



Published by The Jim Hamilton Heritage Society of Coalburn

Message from the Chairman

With the demand for calendars from several organisations and also the recent bad weather, we have been unable to produce the Newsletter at the normal time.

I trust those of you who were present at the Christmas Dinner last month enjoyed the evening. We were fortunate that the worst of the snow came after the event. The outcome of the inclement weather meant we had to cancel the meeting due on 6th January, however as there was a date still to be filled, 17th February, the Quiz Night will be held on that evening.

John and I have been asked to visit Waterside WRI and also pay another visit to Auchlochan. These outings help to publicise the work Society as well as the variety of photos in the collection.

The Second World War evening at the school was very well attended and some of the school children contributed to the night's entertainment. Since changing our venue to the Bowling Club we have seen a marked increase in the number of members and friends turning out to hear our various speakers. As usual we have endeavoured to bring to you as varied a programme as possible.

Believe it or not thoughts are turning towards the production of this year's Gala Day calendar as research has to be made into the content to ensure that the calendar is appropriate for the next year. On the subject it has to be said that a fair amount of our income comes from the production of calendars and while much is said about them, often in jest, I must admit, a large amount of time is taken up in their production particularly as the end of each year approaches.

My thanks as usual to all who have contributed their time, effort and attendance during the past months, it is much appreciated.

Peter McLeish , 19th January 2009.

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2009/10

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ALEXANDER MUIR

From the rural surroundings of Waterside in the early nineteenth century was born Alexander Muir, the son of John Muir and Catherine McDermid.

His mother, previously widowed stayed at Yonderton. His father had been Head Teacher at Crawfordjohn before taking up a similar post at Skellyhill School (renamed Waterside in 1878), and they were married in 1829,

Alexander's birth occurred in April of the following year at Yonderton, and eighteen months later the family was completed on the birth of another son, John.

At the age of three Alexander and his family immigrated with several other local people to Canada. He grew up in Toronto and there he received his schooling and graduated with a BA degree at Queen's University in the city.

Following in his father's profession he became a teacher and was also recognised as a poet and songwriter and it is due to his latter talent that he received acclaim in his adopted country. He married Agnes Thomson and she bore him two sons and a daughter. She died in 1864 and he remarried a year later to Mary Alice Johnston.

It was during his second marriage that he composed his best known work in 1867, "**The Maple Leaf Forever**". This was written to celebrate the Confederation of Canada. Such was his standing several schools were named after him and in his adopted city in 1952 a local park was renamed in his honour. His death took place on **26th June 1906**.



Alexander Muir

THE MAPLE LEAF FOREVER

In days of yore from Britain's shore,
Wolfe, the dauntless hero came,
And planted firm Britannia's flag,
On Canada's fair domain,
Here may it wave our boast, our pride,
And joined in love together,
The Thistle, Shamrock, Rose entwine,
The Maple Leaf Forever!

Chorus

**The Maple Leaf, our emblem dear, The Maple Leaf Forever!
God Save Our Queen and Heaven bless, The Maple Leaf Forever!**

On many hard-fought battle fields,
Our brave fathers, side by side,
For freedom, home and loved ones dear,
Firmly stood and nobly died;
And those dear rights which they maintained,
We swear to yield them never,
We rally round the Union Jack,
The Maple Leaf Forever!

God bless our loved Canadian homes,
Our Dominion's vast domain,
May plenty ever be our lot,
And peace hold endless reign;
Our Union, bound by ties of love,
That discord cannot sever,
And flourish green o'er Freedom's home,
The Maple Leaf Forever!

On merry England's far-famed land,
May kind heaven sweetly smile,
God bless old Scotland evermore,
And Ireland's emerald isle;
Then swell the song both loud and long,
Till rocks and forests quiver,
God Save Our Queen and Heaven bless,
The Maple Leaf Forever!

References

Jim Hamilton's Coalburn
Chronicle No. 19, page 495

LESMAHAGOW

The Parish and the People
Pages 105-106
(Published 1990)

William Clelland



LESMAHAGOW SCHOOLS FOOTBALL COMPETITION 1906

For the past six weeks a series of football competitions between the various schools in the parish has been organised by the Athletic Association, and carried through with great success. The original competitive teams numbered eight-Lesmahagow 3; Auchenheath 2; Bellfield 2; Blackwood 1. But through the agency of the survival of the fittest, these were reduced to two, Bellfield "A" and Blackwood; and on Friday evenings the association grounds at Milton have been well patronised by lovers of the youngsters and the sport. The prize was a handsome silver cup to be competed for annually, and badges for the winning team. Later on jerseys and badges were also provided for the second. The first struggle took place on the 15th June before a capital turnout of spectators and after a hard struggle, ended in a draw, two goals each.

A week's practice followed, and before a large representation of old and young from all quarters, supposed to have been the largest in the football records of the parish-the game again resulted in a draw, no goals scored. On Friday 29th ult. Football fever reached its height, and the attendance eclipsed anything that had ever been dreamed of. The budding internationalists faced each other for the third time, and great enthusiasm and excitement prevailed on both sides.

After playing the customary ninety minutes the score stood five goals each, and it was decided to go on twenty minutes longer. During this time Bellfield succeeded in scoring another goal, and carrying off the cup. After the usual preliminaries, Mr Hamilton, banker, in a short speech handed over the cup-a handsome article-to the custody of Mr Weir, headmaster of Bellfield School, and pinned on the badges-substantial mementoes with gold centres-to the breast of the winning team; also the jerseys and badges to the losers.

Mr Weir, on behalf of his scholars, thanked the Association for their gifts. Bellfield team then mounted their brake, and with their captain, James Reid, seated in the front carrying the cup, drove slowly through the village amid the ringing cheers of all parties. On reaching Coalburn, the team, Mr Weir and Mr Neilson, teacher, were met by the I.O.R. Pipe Band and the Coalburn Brass Band, and amid a scene of enthusiasm unparalleled in the annals of the district, were carried shoulder high to Bellfield School.

Here a bonfire had been kindled, and after a few remarks from Mr Weir, votes of thanks to Mr Copeland, M.A., teacher, and Mr Abraham Walker of Coalburn, who so ably superintended their training, and to all who had assisted, monetarily in furnishing their outfit and defraying the expenses, the proceedings terminated. The play exhibited by the teams was excellent, but in passing and dribbling Bellfield proved greater experts. The interest aroused by the competitions has been unique, and if the Athletic Association provide such excellent sport occasionally, its success is assured. Mr Wardrop M.A., Lesmahagow, ably discharged the duties of secretary, Mr Harry Gray, as referee in the first two games, and Mr Brown, Lanark in the final.

The winning team is – Goalkeeper: Duncan McNab; backs: William McKeon and John Miller; half-backs: Peter Adam; Wm. Adam and John Smith; forwards: George Wilson; Adam Barr; James Reid (captain); Geo. Maitland and Alex. Reid.

See front cover for team photograph.

The following letter appeared immediately after the report

SIR-

With many other grown-ups I was a spectator at the final football match last Friday, between the school teams of Blackwood and Bellfield. With many others also I was altogether dissatisfied with the verdict of the referee, as on the play the Blackwood team ought certainly to have been declared victors at the conclusion of the first hour and a half. Two of the goals credited to Bellfield should clearly have been disallowed as the scorer on each occasion was off-side. Unfortunately the referee, Mr Brown, is one who knows the game only as it was played ten years ago, and should never have been selected for the duty. With a competent referee the result would have been 5 goals to 3 in favour of Blackwood, and the match ought to replayed say at Hamilton, with Mr P. Somers (Celtic) or Mr W. Raisbeck (Falkirk), as referee.

I am etc.,

RICHARD SNEDDON
Blackwood

AFTER becoming a member of the Heritage Society I was interested in discovering what artefacts and resource material was held in **Coalburn Heritage Centre**. This was how I came across the **Coalburn Chronicles** compiled by Jim Hamilton who during his life had interviewed and written about many local residents, so providing a fascinating and an invaluable source of local, social history.

As I read through these **Chronicles** over a number of weeks one significant fact began to emerge. By far the majority of the life stories, the reminiscences and recollections detailed in the archive are of the village's male inhabitants, only a very few of these reports tell us about the local women.

This fact both annoyed and intrigued me. While fully appreciating that many women, particularly in the early 20th century were often reluctant to speak of their thoughts, feelings and opinions, I felt, nevertheless, that their voices should be heard. With this in mind, I decided to enquire into their lives, their characters, their thoughts and their social and economic condition. The result of this study I have entitled:

Coalburn Village – Lanarkshire

Women – Their Education and Employment, 1900 – 2000

I have based my study on a comparison between the lives of a number of Coalburn women and the general economic social and cultural position of British women throughout the 20th century. By doing so I sought to establish if the educational and employment opportunities available to Coalburn girls and women followed the national pattern. Or were Coalburn women restricted in their choices and denied access to more favourable educational and employment opportunities due to living in this somewhat remote mining village?

As well as having use of the **Chronicles** to undertake this study, I have also consulted much of the primary source material housed in **Coalburn Heritage Centre**. In addition, I have had the opportunity to personally interview a number of 'Coalburn women' who have been co-operative and willing subjects and who have allowed me to write their life histories as I understand them, a task which I found both fascinating and rewarding.

The completed work is not a definitive study on the subject, purely a personal view by an 'outside' of what some women's lives were like in Coalburn and how they changed as the 20th century progressed and brought about tremendous improvements to the social, cultural, economic and legal position of all women throughout the country.

Alison BROWN
Auchlochan

THE JIM HAMILTON HERITAGE SOCIETY OF COALBURN

Syllabus 2010

ALL WELCOME – BRING A FRIEND – Tea/Coffee & Biscuits at 9pm
Wednesday, 7.30pm start. Access from 7pm. Venue: **Coalburn Bowling Club**.

20 Jan LANARKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY's **Allan Coltart**

10 Feb **Stuart HOUSTON**, Antique Toys

17 Feb **Heritage Quiz Night** with **John ZAWADZKI**

3 Mar **Jim SMALLS**, Forestry Commission

17 Mar **Paul ARCHIBALD**, Lanark Museum Trust

7 Apr **Esther SERRELS** ex-councillor from Kirkmuirhill (formerly of Coalburn)

21 Apr **Sandy GILCHRIST**, ex-teacher, Covington School. Subject: ARTEFACTS

5 May **Peter McLEISH** – Shopping in Coalburn, Past & Present

19 May **Annual General Meeting**

COALBURN GALA DAY
2010

HERITAGE DISPLAY

Saturday 3rd July

Coalburn Leisure Centre

11am – 3pm

Deaths

Scott LAWRENCE
Joy CHALMERS (Sinclair)
Agnes COLLEY
Maisie MORROW (Burns)
Sandra COOK (Logan)
George BLACKWOOD
Bruce DONALDSON