows that the equivalent section in the shows of the '90s has not changed much.

The sports had the usual children's races but also included races that would require explanation today, such as the cycle tent pegging and flogging the turkey. Men's races dominated the section. Were the high leap, the flat leap and the hop, step and leap for men only? Five a side football was played and there was also a tug of war.

Today's industrial section is more extensive than that of 1927 but it is easy to see that our present day number of classes is based on their eleven open and five confined classes. Perhaps the most intriguing class was one for the most valuable article made from expenditure of 1/- or less (cost to be stated). There were eight baking classes, the most complicated sounding one was a plain loaf to be baked in oven-pot without yeast or eggs and no tins to be used. The special prizes in that section included five stone of flour given by the Dalmellington Co-operative Society.

And what of the personalities involved in the organisation of the 1927 Show. The honorary presiden was T R McMillan, Lamloch and the president William Cambell from Brockloch. The committee consisted of George McMillan, David Mitchell, Alexander Borthwick (Secretary and Treasurer), John Hunter senr., John Hunter junr., Thomas Fergusson, James Hyslop, Andrew Hyslop, Allan Hunter, George Hunter, C L Randall, Robert Wilson, William McKnight, Quentin Mitchell, Samuel Wilson, David Blythe, Peter Campbell, Colin Campbell and Rev. Sievewright.

The Ladies committee consisted of Mrs F A Cathcart, Mrs W Campbell, Mrs R Campbell, Mrs Girdwood (Marbrack), Miss Hyslop, Mrs A Ferguson, Mrs R Grierson, the Misses Randall, Mrs Barclay and Mrs Sievewright with joint secretaries being Mrs

Campbell (Holm) and Miss A Clark Kennedy, Knockgray and joint treasurers Miss A Martin (The Crofts) and Miss McGarva.

Anna Campbell

This article is just a synopsis of the 1927 Show Programme. If you'd like to buy a photocopy of it come to the Heritage Centre on 7th June and read for yourselves what they did 70 years ago!

The Hustings

This report "Mr Young , Liberal Candidate" is taken from the Dumfries and Galloway Standard of 2nd July 1892. It shows that behaviour at political meetings has changed very little over 100 years!

"Mr Young, addressed the meeting, principally for shepherds in Stroanfreggan School on Thursday afternoon. There was a good attendance, including several ladies.* Mr W A McTurk Barlae presided. A unanimous vote of confidence was adopted on the motion of Mr W Dickson, Stroanfreggan seconded by Mr Andrew Lambie, Lorg. Mr Young then drove onto Carsphairn where a large meeting assembled in the school, at which Mr McMillan of Lamloch presided. In the course of his address the candidate referred to the action of the Established Church ministers of the Stewartry in turning their pulpits into Tory hustings, and said they would find that the Church might tumble down by reason of their defence of it, and not because of any attack made upon it by the Liberal party (cheers).

Mr Somerville, Garryhorn, in moving a vote of confidence in Mr Young, said the church question in Carsphairn had taken up too much of their minds. Their minister was about three thousand miles away and drew four fifths of the stipend; still they had the parish ministers of the Stewartry using their position to advocate the cause of the Church of Scotland and proclaiming that there was no man like Mark Stewart. He thought Mr Young was the better of the two. He went for what was

straight and right and gave them a very lucid exposition of his views. Mr Stewart promised fairly enough but his legs took him into the wrong lobby when the division took place. Mr Martin, tailor seconded the motion.

Rev. Mr McNaughton the acting minister of the Established church in the parish proposed a direct negative to the motion - Mr Somerville: "He's merely a curate". (A voice: "but he has a vote".) - A show of hands was taken when only six were held up for the amendment - Mr Somerville "they are all under Colonel Cathcart". (Laughter and cheers)

The Chairman declared the vote of confidence carried by a very large majority".

* Women over the age of 30 got the vote in 1918. In 1928 they got the vote at the age of 18 - the same as men.

THE HERITAGE CENTRE

1997

Dates of Opening

12th April - 26th May weekends only but including

Bank Holiday Mondays **5th and 26th May**

31st May - 28th September daily except Wednesdays

4th October - 12th October weekends only

Re-opens Easter 1998

Times of Opening

Weekday and Saturdays 10.30am until 5 pm

Sundays 1pm until 5pm Closed Wednesdays

The photograph on the front of the previous Newsletter - January 1997 caused some interest. For those who would like to know they were:- Back row L - R :
Diana Lawrence, Campbell McMillan, Margaret McMillan and Betty Carnochan.
Front row : Ina Bell, Ada Grierson, George Ashworth and Elsie Stewart