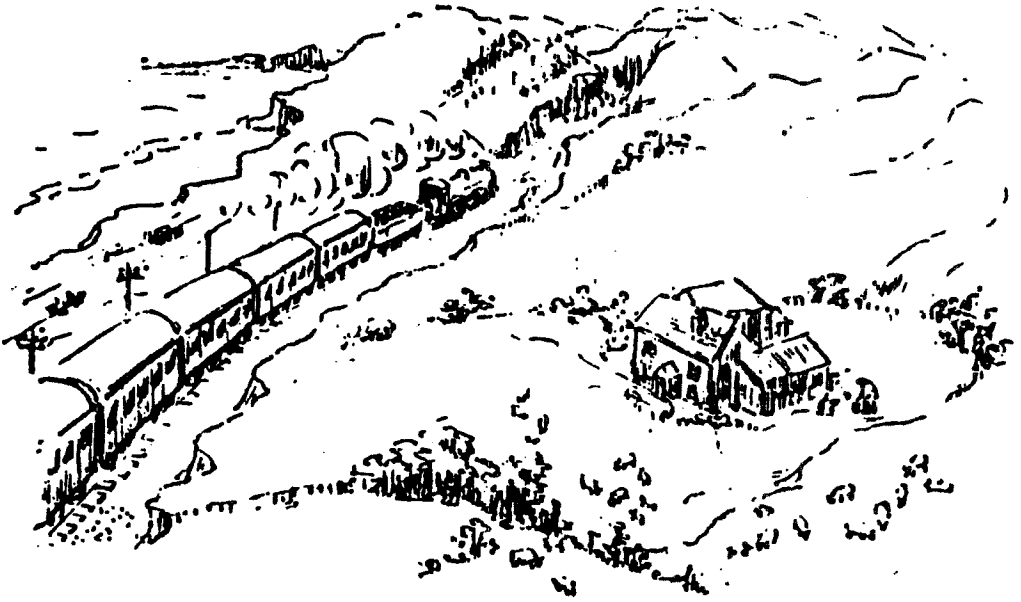


Carsphairn
Heritage
Group.

Newsletter No. 24



The Annual General Meeting of Carsphairn Heritage Group will take place on Friday, November 5th in Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn at 7.30 p.m.

Chairman's Notes.

will be other prizes.

Heritage Group's Activities.

Rock and Heather Garden.

The Annual General Meeting will be held in Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn at 7.30p.m. on Friday, 5th November. We look forward to welcoming a large turnout of members on this occasion as members thoughts and ideas are important to the committee in planning and carrying out the work of the Group in the incoming year. Remember membership fees are due following the A.G.M. Tea and biscuits will be served.

Members who live locally will have noticed that final touches are currently being made to these two features. The Rock Garden is now being covered in. Beryl Hamilton has been working on this with Brian Ferguson and it will soon be completed with an explanatory diagram. Hopefully, the Heather garden has had its final weeding for the year and a bark mulch applied. This work was carried out by Rhoda Campbell.

Old Time Dance.

Newsletter Editor.

Roger Dobson's band will be playing at our Old Time Dance on 26th November in Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn starting at 8.30 p.m. Tea and sandwiches will be provided and a warming cup of soup will be served to sustain you for the homeward journey. There will be a bar.

Anna Campbell has intimated to the committee that she will be resigning from editorship of the Newsletter. As this will be her last Newsletter it is fitting to record our thanks to her for the valuable and interesting work she has done over the past 2½ years since taking over from Robin Ade.

Tickets can be booked by contacting Rhoda Campbell on Dalry 365 and will be available for sale at the A.G.M. Please make a note of this date and tell all your friends as we would like to see a good turnout.

Anyone who would be interested in editing the Newsletter and would like to know more of what is involved before committing themselves can contact either Anna Campbell or Rhoda Campbell for a chat.

Raffle.

Tickets, 50p each are available from committee members now. First prize this year, Border Fine Arts ornament "King of the Castle", is a Blackface ewe with two lambs and there

Sponsored Walks 1993.

Many thanks to all those who contributed towards the £120 raised by the sponsored walks.

Carsphairm Revisited.

It's the twenty third of July 1943. A hot, dusty day. I'm glad to leave behind the stuffy trains packed with servicemen in strange uniforms, the smoke laden city air, blackouts, air raids, the noise and grime of Manchester. This pale faced wee six year old boy grabs his mother's hand and a small tightly packed suitcase. We hurry from Castle Douglas station to catch the Western SMT bus to Ayr. A queue of womenfolk wait at the stop by the library. Will McMath is the driver and Nancy Ferguson the conductress. How will they get this crowd on board, I wonder. Anyone for Ayr, Dalmeil-
-ington? What about us? Carsphairm? At last, on we clamber to the back of the bus. Fighting tiredness I'm kept awake with the strange lilting dialect - music to my ears, and all the clean, fresh sights and sounds. We pass glistening Loch Ken and the locomotives steaming out of Parton with the "paddy" train over the viaduct and away to Mossdale and the hills beyond.

The bus twists and turns, dips and heaves - every minute it seems. All those stops. Now over the Ken Brig to New Galloway and back again. Will we ever get there! Finally Dalry and I begin to spot the changes. The air is cooler as we rise. Through the open door I smell the bog myrtle and the chimney smoke of peat fires.

There's Auntie Jean and Uncle Andy's farm at Stroangassel. The strange names evoke excitement, mystery and longing. Polmaddie, Polquhanity, Dalshan-
-gan, Bardernoch and then the descent to the Liggat and my first view - it seems new every time. There it lies, Carsphairm, slumbering, nestling below the Craig and the seeming giant of Cairnsmore. We sweep past the Liggat. There's the cottage where my grandmother Seaton (nee Anderson) used to live, and over to the east, down the Moniaive road somewhere hidden in the hills, lies Cornharrow - the former home of my shepherd grandfather and the Seatons. Round a final bend now and at last we're here.

We stop outside Lawrence's shop, cross the road and push open the Post Office door to be met by great aunts Agnes and Annie (McWillan). Mary welcomes and smiles, then straight into the living room with the ever burning fire, black leaded grate and simmering kettle. There are so many folk to see and so much "crack", but it isn't boring for the likes of us wee ones here for our annual month's holiday.

I'm awakened next morning about six. From the tiny dormer bedroom over the Post Office I hear Hugh Martin singing and shouting to his cows in the croft opposite. There's a chug, chug, chug as Uncle George's sawmill engine starts up. Mrs Ned Stewart rattles the glass front door as she del-
-ivers the milk. Mr Borthwick calls to Auntie Annie as he sorts the morning's post.

Down in the back kitchen I smell the paraffin stove cooking breakfast.

I'm ravenous for those fried scones, pancakes, black pudding, fried eggs and bacon. What a feast! And oatcakes! I've never tasted anything like it. Then it's out to meet Great Uncle George, one of the kindest, friendliest men I know. George would sort anything for anyone. His workshop is an Aladdin's cave for curious wee boys. There are tools of every kind, timber, paint, glass and metalwork everywhere. And that giant Lister engine with the huge flywheel, the long leather belt and the flashing circular saw. The noise is deafening on wet days - and there are many - I play with cousins in the piles of sawdust or make boats to sail in the pools over the 'coogang'. With bent pins for hooks and worms from the midden I fish for baggy minnows and keep them in one of George's tall glass tanks from the shop. In turn we do the rounds of all the McMillan great aunts and uncles; Auntie Bella with 'B and B' at the top of the village, Auntie Betty, George's wife - the 'postie', Uncle Charlie, a joiner, is home from work in Glasgow, and Auntie Ida (Buchanan) the village schoolmistress. They are all keen for a long crack, cups of tea and cakes. Then we ^{go} shopping down the street to Mrs Blythe's for sweets and into Mrs Lawrence's for cards to send home. Mrs Lawrence and Di always remember us. The shop is a real emporium catering for all the villagers needs.

After the rain comes the sun and a few very hot days. It coincides with the army coming to Carsphairn. Auntie Jean (Ferguson, nee McMillan) is up from her farm. The village is suddenly full of soldiers on manoeuvres, preparing for 'D' day. I step over them whilst picking peas and see a camouflaged face under the hedge. They camp on the 'coogang' and in the fields. Auntie Jean plans a picnic for us up the Bankwood - a real treat! But the army has built a bailey bridge over the Deugh and the bus gets stuck in a muddy field along with army trucks. So off we set on foot with baskets of food and kettles. Alas the Bankwood isn't the same! We sit opposite "Willie's" cave just past the "Greenwell" when through loudspeakers in the trees comes the roar of gunfire and the scream of aircraft in attack. "Hoots! Just carry on" says Aunt Jean, carefree as ever, as she prepares to dip "in the raw" in the deepest pools. The weans smile, bemused, as we gather sticks for the fire, boil kettles for tea, paddle and sing from our view in the cave.

Then there are carefree and happy-go-lucky days at Stroangassel farm or out playing with the Sinclair boys at Carnavel. All too soon the holiday ends. We say our goodbyes till next year as the aunts come out to wave us off on the 9 a.m. bus. Happy days and here's to the next time!

Looking back I'm grateful for all those "next times" when I've revisited Carsphairn. There were years of flyfishing with cousin Jimmy, walking

in the hills, blaeberry picking up the Cleugh, working on the forestry, trips in the car with Uncle George and Auntie Betty to the seaside or over to Glentroof. There were walks to the leadmines and Loch Doon, and more recently visits with our children and happy times with Agnes and Willie Dickson (related to me both through McMillans and Seatons!) There will always be for me deep nostalgia when I think of you, Carsphairn - for you are my roots!

Contributed by David Alexander Seaton.

Mr Seaton would be very interested to hear from anyone who knew the Andersons of the Liggat or the Seatons from Cornharrow.

Frontispiece.

The illustration of the 'Paddy' train is taken out of the book Recollections and Reflections of a Grandmother written by Jane Abel who is David Seaton's mother.

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Endangered Speeches.

It is a common failing in Old Buffers like me (and probably Old Biddies too) to complain bitterly that "Things are not as good as they used to be". I have always tried to avoid this attitude since I consider it to be taking an unfair advantage of the younger generation who obviously are unable to refute our memories of time before they were born. I do feel, however that I may be permitted to grant myself an indulgence on the subject of our language. I hope that someone will prove me to be wrong but I do think that our language is one of the most threatened aspects of our heritage. I am not referring to the Gaelic, which I am advised, has more people than ever, in the North, claiming it as their "First Language". Nor do I mean the "Old Scots", which from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries was not even regarded as a language at all but only as "A corrupt form of English". I believe that it is only late in this century that the Bible has been translated into Scots and despite renewed academic interest in it, is still considered by many people - including Scots- as no more than a mere dialect. It is as unrealistic to expect it ever to return to every day speech as to expect the English to revert to the language of Chaucer.

The language I do refer to is that varient, and there are many of them, which is spoken by modern Scots and may be thought of as "Standard English"

enriched by, I fear a rapidly diminishing number of words from the Old Scots tongue.

In the fifty plus years during which I have known Scotland, a very large number of very descriptive and picturesque words, which delighted me when I first came here seem to have fallen into disuse. True, we still see Yows in our fields but the Kye have all become cattle. Where now are all the Brocks, Tods and Puddocks? The Mavis and the Merle have all flown away and been replaced by the English Thrush and Blackbirds. In the five years since my return to Scotland, I have found my neighbours to be no less friendly and hospitable than before, but I have yet to be invited to "Come awa' ben the hoose". So much more welcoming than "Do come in". Gigots are still available but I have not seen one served on an Ashet for years. Do the Bairns no longer take a Piece-poke to school?

I suppose that it is inevitable that such influences as broadcasting and easier travel should make the better known English words replace the older dialect and, after all, the first purpose of any language is to communicate as widely as possible but it does seem a pity to lose so many very descriptive words such as "Dwan" and "Schilpit" and "Dreich" for I know of no English equivalent. And when signposts refer to Strathspey as Spey Valley, which I am informed some have recently- then the time has come to do something about it. The only problem being what to do?

On reading over what I have written, I feel moved to offer an apology to my Scottish readers for my presumption, as an Englishman, in laying claim to Scots as "Our language". My excuse is: the Scots have a happy knack of taking a little bit of Scotland with them wherever they go. I have been fortunate enough to have been married to one for more than two thirds of my life and therefore my home has been a Scottish enclave although in the South of England for most of this time. The result is that we can now watch the Calcutta Cup match in complete domestic harmony.

Contributed by Arthur Pock.

The Change in Farm Names Over The Centuries.

Bardnoch.

1688	Bardanoch.
1696	Barbunoch.
1702	Bardarnoch
1764	Bardernoch.

Carminnow.

1570	- Karemanno
1590	Keremanoch
1604	Kairmonnoch
1711	Kermunno

Carnavel.

1715 Carnavell.
1775 Cornavel.

Holm of Daltallochan

1591 Holme of Dalcallachane
1675 Holm of Tantallochen

Furmiston.

1696 Furmistoune.
1743 Furmiston.
1783 Furmieston.

Knochengorroch.

1584 Knockinggeroche.

Lamloch

1674 Lambloch

Marbrack

1608 Marbrok
1712 Merbrack

Marscalloch

1668 Mariscaltoch

Muirdrochwood.

1581 Merdroquhat
1733 Miln of Mardrocket
1751 Mardrocket

Waterhead.

1577 Wattirheid.
1590 Watterhead
1609 Watterheid.

100 Years Ago. (Both extracts taken from the Dumfries Standard.)

May 27th 1893. Opening of the United Presbyterian Church in Carsphairn.

The church which lies in the line of the village street is built of whinstone quarried from the bed of the Deugh. It is comfortably seated for 150 people and is elegantly finished internally. The pulpit is of open platform pattern; the pews commodious and convenient, of light varnished wood and each fitted with an umbrella rack. The building is well lighted and is heated by pipes. A little hall behind supplies accommodation suitable for meetings of Session or Bible Classes. The total cost has been about £530 with a grant of £150 from the Synod funds

70 Years Ago.

April 11th 1923. Carsphairn War Memorial.

The unveiling ceremony took place on Sunday of a memorial quite distinctive design erected by the parishioners of Carsphairn in remembrance of the thirteen men belonging to the parish who gave up their lives on the battle-field during the Great War and in honour of the men who served with the Forces. The Galloway V.C. Colonel William Hew Clark Kennedy performed the unveiling of the ceremony.

ODE TO THE HERITAGE CENTRE

Inside this little crofters shed
 Right behind this seat
 There is a wealth of info
 That takes a lot to beat

Why sit upon this toilet
 With heritage so near
 If only you would enter
 The building to your rear

Read about the war
 The rationing and the fight
 That old Dad's Army started
 When the enemy was in sight

If history is not your style
 Nor those brave courageous men
 Then still come in and see us
 You can always buy a pen

Day after day the stewards sit
 A lonely life for su-re
 When the only folk that stop
 Are here to test the sewer

Oh yes, the toilet beckons
 We know they're far from vile
 But please come in just one or two
 We'll make it worth your while

This was written by Helen and Alison Campbell whilst they did a duty as stewards in the Heritage Centre. Many people have acted as stewards this summer and we are grateful for their time, not only inside the Centre, but also in the Heather garden where much weeding has been done by themselves and other members of the community. Many cars stop at the centre, some to use the excellent toilets, and very often people are seen admiring the various gardens. Now, in the autumn, the whole property looks very attractive and it is a very pleasing entry into or exit from Carsphairn.