



newsletter

25

Winter

2010

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Front cover

PHOTOGRAPH c1905 of members of the **Clark / Perrie / Howie family** taken at **Divity**, Waterside, Lesmahagow.

Seated is **Jimmy Perrie**, author of the poem **The Nethan** which can be found in volume **9** of **Jim Hamilton's COALBURN CHRONICLES**.

Photograph and extensive **family history** of the **Clark family** of Divity can be found in two volumes of **Jim Hamilton's**

COALBURN CHRONICLES, Issue **9**, pages **174** to **244** and Issue **61**, Pages **3296** to **3309 (5)**.

A complete set of the **COALBURN CHRONICLES**, Volumes **1** to **80**, can be viewed for local family history research at **COALBURN HERITAGE CENTRE** which is open to the public on **Tuesdays** and **Thursdays**, **10am** to **3pm** or at other times by appointment.

Deaths

James McMURDO

Elizabeth COWAN (NICOL)

Catherine BROWN (McGILLIVRAY)

Thomas KIDD

William EATON

Alexander McLEAN

May WHITEFIELD (McVAKE)

John SCANLON

James COWAN

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**The Jim Hamilton
Heritage Society of
Coalburn**

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OPEN

**TUESDAYS
& THURSDAYS**

10am – 3pm

Housing conditions at Bankend in 1909

The following information was taken from

Coalburn Chronicle No 40.

BANKEND

One row of five blocks-20 houses-4 one apartment, rental, £5 4s. ;16 two apartments, rental. £6 10s. Row of 3 houses of two apartments, rental, £7 3s. ; row of 12 one apartment houses, rental, £5 4s, ; 1 house of two apartments, row of 7 houses of two apartments , rental, £6 10s. The last row was reroofed seventeen years ago, and is in good repair.

These houses were erected at least eighty years ago--stone built--no damp-proof course--plastered on solid walls--wood ceilings--wood floors, not ventilated--some houses are damp. With the exception of four top houses, where felt has been placed below the slates a number of years ago, the roofs are not water-tight.

No gardens—wash-house for each house—coal cellars.

Pail privy for each house.

No sinks—surface channels.

Gravitation water supply, standpipe in front of the row.

Scavenged at owner's expense.

Ashpit in a broken down condition.

War time visitors to Coalburn

The recent BBC programme, “Return to Glasgow”, told of the evacuation of children from Guernsey, one of the Channel Islands, to Glasgow and featured several of them returning to Scotland to recall their stay which lasted several years.

I thought it rather unusual at the time that Glasgow was their home, though it is likely that not all of them would be based in the city, indeed part of the programme focused on a young boy who died while here, in his case he was staying with folk in the Shotts area.

Knowing that there had been an influx of evacuees to Coalburn as well, while visiting the school I had a word with the janitor, Gilbert Dobbie, and he produced the school register for that period and I was able to get copies of part of the register.

The earliest child mentioned who came to the school was Francis Simpson, whose entry on the roll was 27th August 1940. The previous school was actually Waterside Primary School and the residence was given as High Whiteside. As the pupil’s date of birth was 27th August 1927 he was obviously eligible for secondary school and the preferred option was Coalburn rather than Lesmahagow, of course it may have been the case there were no children in that situation at Coalburn, while Lesmahagow may well have had it’s quota.

About two weeks later the school intake showed a further two newcomers to the village, Elizabeth McLean and Margaret McFarlane. Oddly enough the latter’s previous school was shown as Coalburn P.S. and her address was shown as 184a, Coalburn Road. It was also shown that she left the school three weeks later and returned to Birmingham. However by January 1941 she was readmitted to the school and on this occasion her address is given as c/o Smith, 198, Coalburn Road.

She had come to Coalburn at that time from Edrington, near Birmingham and remained here until 19th June 1942. The other girl, Elizabeth McLean, whose home address was quoted as 143, Claythorn Street, Glasgow S.E., her former school being listed as St James'. She returned to Glasgow, in her case on 4th October 1940. Similar to the other girl mentioned, she too came back to Coalburn to continue her education from 20th March 1941. There is no record of when she left. While in the village she stayed with Mr and Mrs Danny Thomson, "Glenview" (Braehead Road).

By March 1941 the trickle of entries became a flood. Between 24th March 1941 and 17th November 1941 there were 204 entries on the register and of that number only 8 were not evacuees. No doubt the capacity of the school would be stretched as a result. To overcome this, quite a number were transferred to Bellfield School depending on where in the village they were billeted. In addition a good proportion of them did not stay very long at the school, whether through not being able to settle in a rural environment and returned to their homes.

Coalburn has always been seen as an understanding place to live and the acceptance of children of all faiths, particularly during those trying times was evident when the information is scanned. Though it can be ascertained without too much scrutiny the religious background of the newcomers, only on a single occasion has that been shown. In that particular case it was a young girl who had in brackets against her name (Jew). She lived in the village for seven months and a member of the family she stayed with is still resident at the same address.

Though the vast majority came from Glasgow, there were others from such as Whitley Bay, Binley, near Coventry, Paisley, Clydebank and Millport. As previously stated quite a number of the children remained in the area for a brief spell, but among those who managed to cope with the not insignificant change, several during their sojourn were selected to take part in the Gala Day which was kept alive despite the fact that the country was at war. At least that would add some lustre to the drabness of those far off days, and for our visitors the Gala Day may have given them an opportunity that might not have been afforded to them in the more populated parts of the country from which they had come.

For example in 1942 one of the Maids of Honour was Margaret Bole who initially came to the village from Polmadie, Glasgow on 22nd April 1941 and lived with Mr and Mrs John McLean at 30, Midfield Road and were registered at Coalburn Primary before transferring to Bellfield School on 2nd May 1941. In 1943 a brother and sister, Jean and Robert Wright were chosen while at Bellfield School, as a Maid of Honour and Page respectively. Originally they were staying in Garden Street before their move to another address which meant them going to the village's oldest school. Lawson Wilson who was based at 32, Midfield Road, with Mr and Mrs John Shaw also appeared, as a Page, in 1944. He had arrived in May 1942 from Johnstone and returned there in September two years later.

By 1945 there were still pupils being registered as evacuees at Coalburn, the last two noted were Pauline Wilson and Elizabeth Banker from Kentish Town in London and their date of enrolment was 17th January of that year and they were residing at 19, Garden Street at that time. Their return to London was shortly afterwards as the register shows them leaving on 12th February 1945.

It has to be recorded that not all evacuees were schoolchildren, whole families were "put up" in homes throughout Coalburn though sadly no further evidence is available to mark their feelings of that time of their life, nor what they felt they added to the community by their presence.

Though these registers are from Coalburn School, as can be seen from above, Bellfield School also had it's share of visitors. Unfortunately the registers of the school are not now available although we did have a caller at the Heritage Centre earlier this year who was on the roll at Bellfield School as an evacuee and was domiciled at Aikmanhill Farm with the Young family.

Coalburn must have had an influence on a couple of the girls who arrived here unknown as they later married two Coalburn lads.

Peter McLeish
26th November 2010.

Message from the Chairman

As I sit here in the Heritage Centre with the heating on, the temperature outside is as low as it has been for some time. Despite the weather members and friends made their way to the Miners' Welfare on Friday 17th December where, once again, Cruet's provided an excellent meal before John entertained us and then of course we had the ubiquitous prize draw. Thanks to all who donated prizes.

The weather forced the cancellation of our meeting due on December 1st, but we were not alone in that respect as perusal of the Gazette showed that a number of other organisations did likewise.

An application to the Hagshawhill Windfarm Trust for further funding regarding a PA system was successful and this will be of benefit particularly when visiting other groups to show John's work. The calendars have been very much sought after and been sold out before Christmas. In addition others have been printed for both the local camera enthusiasts and John also compiled a number of calendars depicting scenes of Lesmahagow which also were well received.

For the session between January to May we have been able to provide a variety of speakers for all tastes. As well as these events we have to thank Jean Savage for the work she has done in organising our forthcoming Burns Supper which will be held in the Miners' Welfare on Friday 28th January at 7.30pm. The principal speakers are all well versed in the works of the bard and an excellent night is anticipated.

The Centre continues to attract a good number of visitors and we do our best to provide information as required.

Christmas is almost upon us and I trust you all enjoy the festive season and that 2011 brings all that you wish yourselves.

Peter McLEISH
21st December 2010.

THE JIM HAMILTON HERITAGE SOCIETY OF COALBURN

Syllabus 2011

ALL WELCOME – BRING A FRIEND – Tea/Coffee at 9pm

Wednesday, 7.30pm start. Access from 7pm

Coalburn Bowling Club

5 Jan Robert McLEISH, History of Bankend Village

19 Jan Jim SMALLS, Forestry Commission

Friday 28 Jan BURNS SUPPER SOCIAL NIGHT

Coalburn Miners' Welfare Club

9 Feb Karen GILLON, MSP

16 Feb Dr Sinclair SCOTT, 'Korea'

2 March Mrs McCARRON, Embroidery & Heraldry

16 March John ZAWADZKI, Various Slideshows

6 April Derek PHILLIPS, 'American Civil War'

20 April Gordon GILCHRIST, 'Crook Making'

4 May Jim FORREST, formerly of Coalburn

18 May Annual General Meeting

Website www.coalburnheritage.org.uk



Guest Speaker

6 April 2011

Derek PHILLIPS

'American Civil War Society'

www.acws.co.uk

Photo by John Zawadzki