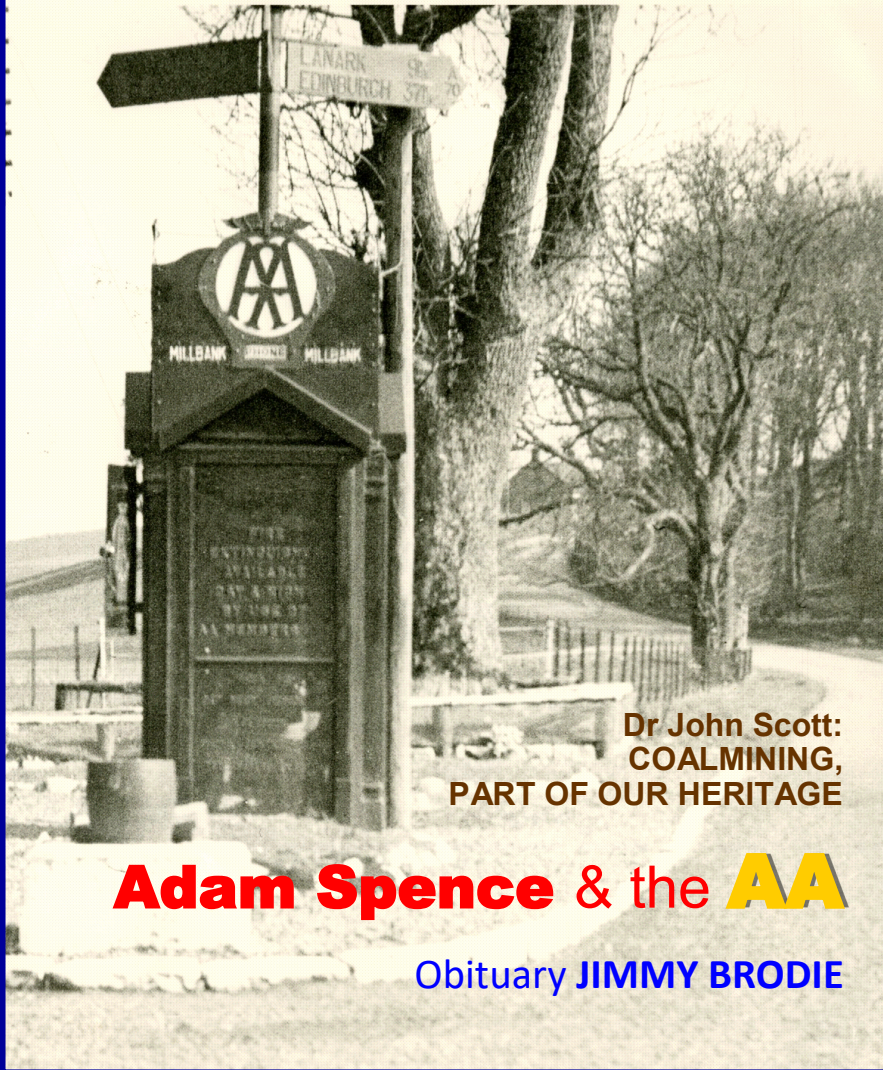


WINTER 2006

The JIM HAMILTON
HERITAGE SOCIETY
of COALBURN
Established 2001

#9 **NEWS** **LETTER**

PUBLISHED BY THE JIM HAMILTON HERITAGE SOCIETY OF COALBURN



**Dr John Scott:
COALMINING,
PART OF OUR HERITAGE**

Adam Spence & the AA

Obituary JIMMY BRODIE

**Message from the
Chairman
Peter McLeish**

WELCOME to our
ninth newsletter.
This has been a

busy few months with a
variety of guest speakers,
commencing with Stuart
Brown from Auchlochan.

He was followed by Bill
Scott and Barbara Smith who
outlined plans for the school's
centenary celebrations.

October brought a return
visit by Lanark librarian Paul
Archibald, while our own
expert John Zawadzki filled in
on the 18th.

The Romans in Scotland was
Ed Archer's theme in
November while a change of
speaker saw David Duncan
telling us about Lead Mining.

A weel kent face, that of
Robert McLeish, completes
our guests for 2006 as we shall
be tucking into our annual
Christmas dinner on 20th
December.

**With that in mind may
I wish everyone the
compliments of the
season.**

**The Jim Hamilton
Heritage Society
Of Coalburn**

**Office Bearers
2006/07**

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Peter McLeish

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James Hamilton

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Mrs Betty Bell

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Miss Jean Savage

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NEWSLETTER

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One Stop Shop

**COALBURN HERITAGE
CALENDARS 2007**

A few remaining... Price £5

Tel. Betty Bell

Obituary

Jimmy Brodie

By Peter McLEISH

The village lost one of its best known sons with Jimmy's death on 17th October 2006.

From a musical family, his father played the melodeon and was often seen and heard on a summer evening at Lintfieldbank where the family lived.

Jimmy followed in his father's footsteps inasmuch that he became proficient with the accordion and he was one of the members of the Golden Oldies Group.

Later, with Charlie Thomson and the late Annie Robertson, he formed the Coalburn Ceilidh Band.

Box and Fiddle

The trio performed all over Lanarkshire, and beyond, including a special invitation to entertain in Belgium.

Coalburn Box and Fiddle Club originated almost 25 years ago and during that time Jimmy was one of the mainstays until his retirement from the committee in May of this year.

Fortunately, the family's musical tradition lives on through the talented grandson Richard Smith who has amassed many admirers with his dexterity as a fine accordionist.



Jimmy was also a very successful businessman, operating the sawmill at Gunsgreen, providing employment for many from the area. He later went into the building industry, initially agricultural type buildings and also in housing, and in these too he continued to demand and maintain a high standard of workmanship.

When the One Stop Shop concept was introduced to Coalburn he was approached to join the Steering Group which was set up to look at the needs of the community. He willingly gave up many hours to get the project off the ground and was still involved up until his death.

Over the years Jimmy provided transport for the benefit of members of the Queen's Court at the Gala days, a role which gave him a great deal of pleasure.

He will be sorely missed in Coalburn in many ways.

Jim Hamilton Heritage Society of Coalburn

Guest Speakers

September / October / November



6th September
Stuart BROWN
Director
Auchlochan Trust



1st November
Ed ARCHER
Lanark
Archaeology



20th September
Bill SCOTT
Headmaster
Coalburn Primary
School



15th November
David DUNCAN
Museum
of Lead Mining



4th October
Paul ARCHIBALD
Lanark Library
& Lanark Museum

ROMANS IN CLYDESDALE

Along with a slideshow, Lanark archaeologist **ED ARCHER** gave a talk on the **Romans in Clydesdale**.

He set the scene by describing the Celts who inhabited Clydesdale when the Romans arrived.

Ed then described the invasion by Agricola in 76AD and pointed out Roman sites in Clydesdale.

Traditionally the Romans are supposed to have left Scotland around 211AD.

However, Ed showed that the discovery of some late Roman coins at Castledykes revealed that Clydesdale was re-occupied about 350/360AD and absorbed back into the Roman Empire.

Musical notes

Historic win for Silver Band

Coalburn Silver Band lifted the prestigious and coveted Scottish Challenge Cup at the Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow on Sunday 26th November.

The contest, by invitation only, pitched Coalburn in with bands from higher sections including two of the current Scottish champions.

The band played off the difficult number one draw and produced a wonderfully controlled and detailed work of the test piece Dimensions by Peter Graham.

The two adjudicators placed Coalburn above the 13 other competing bands in what was a truly fabulous result.

Check out the band's website for news and photos:



www.coalburnsilverband.org.uk

News in brief

• Homing Club

Coalburn Homing Club and Lesmahagow Homing Club joined forces for one night on Friday 1st December by holding a combined annual Dinner and Presentation Night at Coalburn Miners Welfare's Social Club. The evening was a huge success with Johnny Weir entertaining a full house.

• Christmas Lights

Official switch on of Councillor Danny Meikle's amazing Christmas light show (one and a half million light bulbs) took place at 5pm on Friday 1st December. Switching on was special guest was former professional soccer referee Hugh Dallas. The occasion was aired live on Scottish Television news with Danny interviewed dressed in a Santa Claus outfit.

• Xmas Dinner

The Jim Hamilton Heritage Society of Coalburn's 2nd Annual Christmas Dinner takes place at Hollandbush Golf Club on Wednesday 20th December 2006 at 7 pm.

Reported Deaths

William Overend
Helen Mathieson (Steele)
William Fotheringham
Billy Cronin
Tom Stevenson
Ena Gibson (Gemmell)
Walter Greig

The Drawer

A hutch (coal tub) holds 10cwt of coal and itself weighing several cwts. It has four solid iron wheels, is made of wood and iron and has a metal ring handle at each corner.

The task was to shovel ten or more tons of coal into hutches, sometimes having to shovel from one's knees. The miner identified the coal by hanging a disc on each hutch.

The drawer, me, having filled the coal, steered it down a slope, rotated it on a steel junction plate, then took it further down to a siding where it was joined with others and taken on mechanical haulage ropes to the pit bottom.

Roads were both low in height and narrow - just allowing the loaded tub to pass. Restraining on a slope wore out boots quickly and derailed hutches were cruel problems - how to lift, say 12 cwts, back on the rails. Many miners ruined their spines in that situation. To reduce speeds, snibbles were used - pieces of wood stuck into a wheel to stop it rotating - hence producing a braking effect.

To describe the drawer's work as hard is a massive understatement. During the war it was declared that this job required more energy output than any other occupations. It was extremely hard, brutal and dangerous.

To push a fresh empty hutch back to the coal face could be extremely demanding, according to the rise in the roads. I have no memory of this process being easy—it always seemed to demand maximum energy output with lots of sweat.

Piece Work

Payment for work depended on output, and this was calculated as 'X' per ton. All pairs had at least to produce the same amount as other pairs in the section. There was competition for any extra hutches. This was piece work and managers loved it because it increased production. I hated it. It was an aggressive, competitive system which caused everyone to compete and work harder.

COAL N
PART OF OU
by Dr John S

MINING HERITAGE

cott — Part V



Fear

Public perception is that the average person would be afraid to exist underground as in coal mining.

As a child, I heard my mother sing the old ballad:

“Don’t go down the mine dad

Dreams very often come true

And oh daddy dear, it would break my heart

If anything happened to you.”

I heard the stories of the Blantyre explosion. More significantly, my paternal grandfather was chewed up by the picks on his coal cutting machine. After being brought to the surface he was taken by horse-drawn ambulance—some 25 miles—to Glasgow Royal Infirmary, where he died the same day. I was aware of the death or severe injuries of miners in the village—including a next door neighbour.

A background culture of fear may have existed, but it was never overt. An attitude of stoicism was present and the ethos did not allow the easy expression of fear. “What will be, will be”. Apprehension about the safety of a roof was reasonable. My father, giving me instructions in roof safety using the base of his pick to tap the roof and listen to the sound produced, frequently said “Be canny (careful) - Mind your heid” as he tapped the roof.

I had a special kind of fearful situation, of being in total and absolute darkness. If the jet was wet, or the flint wet, it could be difficult to re-light. You turned twice and were totally disoriented, not able to recognise how you were facing. I’m sure I was in a panic the first time it happened to me.

Eventually, my anger, aggression and paranoid notions of unfairness diminished. The system absorbed me and I worked for more money. They say “You get used to anything” - and I did adjust and adapt to the conditions I regarded as brutal and degrading.

Next Issue: Part VI, (Final Part)

New local publication

LESMAHAGOW ARCHIVIST **Robert McLeish** has collated and compiled an invaluable genealogical research resource with an alphabetical listing of Lesmahagow New Cemetery's interred.

In the book's introduction, Robert writes:

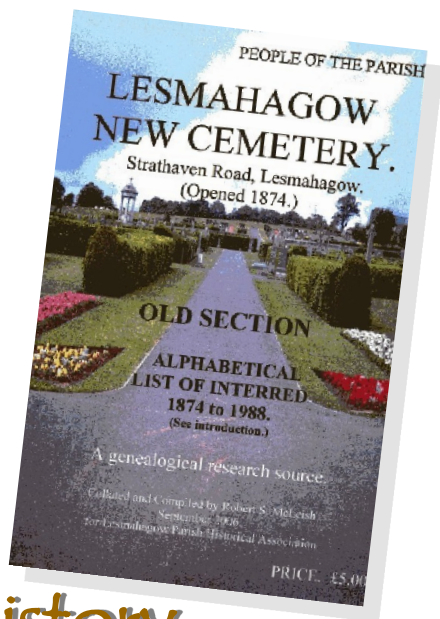
"For the past 25 years I have engaged in genealogical research on behalf of people from all corners of the world who have sought confirmation of their Lesmahagow Roots.

In doing so I have amassed a host of information with regard to individuals who were born, married or died in this Parish.

Included in my genealogical files is a collection of notes and fragmentary references to those buried in Lesmahagow New Cemetery.

The said notes etc., have, over the years, been a valued and important research source in locating the final resting place of many who died in Lesmahagow Parish since 1874.

family history



This booklet is the bringing together of the burial references I have secured from various sources with regard to the New Cemetery from 1874 to 1988.

Alas it is not complete; common ground internments from 1874 to 1895 and internments from 1930 to 1988 for lairs 1254 to 1928 are fragmentary.

Nevertheless, the main body of the work is a valuable search guide for those who wish to find their kinfolk from earlier generations."

*

Copies of the book, priced £5, can be obtained from Robert McLeish. Tel. 01555 893859 Email mcleishrs@supanet.com

Family history

ADAM SPENCE and the **A.A.**

Reprinted from **COALBURN CHRONICLE** Issue 3

Photograph is of **ADAM SPENCE** (1896 — 1946), married to Mary Turnbull, who lived at 263 Bellfield Rd, Coalburn and served with the **Automobile Association** around 1925.

The **A.A.** was formed in 1905 and its story reads like a romantic history as it deals with the rise in popularity of the motor car as a means of transport, and the improvement in the provision of roads in Britain.

Motto

The motto of the association is 'Courtesy and Care' and the organisation can truly be said to have lived up to these words throughout the years since its inception. It is interesting to read how the organisation came into being.

On 3 July 1895, the first automobile appeared on the roads of Britain.

The Honourable Evelyn Ellis went to Paris and bought a motor car which resembled a hooded four—wheeled dogcart (now in the museum in South Kensington). The engines had been invented by German engineers, Gottlieb Daimler and Carl Benz, and were applied to road conveyances by the French firm of Panhard and Lavassor



Additional
images from
internet



Turnpike Trusts

The roads of Britain had been made suitable for carriages drawn by horses by the Turnpike Trusts, giving fame to builders of roads and bridges like Telford and Macadam.

The number of cyclists had increased from around 1850 and they complained about the state of the roads as unsuitable for two—wheeled conveyances. When the motorists began to use the roads, they objected to the narrowness and to the many corners which had easily been navigated by horses drawing carriages but limited the speed of petrol-driven automobiles.

(The French who had been the first motorists, provided us with names such as ‘automobile’ and ‘chauffeur’.)

‘The Autocar’

The first weekly magazine dealing with the new fangled vehicles appearing on the roads, was ‘The Autocar’ which began publication on 2nd November 1895 and its aims were ‘to purchase, examine, enquire into and develop recently invented motors and motor carriages’.

Also, in 1895, two associations were formed — the ‘British Autocar Committee’ and the ‘Self—propelled Traffic Association’.

By 1905, 13,129 cars were registered to travel on the roads. As I have indicated, the A.A. was formed in 1905 mainly to provide anti- police trap patrols of cycling scouts. The speed limit, after the initial period when cars had to be fronted by a flag—carrying pedestrian, was 20 miles per hour.

25 shillings per week

The A.A. scouts were paid 25/— per week plus the cost of hiring a bicycle. Incidentally, the A.A. scouts were only employed in the summer months as few cars were used in the winter.

A.A. Patrolmen were asked to turn out decently dressed in suitable cycling gear — knee breeches, stockings, boots, jacket, cap, collar and tie - with their machine clean and in good condition.

Salute

Members of the A.A. whose cars were bearing the official badge, were to be saluted by the patrolmen and this indicated that the road ahead was clear. If the patrolmen failed to salute, it was to be presumed that a police-trap lay ahead. This practice continued for many years (till 1960) until the rate and speed of traffic made such a practice hazardous.

Uniforms

One of the most significant developments of the A.A. was the introduction of uniforms in 1909. 'Sentry' boxes (black with the A.A. sign in yellow) were erected at intervals of several miles along main roads throughout Britain.

A.A. members were given a standard pattern key to gain entry to the boxes in order to phone to summon help.

Adam Spence was on patrol from a sentry box at Canderside Toll to Pathhead at Douglas and this he covered on a pedal cycle.

Murdoch family

Adam, a member of the Murdoch family whose forebear, William Murdoch had invented gas lighting and horseless carriages driven by steam, was married to Mary Turnbull and her father had one of the first motor cars in Coalburn.

Adam must have faced many storms while working with the A.A. as his 'beat' included the Corncockle stretch and Star Inn moss where cover from rain and wind was practically non-existent.

In the 1920s many of the patrol force were equipped with motor cycle combinations which permitted tools to be carried to effect repairs, but many continued to travel about on pedal cycles.

Speed limits

It was not until 1st August 1930 that the speed limit of 20 m.p.h. was abolished for private cars. Thereafter the police traps to catch motorists driving at over 20 m.p.h. became redundant, although later revived to catch drivers travelling at over 30 m.p.h. in built-up areas, because of a clause in the 1934 Road Traffic Act.

We are all familiar with visible signs of the A.A. - vans and break down trucks replacing pedal cycles and motor cycle combinations.



The Jim Hamilton Heritage Society of Coalburn

Syllabus 2007

Diary Dates

7.30pm — 9.30pm **WEDNESDAY**
at Coalburn **ONE STOP SHOP**

JANUARY

Wed **10** **GEORGE GREENSHIELDS**, Chairman of Coalburn Miners Welfare Society and **DIANE TAYLOR**, Centre Manager, One Stop Shop

Wed **24** **JIM KIRK** of Coalburn, former policeman

FEBRUARY

Wed **14** **Wilma BOLTON**, historian / authoress

Wed **21** **Christine WARREN**, Carluke Heritage Society

MARCH

Wed **7** **Harold HART**, Coalburn Railway Station

Wed **21** **Brian LAMBIE**, Biggar Museum Trust

APRIL

Wed **4** **Dr Sinclair SCOTT** of Douglas

Wed **18** **Mary DUCKETT**, Life in Coalburn