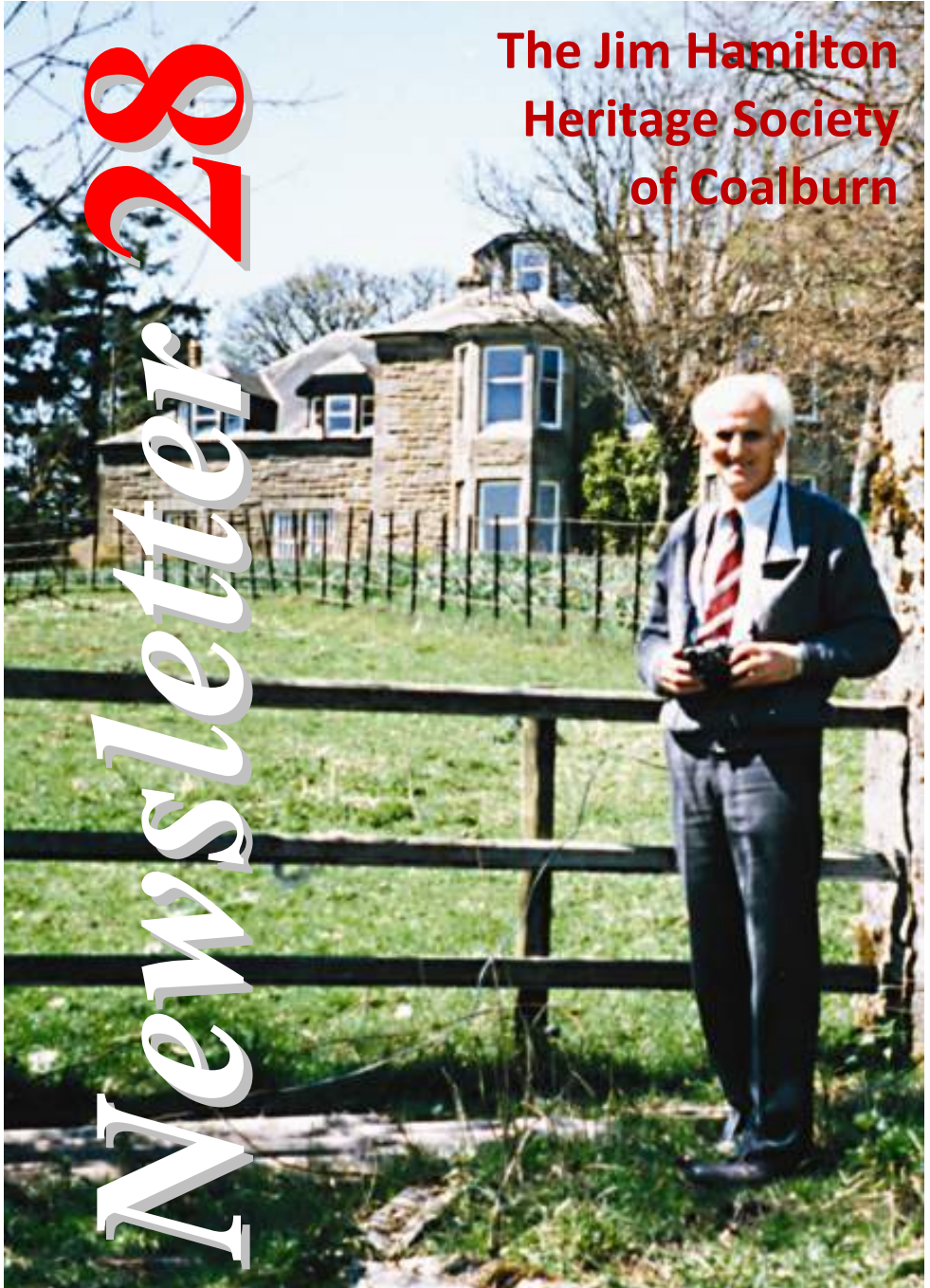


Newsletter 28

The Jim Hamilton
Heritage Society
of Coalburn



Front cover

Coalburn historian, the late Jim Hamilton pictured outside Westoun House in 1988.

The mansion house belonged to the Greenshields family for generations. Jim's extensive history of the Greenshields family and the house can be found in Part 73 of Jim's Coalburn Chronicles. A complete set of the Chronicles can be viewed at Coalburn Heritage Centre, which is open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am – 3pm.

News in brief...

On the road...

John and Peter will be promoting the Society and the Heritage Centre with talks and presentations at the following meetings:
15th September – Forth & Wilsontown WRI
9th November – St Nicholas Guild, Lanark
30th January 2012 - Old Parish Church Guild, Lesmahagow.

Heritage fundraising quiz..

Congratulations to quiz winner Billy Struthers of Coalburn. Total raised from the quiz was £96. Many thanks to Anna McLachlan for compiling the quiz and to all who took part.

Deaths

George BROWN
Rose GARDINER
John LUNDIE
Mary PEARSON
William NIMMO

Office Bearers 2011/12

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Peter McLEISH
Tel. 01555 820287

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John ZAWADZKI

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Heritage Society of
Coalburn**

**COALBURN
HERITAGE CENTRE**
Coalburn One Stop Shop
42 Coalburn Road
COALBURN
Tel. 01555 820060

**OPEN
TUESDAYS
& THURSDAYS
10am – 3pm**

Chairman's Remarks

It seems no time at all since we had our Annual General Meeting and here we go again into a new session in which I am sure there will be something for everyone as far as our speakers are concerned.

Jean, Betty, John and I continue to hold the fort on Tuesdays and Thursdays are looked after by Jean and Anna. I would like to see more of our members coming in to have a look around to find out what we have by way of documents, photos and the like and that might stimulate a greater input into the contents of the Newsletter in future by way of articles of interest compiled by members who have taken advantage of the many pieces of information available. John is being kept busy outwith the Centre and he is finding his time limited in producing the Newsletter content as much as he has in the past and articles suitable for inclusion will be welcomed.

For the first time in several years we did not have a presence at the Flower Show and I must apologise for that as it seemed to come upon us very quickly and we had nothing prepared which I hope to rectify for 2012.

We continue to be presented with items of interest, from a miner's helmet to badges presented to railway employees. For these we are very grateful and this means that we can produce different displays over the coming months, another good reason for members, as well as the general public, to pay the Centre a visit.

Once again the officials and members of the Bowling Club have granted us facilities for our meetings during the months to come and we do very much appreciate their co-operation.

Remember to encourage a friend to come along on a Wednesday evening.

Peter McLeish

29th August 2011

History of Education in the Coalburn district prior to the opening of Coalburn School in 1908

Part Two

Bellfield School was opened on 3rd July, 1876, Mr. McCall taking over the duties of Mastership at a salary of £120 per annum, with quarter government grant and fees for evening classes. Three months notice either side.

At a Board meeting on 6th June, 1878 a complaint by inhabitants of Bellfield School District against Mr. McCall was dismissed, not being presented or supported by responsible particulars. The Board however, taking into consideration the state of affairs affecting the condition of the school at Bellfield, deemed it desirable to have a change of masters there. It was resolved to intimate to Mr. McCall and Miss Cochrane the assistant, that their services would be dispensed with at the expiry of three months. The Mastership was offered to Mr. William Forbes, Springfield, Cupar, Fife, and to advertise for a female assistant. Mr. Forbes accepted, but later was offered assistantship in Lesmahagow Boys' School, which he accepted. Mr. Brown, Skellyhill School accepted transfer to Bellfield to commence 9th September, 1878, and this engagement terminated on 11th February, 1881.

On 14th May, 1877, Mr. John Weir, Glasgow Industrial Schools, was requested to furnish to the Board his certificate with a view to his being appointed successor to Mr. Brown in Blackwood Boys' School. On 5th July, 1877 it was intimated he had been appointed from 25th June, 1877 at a salary of £75 per annum, and from 4th April 1878, that he had been appointed to take over duties of Mastership at Bent School, the salary being £80 per annum. His next transfer was to Bellfield School, where he remained from 14th February 1881, until the end of the First World War. Until the School House was built around 1884, he lived at Stockbriggs in the Porterhall district.

On 1st October, 1885 a letter to the Board was received from Miss Jean Scott, Lesmahagow, late assistant in Blackwood Female School, stating she had resigned, being under the impression she was not qualified to teach after the

age of 25 without obtaining a permanent certificate. She had contacted Mr. Calder, H.M.I.S., who considered she was still eligible, and she therefore wished to apply for re-engagement if and when a vacancy occurred. When Miss Maggie Thomson, assistant, resigned from Bellfield School, Miss Scott was appointed to succeed her from 30th November, 1885, and there she remained until retirement in 1921. Thus Bellfield's two best known teachers, Mr. Weir and Miss Scott, were contemporary, one with the other, over a period of fully thirty years. The succeeding headmasters were Messrs. Mackie, Calder, Wills, Allan, Patton, Michie and Cameron.

Prior to the foregoing, Forrest's Map of 1816 shows the site of a school house where the present day New Row (Nethertown Croft) is situated on the road to Westoun. The school itself (Nethertown) would appear to have been at Bucht Knowes on the right-hand side of the road to Lintfieldbank, but to date little is known of its early history. In the Hamilton Advertiser of 5th September, 1868, there is a report of the annual examination on 2nd September 1868, previous to vacation, which would indicate this was to suit harvesting and potato lifting.

Some valuable and interesting information is given. A Mr. Bond was the teacher and the examiners were the Rev. James Naismith, Douglas Water and the Rev. John Thomas of Glasgow. A large number of scholars, along with several of their parents, were present. A considerable number of copies were exhibited containing specimens of text, half-text, small and ornamental writing, which were much admired for the taste and neatness displayed.

Comment was made on the marked improvement of the reading and spelling. Prizes (books) were provided by Messrs. Brown of Auchloch, Mrs. Struther of Crowhill, and other generous friends. At this time there were over 100 scholars on the roll, and it was stated there was urgent need of enlargement of premises and also the provision of a dwelling for the teacher.

(The above information was collected by the late John Hamilton at a display held to commemorate the Centenary of the Education Act.)

Local Bits and Pieces

Coalburn IOR Pipe Band have had a very successful few weeks, at the World Championships held at Glasgow Green, the band achieved their highest ever ranking in its 114 year history when placed 3rd in Grade 3a. Continued success came at the Annual Cowal Gathering in Dunoon on Saturday 27th August for the senior Band with First Place overall in Grade 3 and also being awarded the accolade of Best Drumming Section. The Junior Band in only its second entry in a competition, at Melrose, three weeks ago, was placed in 4th position from an entry of nine. At Cowal the Junior Band had to qualify and was placed 2nd from an entry of 29. This meant that it could enter the Grade 4 section and is so doing 3rd place was the result, a remarkable outcome for such a young and relatively inexperienced group of young people

The village's other well known group of talented musicians, the **Coalburn Silver Band**, have also been amongst the honours. In The Land of Burns Invitational Brass Band Contest held in Troon on 20th August the band won the First Section Championship on only its second entry into this particular event. As a result of the triumph the South Beach Hotel Trophy was annexed in addition to a handsome cheque for £300. The Silver Band have also benefited from the introduction of its junior section, the Bronze Band, as one of the former juniors was featured at Troon.

Congratulations to both organisations on bringing success to the village and it would appear that the future looks bright for each of them.

Reverend Aileen Robson

It came as a great surprise to many when the Rev. Aileen Robson announced that she had been asked to preach as the sole nominee in the South East Cowal Church group which encompasses three charges. Aileen came to the area in March 2003 and during her time has made many friends, both members and non members alike, both in Coalburn and Lesmahagow. A Farewell Service was held in Coalburn Church on Friday 19th August and was very well attended from both villages. A varied programme of entertainment was sustained and presentations were made to Aileen on her demission from the linked charge. Her induction into her new charge took place on Saturday 3rd September in Dunoon High Church and a number of members from Lesmahagow and Coalburn were present on that occasion.

**2011 Jim Hamilton Heritage
Award.**

This year the award was won by Eazra Foley of Coalburn Primary School. Eazra is pictured receiving the trophy from chairman Peter McLeish at the Society's first meeting of the new season on Wednesday 7th September. The evening was well attended with a number of new members present.



**2011 Coalburn Gala Queen
Sophie Meek.**

Slideshows of Gala Day photographs taken by John Zawadzki and Geoff Brown will be presented at the Society's annual Christmas Dinner which takes place at Coalburn Miners' Welfare Club on Friday 16th December. Members wishing to book a ticket for the dinner are advised to contact Secretary Betty Bell by Wednesday 16th November.

Syllabus 2011

Admission is FREE

ALL WELCOME – BRING A FRIEND – Tea/Coffee at 9pm
Wednesday, 7.30pm start. Access from 7pm

Coalburn Bowling Club

7 September Terry WOODS & Paul McGOWAN

Lanarkshire Philatelic Society – History of the Post in Clydesdale

21 September Dane LOVE, Scottish author - The Covenanters

5 October Ed ARCHER, Lanark archaeologist/historian

19 October Paul ARCHIBALD, Lanark historian – Mauchline Ware

2 November John VEITCH, History of Pharmacy in Lesmahagow

16 November Dr Sandy ADDISON of Douglas

7 December Robbie ALLAN, My life with motor-cycles

16 December ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

WEBSITE

www.coalburnheritage.org.uk