



The Jim Hamilton
Heritage Society
of Coalburn

Newsletter 29

WINTER 2011

www.coalburnheritage.org.uk

Front cover

View from Muirburn Bridge, Coalburn.

In distance is Waterside and Warlaw Hill.

Photograph by John Zawadzki,

January 2012.

News in brief...

On the road...

Peter will be promoting the Society and the Heritage Centre with talks and presentations at the following meeting:

12 January 2012

Coalburn Parish Church Guild

Xmas Dinner Raffle..

Total raised: £187

Deaths

Walter BROWN

Jessie MUIRHEAD (Meikle)

Nettie CROSBIE (Wilson)

George AITKEN

John WEIR

Jane BULLOCH

Helen MURRAY (Dobbie)

Helen LENNOX (Strang)

Mary MILLIGAN (Smith)

Agnes (Senga) HARVIE

Thomas STEVENSON

Office Bearers **2011/12**

Chairman

Peter McLEISH

Tel. 01555 820287

Vice-Chairman

John ZAWADZKI

Secretary

Betty BELL

Tel. 01555 820276

Treasurer

Jean SAVAGE

Membership Secretary

Anna McLACHLAN

Tel. 01555 820750

Archivist / Newsletter

John ZAWADZKI

Newsletter published by

**The Jim Hamilton
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 is amazing to find that we are in a new year already. Once again we have been fortunate in having many speakers of quality since our opening meeting in September and I know by the numbers attending that the members and non members obviously feel that way too.

The syllabus from January to May can be found elsewhere in this issue and while we have one or two people coming to speak to us who have been here before, there are also some new names on the list which is indicative of the efforts to widen the topics which, we trust, are of interest.

In addition to the regulars, I would like to thank Hamish Gilchrist, he has been coming into the Centre on a Tuesday and has been helpful in assembling the calendars in the last couple of months.

As advised we are not having a Burns' Supper in 2012, however to compensate, on 18th January we have a "Burns Theme" evening and this will be our normal meeting night and I hope to welcome as many of you as possible, the weather permitting.

John has again been busy visiting other groups with his own particular brand of slideshows and these have been very well received wherever he has gone and one or two others are in the pipeline.

We can look back on another successful Christmas Dinner and would like to take this opportunity of thanking all of you for your valued support whether as a Committee member or as a regular attendee at our meetings.

Peter McLeish

17th January 2012.

1950 Coalburn School Football Team



Photograph by W Brown, 104 Burnbank Road, Hamilton.

Taken in Coalburn School Hall/Gym circa 1950.

Back row, left to right: Ian McBAIN, Will MITCHELL, Bobby YOUNG (goalkeeper), John SHAW, Willie NEILSON, Tom YOUNG.

Front row, left to right: Alec WATSON, Donald McGOWAN, Robert OVEREND, Sammy DYET (Captain), Morton LOGAN, Jim BRYCE.

Will Mitchell lives in Lesmahagow (Forsyth Joiners)

Donald McGowan lives in Lesmahagow (D McGowan & Son Garage)

Morton Logan lives in Kirkmuirhill (retired). Played for Lesmahagow Juniors and Royal Albert in Larkhall.

Alex Watson's father played for Lesmahagow Juniors (goalkeeper)

John Shaw – his father, also John, played for Coalburn Juniors in 1920s.

John Jnr's brother Andrew played for Lanark United.

James Mackay



As we approach the Burns season the name above comes to mind as he was a prolific writer on many subjects including the works of our national bard.

Though born in Inverness on 21st November 1936 part of his schooling was spent in Coalburn when he came to his grandfather's home at Gunsgreen during the Second World War in 1942 for a brief spell as an evacuee.

James had come from Glasgow at that time and returned to complete his education there and went on to Glasgow University where he was awarded a Doctor of Literature. His mother was Minnie Mathieson, the daughter of Murdo Mathieson. Her husband, William Mackay had come to the village in the 1920's as a mining engineer.

Interested in [stamps](#) and the [postal system](#) from an early age, he wrote two acclaimed histories of the Scottish posts; one limited to [St. Kilda](#) and, in 1978, his *History of Scottish Postmarks, 1693-1978*, the definitive work on the subject. He became a prolific philatelic author, especially on English, Irish

and Scottish [postmarks](#) and also produced popular Postal History Annuals and island series books. He wrote some 200 books and at least 10,000 articles. Mackay's interest in the postal history of St Kilda had been formed during his time stationed there during his army service in the 1950s.

With regard to his yearning for anything about Burns he was the Editor of the Burns Chronicle and The Burnsian, he was regarded as one of the foremost Burns scholars in the world. His book, "Burns-Lore of Dumfries and Galloway" is regarded as a 'must have' for any tourist/Burns enthusiast in that part of the country as it covers every journey made by the poet in the former counties of Dumfries, Kirkcudbright and Wigtown, in depth.

William Wallace was also written about with great fondness and in an interview with the late Jim Hamilton, James Mackay recalls being taken "over the mair" to Wallace's Cave as a youngster and this is mentioned in one of the books he has written about "Braveheart".

The author's aunt, Maggie Mackay from Inverness, worked at Westoun House approximately 100 years ago as a domestic servant and while there she met one of the farm hands, William Weir, whom she later married. They lived at Station Terrace, now Coalburn Road. He later worked as a miner at Bankend.

James Mackay died in Dumfries in 2007 and during his life his interests covered many subjects and as mentioned above his output as an author was immense, not bad for a former pupil of Coalburn School.

Peter McLeish, 25th November 2011.

23 years ago... 1988

Coalburn Chronicles No. 49

“A visit to Coalburn which caused great excitement towards the end of 1988 was when Davie Cooper of Glasgow Rangers called at the Station Hotel to break open a bottle of money collected for the local Old Age Pensioners’ funds. Here he is seen with the host and staff of the Station Hotel.” – Jim Hamilton.



Left to right: Mary McNeil, Davie Cooper (1956-1995), Jack King and Mrs Ian McGregor. Boy in background is Andrew McCabe.

Scottish football legend Davie Cooper died of a brain haemorrhage on 23 March 1995.

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Peter McLeish

17th January 2012.

Syllabus 2012

Admission is FREE

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

Wednesday, 7.30pm start. Access from 7pm

Coalburn Bowling Club

4 January Geoff Brown & Archie Martin

Edinburgh Festival 2011 Photos & Lesmahagow Male Voice Choir

18 January Burns Theme Social Night – Quiz by JZ, etc

1 February John Zawadzki, Slideshows, Various Subjects

15 February Speakers from New Lanark Trust

7 March J Thomson, Forth. Subject: The Orkney Italian Chapel

21 March Pearl Murphy, ex-librarian, Hamilton Reference Library

4 April Return of Derek Phillips. Subject: American Civil War

18 April Robert McLeish, Lesmahagow Parish Historical Association

2 May Gilbert Dobbie, Coalburn Primary School Janitor (retires 2012)

16 May Annual General Meeting

WEBSITE

www.coalburnheritage.org.uk