

Carsphairn
Heritage
Group



WOMEN'S LAND ARMY (ENGLAND AND WALES)
RELEASE CERTIFICATE.

The Women's Land Army for England and Wales acknowledges
with appreciation the services given by

MISS BEATRICE WYKE.

who has been an enrolled member for the period from

19TH APRIL 1941 to 31ST JULY 1945.
and has this day been granted a willing release.

Date 31. 7. 45

J. A. [Signature]

COUNTY SECRETARY, WOMEN'S LAND ARMY.

See Newsletter No 89 p7

Newsletter No 90
Spring 2010

Lt Colonel John Clark Kennedy M.C. 1918 -2010

An Appreciation

The death of Lieutenant Colonel John Clark Kennedy, or the Colonel, as he was affectionately known is a great loss to Carsphairn Heritage Group.

Since its inception in 1988 he had been an active member, a regular steward and a keen contributor to the newsletters and annual exhibitions.

In 2004 and 2005 our exhibitions were devoted entirely to the rich heritage of the Clark Kennedy family and their history at Knockgray. Often there were ingenious contributions from the Colonel, several of them photographed here. In 1999 in "Centuries of Communication at Carsphairn" he made up the 1880 Knockgray tricycle from the parts he had found from Knockgray and painstakingly made, in a fish tank, part of a road just as John Louden McAdam would have done. His enthusiasm for all his artefacts was infectious.

In our newsletters he contributed 15 articles over the years, covering many subjects from his wide community interests to his illustrious ancestors of whom he was very proud but equally delighted to share the detail of their colourful lives.

Until his late 80s each Thursday morning he would undertake a duty as a steward in the Centre. He'd bring in his radio and during the season could be caught listening to a cricket commentary. He visited the Heritage Centre most days when it was open, either bringing in something that would be a valuable asset to an exhibition or just to talk to the steward. Each week, during our open season he usually brought a bunch of flowers, daffodils, beautiful rhododendrons or whatever he could find in his walks around Knockgray.

Sponsored walks in the 1990s were often organised and led by him with a few other friends helping in the marshalling. The pace was fast and he was an intrepid leader.

His generosity and encouragement to Carsphairn Heritage Group were hugely appreciated over the years and we will sadly miss his contributions. We all have many fond memories of a kind, benevolent man who brought much pleasure into our lives as well as a lasting heritage.

Anna Campbell

Anniversaries

Funny things, anniversaries – they make you think. You get intimations of mortality but, at the same time, reassurance that not everything is forgotten.

I suppose the big one this year is the 450th anniversary of The Reformation. That is not an easy one to pin-point but, had it not taken place, what a very different place Carsphairn would have had in history. My rather frivolous mentors let me think that it happened because Henry VIII was bored with his wife but of course things were much more serious than that. Luther's ideas caught on in a big way in Scotland and led eventually to The Kirk as we know it with battles and schisms, Covenanters, Dissenters and all sorts along the way.

One of my grandfathers came from deepest Protestant Ulster, the other was a Wee Free until the Minister admonished him for taking his wife and children out for a spin in his new motor-car on The Sabbath, whereupon he left in a huff and joined the Kirk. Every now and then in May, in Edinburgh, when a contentious issue is to be debated at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, you get the feeling that a bit more reforming would not go amiss.

The congregation of Carsphairn Church, and anyone else with the welfare of our actual building at heart, have been asked to suggest ways it could be more fully used. We are told that the acoustics are wonderful, particularly for choral music. We have our central Communion Table, still in use once a year. Perhaps we could use it more often and invite others to come and join us to boost the offering. It is, after all, the three hundred and seventieth anniversary of Carsphairn Parish.

The other anniversary this month is that of J.M. Barrie's birthday 150 years ago in Kirriemuir. Part of his education was at the Dumfries Academy, when he stayed next door at Moat Brae. The garden there, sloping down to the Nith, was the inspiration for Peter Pan. Latterly the building became a much-appreciated Nursing Home but was eventually

sold and fell into decay. It has been acquired, just in time, by the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust who are now raising funds to bring the house and garden back to their former glory, to be used in some way for the benefit of children.

It is also sixty-five years since VE day, the beginning if the end of World War II. I know most of you weren't so much as a twinkle in your father's eye that year but some of us remember what we were doing and where we were when the news came through. My mother, sisters and I were living in Creetown and the daffodils were out (Spring really has got earlier). There was a Tableau Vivant in the Church Hall and I was Peace's little sidekick in a horrible frilly blue dress that itched and I had to stand still to be part of the Tableau. I had rather a lot of very unkempt curly hair which made me, I was told, look like 'a hoolit peekin oot o' a whin bush'.

Maybe some of you would like to write in to the newsletter with your memories or notable anniversaries? One of my brothers-in-law is going to be 90 this month – quite young for these days but still worth celebrating!

Joyce Hunter Blair

Jamieson House

Jamieson House, opposite the shop in Carsphairn, is two houses nowadays. From a photograph of the village taken in 1885 it can be seen that it was by far the largest and highest property on the street.

If you have ever wondered how this house got its name here is the answer. Below is an extract from a letter written on 14 July 1860 from Richard Jamieson (Holm of Daltallochan) to his brother Robert who lived in Australia

"I am building a new house in Carsphairn Village where my old house and smithy stood. It is 47 feet by 35 and to be two storeys high. The joists were put in yesterday. It has a fine ornamental front. It is taken from a plan of old Mrs McClaren's house in Cathcart Street Ayr but looks better. The doors (it has two) windows and corners – base wall plate are white freestone and the rest of the front is polished whinstone cut square which makes it look good."

The late C. E. Stewart, Carsphairn Portrait of a Rural Postman

One of the oldest inhabitants in the parish of Carsphairn, Mr Charles Edward Stewart passed away on February 14 in his 80th year.

With the exception of a few years in early manhood he spent his life in Carsphairn in the same house he was born and where he died.

He became a prominent and well respected personality during his 37 years as postman where his duties took him over the hills to the Ayrshire border and to Castlemaddie, Shiel and to the Kells border, his only absence being three days when he strained an ankle on the icy hills. In 1947 at the age of 75 he retired from the Post Office, but after a short interval took over the farming of the glebe at which he worked arduously.

All his life whatever his hand found to do he did with all his might, never flinching no matter how onerous the burden. For 22 years he was secretary of Lagwine Hall Committee and the books he left behind are an example of beautiful handwriting and neatness. For 23 years he was clerk to the School Board until the County council took over the schools and for 24 years he had been registrar of births, marriages and deaths.

He was well known as a Burns Scholar and at all Burns functions he was called upon to recite. "Tam o Shanter", "The Cotter's Saturday Night", "To a Haggis" were but a few of his repertory, repeated without a mistake. In the local Dramatic Club he was an enthusiast and took leading parts each year never needing a prompter. At the county festival in 1950 he was specially mentioned by the adjudicator for his acting and clearness of speech. His first attempts when but a youth were in "The Gentle Shepherd", his last in 1951 at the age of 79 in Lagwine Hall.

Steadfast and faithful in all his undertakings he was the most regular attender at divine service and only twice was he absent from communion since the present minister came here 26 years ago.

For fifty years he assisted with the decorating of the hall for the Christmas party and unaided dressed the tree. It was his task to make a list of all the children in the parish and he was never known to miss a child.

At his memorial service on Sunday February 17 the Rev. W. Sievwright preaching from the text "Gather the people together and I will give them water" referred to Mr Stewart as a well of water which never failed. Teaches and ministers testify to the willing assistance he rendered at all times, his reply when asked to help being "I'll no let ye doon", and he never did.

Quiet and unassuming he lived his life. On the lonely walks in the

hills he recited the poems of Burns and learnt his parts in the annual plays. On quiet winter evenings, the newspapers carefully read, he turned to the knitting of socks and gloves and during the war knitted 40 pairs of socks for the forces.

He leaves a widow, two sons, five daughters and grandchildren to mourn his loss. The funeral service was held in the church on Saturday, February 16 when there was a very large congregation from Glenkens and Ayrshire and the many beautiful wreaths testified to the love and respect of his associates. He will be greatly missed and his place will be hard to fill.

There are photographs of Mr Stewart in this year's exhibition and extracts from his winning sermon can be found in Newsletter number 80 Autumn 2007

Extract from the Ayrshire Post March 7th 1952

Anna Campbell

Carsphairn Golf Course

Following the article about the Rogers Trophy in the Winter 2009 newsletter one of our members Mr Ken McAlpine of Prestwick has done some research on the link between Prestwick St Nicholas golf course and the one in Carsphairn.

The designer of the Carsphairn course, David Kinnell was the professional at St Nicholas from 1902 until 1936. He was an accomplished golfer and was fifth at the Open Championship in 1905. He was responsible for the design of three courses, Carsphairn being the third in 1914.

Can anyone help?

Dumfries & Galloway Family History Society are intending to produce Memorial Inscription Books for various graveyards across Kirkcudbrightshire, including Carsphairn. We have keyed into our computer a copy of the Manpower Services (MSC) recording of the graveyard and our aim is to correct, amend and update this before publishing. Normally we would NOT include an obvious "modern" section or extension but stick to the main graveyard. Wherever possible we like to look for local volunteers who are familiar with the families and place names. If anyone would like to get involved or know more details please contact: - Sheila Crosthwaite, Barnsoul Farm, Irongray, tel 01387 730 249 or email simcros17@aol.com

From the History of Galloway Volume I published 1841

“Few early historians take much notice of the internal condition of Galloway. Buchanan mentions it, as possessing an undulating surface, and as containing in the valleys, between the hills, almost innumerable lakes and fens, which, being now drained, form beautiful fields of rich and well-cultivated land. Originally the greater part of its whole extent was covered with natural wood, principally oak; and even huge tracts, now presenting nothing but barren and desolate moors and mosses then clothed with noble forests of oak, ash, beech and other hard timber. The only places destitute of trees, were the exposed verges of its shores, the soil-less summits of its rocks, and the low marshy spots here and there to be observed, which the stagnation of water had rendered unfavourable to the support of vegetation.”

“The numerous mosses of the district, indeed, owe their formation to these ancient woods; and the trunks of trees are still dug out of them, in a state of wonderful preservation. Many of the original forests existed until recent times. *Symson mentions the extensive forest of Minnigaff – a great part of which remained in 1684, when he wrote his Description of Galloway.”

“There was once an extensive wood in the parish of Kells, called the ‘Forest of Buchan’ and two farms bearing the names of ‘Over and Nether Forests’ mark its locality. The forest of Kenmure that once lay on both sides of the Ken is mentioned by Maclellan in his account of Galloway. The tract of country between Kirkcudbright and Kenmure Castle, is said to have been once over-spread with thick woods; and some places in that direction still retain names indicative of the fact; such as Meiklewood, Underwood, and Woodhead. Natural timber still appears in various parts of Galloway, particularly on the sides of hills and banks of rivers.”

“The English, in their various invasions of the south of Scotland, endeavoured to clear the country of its impervious woods, which obstructed their own progress, and afforded protection to their enemies. In some of their expeditions into Scotland, the strokes of eighty thousand hatchets were heard at one time; whilst fires blazed in many quarters, hourly destroying whole acres of timber.”

* see Andrew Symson's description of Corsefairne in 17th century - over

“CORSEFAIRNE. This parish-kirk, being eight miles distant to the northward from Dalry, Kircudburgh, going by the way on the east side of Dee; but, crossing the river of Kenn twice, and then crossing Dee at the boat of the Rone, and the boat of Kirkcudburgh, it will be but about twentie-four miles distant therefrom. The Bishop of Galloway is patron of the kirk of Corsefairne. This parish is in part bounded, on the south, with the parish of Dalry, [(and separated therefrom by the river of Kenn,) and in part with the parish of Kells, being of old a part of the said parish; but now separated therefrom by (Polmaddy) Bourn, which emptieth itself into the water of Kenn; on the west, it is bounded, with the parish of Monygaffe; on the north-west, with the parish of Dumallington, this parish of Corsefairne, running up as far as Loch Dune; on the north (it is bounded by Ayrshire, and on the east, with the parish of Dalry.)

In this parish of Corsefairne, there is a considerable water called the Water of Deugh, having its rise in the (moors of Ayrshire,) and runneth hard by the Kirk of Corsefairne, on the west end thereof, and at length loseth its name, by entering into the river of Kenn, two miles beneath the said Kirk of Corsfairne.”

The History of Galloway Volume II

written about 1684 by Andrew Symson 1625 - 1713

CHG Committee for 2010

Chairman Agnes Holden , Dalshangan, Carsphairn	01644 460651
V Chairman Anna Campbell , Holm of Daltallochan	01644 460208
also Membership Secretary	
Treasurer Ruth Williams , Kensglen, Carsphairn	01644 460516
Secretary Joyce Hunter Blair , Dalry	01644 430329
Editor Carol Cathcart , Culraven, Borgue	01557 870247
Robin Ade , Auchrae Sauchs, Carsphairn	01644 460251
Elizabeth Affleck , Brownhill, Carsphairn	01664 460548
Sheila Hey , 26 Doonbank Crescent, Patna	01292 531542
Allan James Salutation House, Carsphairn	
Anne Rutherford , The Schoolhouse, Carsphairn	01644 460674