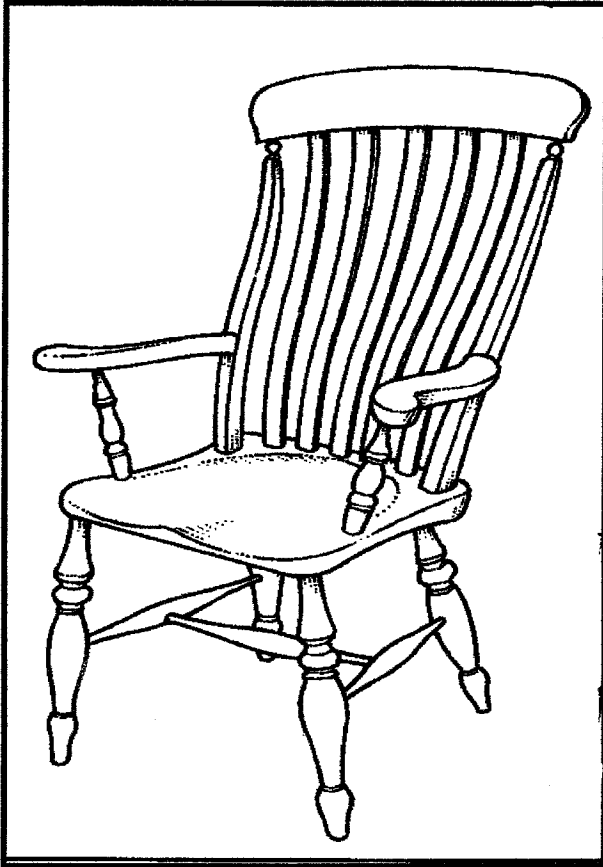


Carsphairn
Heritage
Group



Reflections of the Chair - see page 2

Newsletter No 84
Autumn 2008

Reflections of the Chair - by Agnes Holden

As of the 27th October 2008, I will have been in Carsphairn for exactly 11 years. I have been a committee member of the Carsphairn Heritage Group for almost the same length of time. When I was first approached to join, I vividly remember how impressed I was by the Heritage Centre, and by this very small band of people who got together and produced an annual exhibition on a subject closely related to Carsphairn and its surrounds.

At this point it might be useful to say a little of my background. Although Scottish, I had lived in London for nearly 20 years, prior to moving to Carsphairn. I was employed for all that time within the Conservation Department of the Victoria & Albert Museum. Two weeks ago, I was in the V&A and some projects that were under discussion when I was still employed there are only now coming to fruition.

Perhaps that makes it easier to understand my awe at this small community initiative. They not only came up with the idea of having their own Centre but persuaded the Council to build it. They produce an annual exhibition, run it using only volunteers, produce four Newsletters each year and survive purely by donation! I had never seen anything like it. It was so refreshing to me after the bureaucracy of a large national museum.

Over the years, I have continued to be impressed by the drive and dedication of the Group. Having said that, given the feisty nature of some of our members, we do have our moments of discord!

In the beginning I felt rather inadequate; partly due to the fact that I knew nothing of the area but also that I was a confirmed "townie". However, in true Carsphairn style, I was found a role. My first job was to assist the Head teacher with the mounting of the exhibition. It is a role we continue to this day. Most of our time in this task is spent cajoling, begging and generally demanding text from the other members writing it up. We get there in the end, but sometimes it

is rather tight!

When I first moved here, my children were small and so meetings generally took place at my house. The tradition has continued and over the years we have had many enjoyable and interesting debates around my kitchen table. We greatly miss Colonel Clark Kennedy since he retired last year. I particularly miss his chocolate! Occasionally he would leave, at the end of a meeting, a chocolate bar with a post-it-note attached thanking me for my hospitality.

One particular evening, after a very long agenda, he had to leave without the usual cup of tea and cake. I had, in the course of the evening, noticed him writing something. When I took out the note from the chocolate, one side said "Thank you for your hospitality", the other read "Please could you provide a clock for the next meeting to stop people droning on and on and on !" I duly obliged.

It is a reflection of the welcoming nature of the Group that someone from 'outside' like me can become so much a part of a group that is passionate and committed to telling to others the fascinating history of this area.

Our exhibition next year will be looking at families that have left Carsphairn and tracing the histories of those families across the world. How nice to feel, at last, rooted in a community that has welcomed me and my family to its own developing history.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the

Carsphairn Heritage Group will be held at

Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn on

Friday 14th November 2008

AGM begins at 7.00pm

Followed by a Quiz Using Local Slides

by Anna Campbell

Refreshments

More Jamieson Letters

Here are some more extracts from the letters written by the Jamieson family from the Holm, Carsphairn to their brothers who went to Australia in the 1830s. They cover a wide spectrum of subjects from family news to farming updates to local and national news.

Addressed to Mr William Jamieson, Castlemaddie , Scotland.
District of Port Phillip. N.S.Wales. (By Sydney Packet)

Holm 1st October 1846

Dear Brother,

We received four letters about three weeks ago, all at one time, dated February 1846 and we were sorry to see by one of them that you had got yourself hurt by the natives. And we received another last week from Robert dated May 1846 informing us that you were now got better and out of danger. You will need to be more careful in future and not go so near them as they may kill you.

I have not wrote you for sometime but Robert will have received Richard's letter before this time, informing you of Archibald's death which happened on the 17th of May last. He died in the Bank Holm at the Midgeyhau opposite Willie's Cave.

We are all well and I hope that this will find you and Robert in the same. And all our friends are well, those that we have heard from lately. Uncle of Wandlemill got himself hurt a little by a cart of corn falling on him but he is now quite well.

We have had a very warm summer this year, warmer than any one since the year 1826 and we had all the crop in a month earlier than usual but the potato crop will be a total failure this year. They are all diseased and there will not be above one fourth of an average crop. We are thinking of not raising our potatoes until the spring as we think they will keep better in the ground than in pits. I am afraid there will be very few of them planted next year as this is now the second year they have failed. Ours looked very well this year, indeed I may

say I never saw a better harvest until the first of August and then the stems went all at once.

The meal is very dear at present and still rising but the Corn Bill is now off and that can be no excuse for keeping up the prices.

We had a visit of Mr Auld for two or three days. He speaks greatly in favour of Australia as being a fine country and how much money can be made but I fear he has not been much the richer of his journey to that country. He speaks of what free rides he had through the country. He has done nothing since he came home.

I am your affect. Brother James Jamieson.

A Parable for 2008

For the purposes of this story a talent = £500,000)

A man who was to travel to a far country called his servants and delivered unto them his goods.

And unto one he gave five talents, to another two and to another one, every man according to his job specification and he straight away took his journey.

When the master returned he called unto him and man who had received the five talents, but the man looked crestfallen and said: "Lord, thou deliverest unto me five talents and I did trade in stocks and shares and did buy into a dodgy pension scheme and now all is lost and I am bereft".

The master raised his eyes to Heaven and did call in he that had received the two talents. But the servant said unto him, "Master, I went on the Internet and put all the money into Icelandic banks and have lost everything and the bailiffs knocketh at my door".

The master wailed and gnashed his dentures and called unto him the man who had received one talent, who was looking a trifle smug. "Lord," the servant said, "I was afraid (having heard rumours about the American sub-prime mortgage market) so I dug a hole and buried my talent in the earth. Then to

conceal its hiding place from the neighbours I planted vegetables and fruit over it and also I did place a chicken coop there and populated it with hens and ducks. And lo, the hens and ducks laid eggs and did multiply and in the passing of one year I became self-sufficient and have not needed to use the initial capital which I can return to you.”

At this the master rejoiced saying, “Thank goodness someone round here hath a bit of sense. I am in need of the money. The airline I was with hath gone bust and I had to pay to fly back with another company.....oh.....and by the way.... Hast thou a couple of eggs and a few spuds thou couldst let me have....?”

from Sue Wiseman of course

Some Names in Carsphairn and their meanings

Taken from ‘Studies in the Topography of Galloway’
by Sir Herbert Eustace Maxwell, Bart. Published in 1887

- Ardarroch** - *m* Height of the oaks
Auchrae - *m* smooth field
Bardennoch - *s* Bardannoch
Bow (Burn) - *m* term used to denote a manor-house, or principal farm-house, or a village
Braidenoeh - hill of 1000ft adjacent to Bardennoch; ‘The Robbers Den’ (bradoch = robber)
Brockloch - *m* a badger warren
Carlin’s Cairn - *s* Karlingkairn; *m* carlin, carling – an old woman. Said to have been erected by a miller’s wife who gave shelter to Robert the Bruce
Carminnows - *s* Kirremonnow 1615, Karmunnow; *m* (minnough) the middle land-quarter
Carnavel - *m* land-quarter of the apples
Castlemaddie - *s* Castle maddyes, Castlemady 1527; *m* castle of the dogs
Coran - as in (of Portmark) a round hill.
Craigengillan - *s* Kragingullan; *m* crag of the holly OR Guillin’s crag, (Guillin being tutelary deity of blacksmiths)
Craigtarson - *m* thwart crag
Dalshangan - *s* Dalchangan; *m* field of the ants

- Deugh, Water of** - *s* Ottroduscan 1550 (water of Duscan); *m* black water
- Dodd Hill** - *m* uncertain, perhaps related to doddy, doddit
- Drumjohn** - *s* Drumjowan, Drumjoan
- Drumness** - *m* ridge of the cascade (waterfall at Polmaddy)
- Dundeugh** - *s* from several charters has been Dungeuche 1515, Dundeuch 1674 & Dindouch 1700
- Glenhoul** - *s* Glenhovyll 1563; *m* glen of the fork (junction of streams)
- Holm of Dalquhairn** - Holm - *m* stretch of land beside a river; Dalquhairn -*s* Dalwharn, Dalahorn, Dalwhairns. *m* field of the cairn.
- Holm of Daltallochan** - Holm (as above) Daltallochan - *m* Dal - a portion of low land between hills; tal ?; lochan - small loch
- Ken, Water of** - the stream that gives the name to the Glenkens and Kenmuir
- Knockengorroch** - *m* knockan - a little hill, gorrach - near or short field
- Knockgray** - *m* hill of the elevated flat
- Liggate** - *m* a gate so hung it may shut of itself
- Marbrack** - *s* Morbrock; *m* brindled, spotted moor
- Marscalloch** - *m* moor or merkland of the rocks
- Meaul** - hills of 2279ft, 1525ft, 1591ft and 1432ft; *m* bald, bare
- Muirdrochwood** - *m* bridge moor; (between Bridge of Deugh & High Bridge of Ken)
- Polmaddie** - *m* stream of the dogs/wolves
- Shiel of Castlemaddie** - shiel *m* hut for shelter for man/sheep; Castlemaddie see above
- Stroanfreggan** - *m* point or headland of the crag
- Stroanpatrick** - *m* Patrick's headland

s = spelling variations

m = meaning

Taken from 'Studies in the Topography of Galloway'
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Carsphairn Mutual Improvement Society

Carsphairn Soiree – The Carsphairn Mutual Improvement Society held their anniversary on the 11th inst. in the schoolroom, which was all the better suited for the occasion through the taste of the Sabbath-school teachers, who had treated the scholars to a soiree. Mr Carson, the president, asked a blessing, and tea was served up in a way that did much credit to the officiating ladies. The meeting was addressed by the Chairman and Messrs Bone and McNaught, who explained the object of the Society and the meeting. Mr Maxwell played the part of a comedian in a most excellent way, and kept all in a merry mood; Mr Gracie gave vocal and instrumental music in a masterful manner; Mr Hunter read a capital essay, entitled “Onward”; and Mr McKay recited a piece for the ladies. Mrs Ferguson, Mrs Gracie, Miss Ferguson, and Mr R. Gracie sang some songs in good style. On the motion of Mr Hannah, the chairman was awarded a vote of thanks, and all who had taken part in the proceedings were heartily applauded for their performances. After singing “Auld Lang Syne”, the meeting broke up at a late hour. – *Cor.*

Letter to the Editor

Friday, Feb 1, 1867

Sir,- I have observed with great pleasure, and at the same time warm interest, through your pages and other channels, the rise and increase of “Mutual Improvement”, or, as they are better known, by the name of “Debating Societies”....

have watched with great interest the progress of a Debating Society in one of our upland wild districts, viz, Carsphairn, in that country of hills, where you may travel for miles without a sound to disturb the ear save the scream of the curlew, and the roar of some distant waterfall; there, in that wild region, the wide-scattered hardy mountaineers have joined heart and hand and formed a Debating Society, the advantages of which, if they have not already felt, they will soon feel. I only wish there were more of these excellent societies among us. If the young men in the lovely valley of the Ken would take an example from their northern neighbours, and pluck up a spirit and form a Debating Society at some of our villages, the result would soon be seen, the minds of our young men would experience a healthy and invigorating influence, and the current of their thoughts would be directed into channels fitted in every way to improve and cultivate their mental faculties, which would show that they were *men* – men not carried away and satisfied with the opinions and decisions of other people, but men who can think and judge for themselves.

Such are a few of the many good qualities of Debating Societies, and I would heartily recommend them as fitted in every way to give an impulse, and at the same time a refining tone to the mind.-

I am, &c., A YOUNG ADVOCATE OF DEBATING SOCIETIES.

New-Galloway, Jan 30, 1867.

Contributed by by David Bartholomew