



The Jim Hamilton Heritage Society of Coalburn

newsletter

33 WINTER

2012

Published by The Jim Hamilton Heritage Society of Coalburn

FRONT COVER

Sinking Dempter's mine, C1920

Wanted

*Items, documents, books, etc
relating to the history of coal
mining, and social history of
Coalburn in general, required
for display at Coalburn Heritage
Centre. If you have a suitable item
you would like to donate to the Heritage
Centre, please call any Tuesday
or Thursday, 10am – 3pm.*

Deaths

Marion FREW (Strang)
Mary CURRIE
Douglas LOCKHART
Mary BROWNLIE
Agnes STITT (Russell)
Robert TENNANT
Mattie PERRIE (Cringan)
Isa ALLAN (Hughes)

Office Bearers

2012/13

Chairman

Peter McLEISH
Tel. 01555 820287

Vice-Chairman
John ZAWADZKI

Secretary

Betty BELL
Tel. 01555 820276

Treasurer
Jean SAVAGE

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

The Jim Hamilton Heritage Society of Coalburn

www.coalburnheritage.org.uk

Chairman's Report

The mild weather over the last few days belies the time of year, no doubt we will soon be back to normal. 2012 saw the demolition of Coalburn Primary School and those residents neighbouring the area have been informed that the work to rebuild the school was due to start in on 7th January. On speaking to the headmaster, Mr Scott, some time ago, he expressed the hope that the pupils would be back in the village for the new term in August.

Once again our annual Christmas Dinner proved to be a success with almost 50 members and friends being present. John produced his now traditional presentations which were the highlight of the evening.

We look forward to another busy few months with an excellent selection of speakers and a varied selection of subjects to be discussed.

I know that I seem to have a thing about calendars, however I would like to thank all the volunteers who worked diligently throughout the last few weeks and months producing calendars, both for the members and friends with a Coalburn calendar, and also for the Auchlochan Digital Camera Club, for whom over 500 were printed.

In addition Richard Law, the son of former Gala Queen, Nettie Tait, spent some time with us as well and was a welcome addition for the period he joined us at the Heritage Centre.

For those who are able to attend our regular meetings, you may remember I made a plea for items relating to the Guides and Brownies as other than a few photographs there is nothing in our collection relating to these groups. I am pleased to let you know that among the items received are a Brownie uniform and several badges all of which have been gifted. I would like to thank those concerned who responded. There is still room for other pieces of information if anything further is available.

I look forward to seeing our regulars and new faces too in the coming weeks and months, both at our meetings and also at the Heritage Centre.

Peter McLEISH
7th January 2013

Recent requests/messages received via our website:

23 November 2012

Katrina Dunbar

kdunbar111@gmail.com

My great grandfather was John Dykes, Coalburn, and I would like to know if there are any of his photographs available in the Centre's archives for sale. I inherited his pipe from my mother. I spoke to Jimmy Hamilton many years ago about our mutual ancestors and he was very helpful in getting me started on my family tree. Many thanks.

16 December 2012

Jim Kerr

kerrr@btopenworld.com

Grateful if you can advise how I can get a copy of the Coalburn Chronicle edition containing details on the Kerr Family that lived at Merchant Hall Farm for many years.

26 December 2012

Heather Rozon

email:hrozon@rogers.com

My Dad, John James Wilson was born and raised in Coalburn. His family was featured in the Coalburn Chronicles Part 64. Is there any chance of getting a copy of the family photo displayed on the front issue.

5 January 2013

Ian Mathieson

email:Glenmorn@aol.com

My Grandparents reared 10 of a family at Gunsgreen Croft, Coalburn. My father John was the second youngest, I am the eldest of 6. I am a piper and remembered playing pipes while visiting my grandparents in the band hall. Jimmy Findlay was pm at the time. I have been playing pipes for 68 yrs and still teach kids here at Seamill.

19 January 2013

Heather ROZON

hrozon@rogers.com

My Dad's family is from Coalburn. The Wilsons were featured in the Coalburn Chronicles Part 64. If at all possible, I'd appreciate a copy of my Grandfather's photo in The Coalburn Rechabite Pipe Band 1921. I tried Google street map to get an idea of where the Wilson family lived. I had no luck finding 260 Bellfield Rd. Does the addresss still exist? Any help you can give is deeply appreciated. Thank you.

An Evacuee's Story

Part Four

LIFE ON THE FARM

The mainstay of the farm were the cows, which were, of course, Ayrshires, horned and much smaller than today's version; I think there would only be 12 to 15 at the most. The byre was attached to the main building at the far end, where a garage now stands. Milking was done by hand during my time there, using a one-handled milk pail and sitting on a three-legged stool, although by the time of my last visit, which would be about 1958/59, they had newly installed milking machines.

One of the things I did, presumably when a bit older, was cleaning out the byre and barrowing the dung up a rickety plank to the midden, which in the old Scots style, was directly across the close from the house, we never thought anything of that. The byre then had to be washed down and thoroughly scrubbed out, arguably a cleaner system than that which applies on a dairy farm today!

Apart from the cows, there were usually some sheep about the place, one horse, one dog for the cows and one house-dog, a number of cats and lots of hens.

The hens of course were free-range and were, in fact under your feet at the time! There were two or three hen-houses, including one right over by the moss with bantams, and one of the routine jobs was going round to collect the eggs (I think I can safely say I was brought up on eggs, generally two at a time!) When there were chicks they were kept

in metal incubators and one of my favourite things was to go out at night and check them; I can remember the unique smell of the paraffin burners to this day.

We even used to take a hen home – this was wartime or just after of course. Aunt Nellie would go out and kill one the day before and when we got back my Grannie would clean and pluck it! We also used to take eggs home, which was I believe illegal at the time, and there was a story in the family which I can't personally vouch for but is I have no doubt true, that I once pronounced to a packed train compartment “you don't know what we've got in this case”, the answer of course being “eggs”!

The food was one of the great things about the farm, although perhaps surprisingly I remember relatively little about it, except that there was always plenty of it! It started with breakfast, which was after the morning milking, followed by the “ten o'clock” after the chores were done, then dinner. Then the “four o'clock”, and after the afternoon milking, supper. Most of the supplies came from one or other of the vans which came round the farms, of which I only remember the baker, I think it was Brown's from Lesmahagow.

He sold the shiny cookies we always had for the 4 o'clock, and also, from a drawer underneath the floor of the van, the scrumptious Abernethy biscuits which are another of my abiding memories! He also brought the plain bread which was our mainstay, along with the scones which Nellie used to make on the girdle. Those were the days of the “jeely piece”, the jeely mostly being strawberry jam which was of course home-made and, as I recall, always runny.

David Gwynne

Down Memory Lane....



COALBURN RAILWAY STATION STAFF

Photograph kindly donated by Mrs Helen Walker in January 2013

COALBURN HERITAGE CENTRE

Coalburn One Stop Shop

42 Coalburn Road

COALBURN

Tel. 01555 820060

OPEN TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS 10am – 3pm

Researching Your Family History

Elizabeth Irving, Heritage Genealogy

Scotland has a wealth of resources for researching family history. We're very lucky to have records which are easily available – sometimes free, or at modest cost - and which contain lots of useful information. Birth, marriage and death certificates, censuses and old parish records can set us off on a journey into the past.

You can start with your own birth certificate, or perhaps your parents' or grandparents' marriage record. Scottish birth certificates show the names of the child's parents, including mother's maiden name, and the date and place of their marriage. That makes it easy to find the marriage record, which contains lots of information about the bride and groom and their families. Using the ages of the bridal couple and their parents' names, it's fairly simple to track down their birth certificates. In this way, you can step back, generation by generation. Having a less common name does make things easier, but knowing the names of both parents means you can be sure you've found the correct John Brown out of thirty born that particular year!

Scottish death certificates should show the name of the deceased's husband or wife, again meaning you can be sure you've got the right person. They can also be a useful source of information if someone has been married more than once because all spouses should be listed. A word of warning though – nobody fills in their own death certificate, so we have to rely on a third party to remember how old someone was, and the names of their (possibly long dead) parents.

Statutory Registration began in Scotland in 1855 – that was when birth, marriage and death certificates were introduced. Before that we have church records, known as OPRs, which usually contain much less information. They tend to record dates of baptism, proclamation of banns of marriage, and burial, rather than dates of birth, marriage and death. Marriage records rarely give the names of the parents of the bride and groom. However, if someone was born and married before 1855, but died after that, they'll have a death certificate, which should include their parents' names.

Censuses, which are taken every ten years, are a wonderful resource for seeing the evolution of a family. Those from 1841 to 1911 are available to be viewed. They provide a snapshot of a family, giving information about where they were living, who was in the household (including relatives, visitors and lodgers), occupations and birthplaces. The latter can be especially helpful if a family's moved around a lot and you're finding it difficult to track down all their children's births. It's also possible to see if someone has been widowed or remarried from one census to the next, helping to narrow down a date of death.

All these records are available on the ScotlandsPeople website www.scotlandpeople.gov.uk or you can go to the SP Centre in Edinburgh or the Genealogy Centre in Glasgow's Mitchell Library. You'll need to go in person to consult more recent records because there is a time-bar period on online records -100 years for births, 75 for marriages and 50 for deaths. Booking a place is advisable – 0131 314 4300 (Edin), 0141 287 8364 (Glv).

Many other documents and websites can help you in your research – libraries usually have microfilm copies of local newspapers, as well as voters' rolls and business and residential directories.

The Mitchell Library holds the Poor Law books for this area – if you find a relative applying for help you can glean a wealth of information about their circumstances.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's free website www.cwgc.org lists the war dead of the First and Second World Wars (including civilians) and has details of war cemeteries and memorials. And of course gravestones often give detailed information about family members buried there, or who may have died far away but are commemorated on the stone.

Heritage Genealogy is run by Elizabeth Irving, a professionally-qualified genealogist and family historian with many years' research experience. She has a Postgraduate Diploma in Genealogical Studies from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, and wide knowledge of the many records which can bring our ancestors vividly to life.

Elizabeth was a guest speaker at our meeting on Wednesday 5th December 2012.

For further information please visit Elizabeth's website: heritage-genealogy.com

Syllabus 2013

Admission is FREE

ALL WELCOME – BRING A FRIEND – Tea/Coffee at 8.45pm

Wednesday, 7.30pm start. Access from 7pm

Coalburn Bowling Club

9 JANUARY VINTAGE VIDEO NIGHT. Subject: Coalburn Past & Present

23 JANUARY BURNS SOCIAL NIGHT + JZ QUIZ & SLIDESHOWS

6 FEBRUARY JOHN YOUNG. Subject: Stonehouse Heritage topic

20 FEBRUARY BOB DALZIEL. Subject: Edinburgh Royal Mile

6 MARCH Speaker from DAVID LIVINGSTONE CENTRE.

Subject: David Livingstone on the Bi-Centenary of his death

20 MARCH PETER McCLEISH. Subject: Lesmahagow's mansion houses

3 APRIL ROBERT McCLEISH. Subject: Lesmahagow Parish history topic

17 APRIL Annual General Meeting