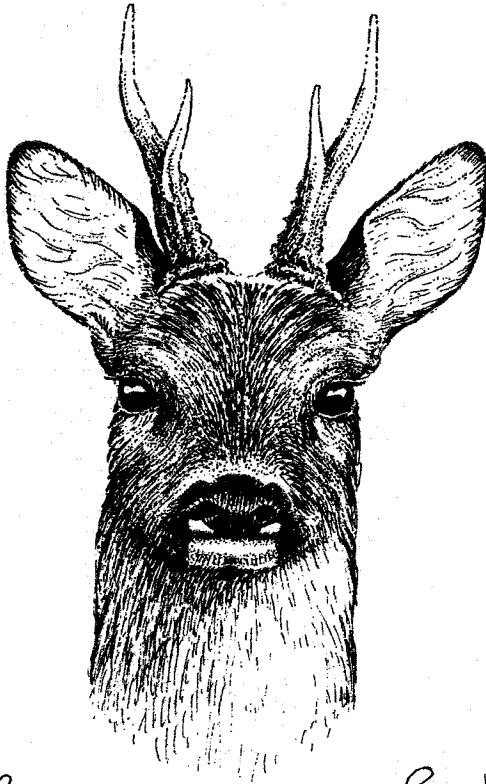


Carsphairn

Heritage

Group



Boe Buck

Robin Ade
'85

Newsletter No 93

Winter 2011

75th Anniversary of Carsphairn Women's Rural Institute

Members, past members and friends of Carsphairn Women's Rural Institute met in December to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Institute in November 1935. The very first president was Miss Laird (the schoolmistress), vice-president was Mrs G McMillan, Secretary Miss M Campbell, Brockloch, Treasurer Mrs Blythe with Mrs McKnight, Knockgray and Miss Tait, Knockgray Farm. It was agreed to hold meetings on moonlit Thursdays if possible, thirty ladies signed up and the subscription was set at t w o s h i l l i n g s p e r a n n u m .

Do you recognise a name there? Miss M Campbell was not the Secretary for very long as she married Adam McNae and is our own dear Minnie! There are not many institutes lucky enough to have the original Secretary cut the celebration cake seventy five years later.

Due to the severe weather not everyone invited could attend, but a happy company enjoyed a delicious supper provided by Agnes Holden (wearing one of her other hats), the cake, baked by Dorothy Faulds, an address by the Federation Chairman, Christine Hutton, extracts from past minutes, a sketch first performed in the fifties by Jean Bell, Evelyn Watret and Mrs Barrie, this time by Ruth Williams, Susie Seed and Joyce Hunter Blair and we all tried our hand at indoor curling, one of the games played at the Ruralympics, a modern addition to the Rural's activities. The evening ended with some topical jokes from Susie, who led us in singing a carol to end a very happy evening.

Joyce Hunter Blair

Rhoda Campbell

Sadly, we record the death of Rhoda Campbell, who was the second chairman of the Carsphairn Heritage Group from November 1988 until December 1993. During that period the dream of having a building as a Heritage Centre became a reality, though not without a number of challenges which Rhoda, with her characteristic determination, overcame. The proposed building, an A-frame from the Liverpool Garden Festival burned down, but Rhoda, undaunted, doggedly pursued the goal with others from the committee. She had the mammoth task of steering the project through financial planning, physical planning, construction, and landscaping. In April 1992, the building was opened and it stands as a tribute to her commitment.

Buses by Joyce Hunter Blair

The other day came the good news that another bus is joining the Glenkens Transport Initiative stable; and I got to musing about transport in my life. Before the war it had been horseback or mule waggon in South Africa - I exaggerate, of course, my parents had a perfectly good car but I was a bit young to remember, they did ride to fetch the post from the station.

Back in Britain for the War we again had a car, bought in Portsmouth, ATP 767 -don't ask me the number of my present car, I have it somewhere - which was a blue Hillman with a very modern single rear window, to us, old-fashioned cars were the ones with two panes at the back. This did us well throughout the War with enough petrol ration to take us once a week to Dumfries to deliver vegetables, when we moved to Creetown it was augmented with a donkey-cart. When we went back to South Africa after the war it went to a new home at Palnure, that is the car, not the donkey, God knows what happened to it.

Of course, full use was made of public transport. My big sisters went to the Academy in Dumfries by service bus, walking the mile or so to the main road to catch it. They left the house at eight o'clock as the News started - 'Pips , Jennifer, pips, Alix, come along, hurry up!' The brown Carruthers buses took us along the shore road to Sandyhills for red-letter-day picnics, the Lockerbie bus took me - aged five, unaccompanied, there were conductors in those days - to my weekly boarding with my Mother's old governess in Lochmaben for lessons and to get me out of the way, I suppose. My little sister arrived that autumn.

I haven't even mentioned trains, boats and planes - that would make another whole story and I will stick to buses. In Capetown there were trolley-buses, like trams without the rails which took me home from college - we walked down in the morning - and then from work. Back to Britain again and work in London, the buses were much nicer than the underground once you knew which one to catch.

Those were the days of petrol rationing, the Suez Crisis of the late fifties. The first time I came to Carsphairn I came by bus from Dalbeattie - I stayed with my Aunt at Portling - and thought it a most romantic journey. Frank and I were courting at the time of course. I waited for him to collect me at the shop and marvelled that it sold Wedgwood china ashtrays, little thinking that I would be reliant on that shop for the next forty-odd years!

Here I am now in Dalry, my bus pass safely tucked in my purse and a determination to use it for more than the run from the Loreburn centre to the Infirmary in Dumfries. This I can thoroughly recommend, no worries about parking and a bus every twenty minutes. Perhaps, with the price of petrol as high as it is, the glory days of The Bus Trip will return, meanwhile we can make full use of the Catstrand buses and consider ourselves fortunate indeed.

Walk on the wild side

By Ruth Williams

While I was stewarding at the Heritage Centre I came across some walk leaflets in a cupboard. I asked why they are not on display and was told that they are a bit out of date. So when I became a member of the committee about a year ago I volunteered to upgrade them.

A couple of members were keen to come with me to walk the routes, so on a dull and overcast day last February Ann, Kath and I set off to Polmaddy to start our first walk, Polmaddy to Carsphairn on the Pack Road.

It started very 'auspicious' with one of the walkers being a bit scared to walk over the bridge which spans the Polmaddy Burn which was raging at the time. But she shut her eyes and ran across only to perch herself precariously onto the wet and slippery edge to take a picture of the burn.

I was told that the way leads off by the inn sign at the beginning of the mediaeval village of Polmaddy. Well if Ann Rutherford had not been with us I would still be searching for that trail, it was and still is very small like a sheep's track.

So off we went soon going into the thick forest which had been planted 30 years ago. We made slow progress because the footpath was clearly visible but very wet and very often we had to navigate onto dryer land. At one time Kath came out from the trees having looked for a dry passage, lost her balance and stepped/fell into the track submerging a foot.

We found our way across newly built forest roads, through areas of recently felled trees and at last after negotiating a very boggy patch out on to open ground.

We spent some time looking for the mediaeval crosses but no luck. When the mist started to come down we realized that we really had to make a move on or we'll become ghostly women roaming the hills.

A walk which should have taken 3 hours took us 5!

Names of local features by Anna Campbell

At our 2010 Annual General Meeting a short talk was given about recent donations, one of which was a framed photograph of a view looking up the River Deugh towards Cairnsmore of Carsphairn.

In the photograph is a cave, known as Willie's cave. It's not very big or deep and is really only accessible from the river. Looking back at the 1848 Ordnance Surveyors Notebooks written in preparation for the 1851 6" maps it was known as Willie's cave then. It is graphically noted as "its extent is such as to allow a man to sit at ease in it. The origin of its name is from an eccentric character (whose Christian name was William.)"

My curiosity deepened and I decided to look through all the Carsphairn entries in the notebooks for features that included Christian names or what would appear to be surnames to us.

One of the most well known features is Allan's Cairn which is just outside the parish on the Southern Upland Way. The notebook description is "that it is 1 ¼ miles east of the Lorg but tradition had it that a packman or pedlar called Allan was murdered there. It may well have been a cairn in 1848 but now there is a Covenanters memorial which is a 4-sided obelisk standing about 1.5 metres high. It is surrounded by a ring of iron railings and every surface has an inscription on it. One says "In memory of George Allan and Margaret Gracie who followed Christ to martyrdom. They were shot by the dragoons of Coupland and Lagg near the fawns of Altry in the days of the Covenant. More information about Allan's cairn can be found in newsletter No 9 1990)

There are three pools named after people, two quite close to the village which are known as Cubbins Kate pool and the other known as Dalbonniton Pool where, reputedly, Bonniton was drowned. North of the village in the Carsphairn Lane is Fergie's Pool.

Luke's stone was a mile from the Clennoch and Maxwell's Crook, named after its owner Maxwell, was described as a piece of rough pasture land near Holm of Dalquhairn and near the Lorg was Mungo's Pool.

All these names were taken from the 1848 notebooks. Some of the names are still used today and at the AGM a few more were added, Tam's Stell on Cairnsmore and Scobie's field on Marbrack. Are there others and do readers know of names of specific fields and woods in the parish that might have been more recently named?

Income & Expenditure for Carsphairm Heritage Group (Charity No. SC007408)

Last Year	Income	Expenditure	
			1/11/09 to 31/10/10
£309	Membership	£365.00	Membership
£739	Donations	£662.32	
£197	Social Events		£24.57
£255	Interest		
£2931	Grants	£1883.23	
£968	Sales	£734.06	
£50	Sundries		
£5348	Total Income	£3669.20	
	Uncleared from last year now cleared	(£182.69)	
	Cash In Hand @ 1/11/09	£20.00	
	Treasurers Account @ 1/11/09	£2802.71	
	National Savings Investment Account @ 1/11/09	£8126.92	
		£14436.14	
		£3778	Total Expenditure
	Uncleared cheques & Banking	(£127.21)	
	Cash In Hand @ 31/10/10	£20.00	
	Treasurers Account @ 31/10/10	£3421.97	
	National Savings Investment Account @ 31/10/10	£8148.97	
		£14436.14	

Notes:

		2010
£5348	Total Income	£3669.20
(£3778)	Total Expenditure	(£2972.41)
£1571 (1)	Profit/(Loss)	£696.79

Notes: (1) Last year's profit was apparently this large because a) money was transferred from the NS & i account and b) interest rates were much higher

I have examined the above and with explanations provided, find the figures correct.
 Stephanie Dowie
 1/12/10

A 98 year old woman in the UK wrote this to her bank. The bank manager thought it amusing enough to have it published in The Times.

D e a r S i r ,

I am writing to thank you for bouncing my cheque with which I endeavoured to pay my plumber last month. By my calculations, three nanoseconds must have elapsed between his presenting the cheque and the arrival in my account of the funds needed to honour it. I refer, of course, to the automatic monthly deposit of my Pension, an arrangement, which, I admit, has only been in place for a mere thirty eight years. You are to be commended for seizing that brief window of opportunity, and also for debiting my account £30 by way of penalty for the inconvenience caused to your bank.

My thankfulness springs from the manner in which this incident has caused me to rethink my errant financial ways. I noticed that whereas I personally attend to your telephone calls and letters, when I try to contact you, I am confronted by the impersonal, overcharging, pre-recorded, faceless entity which your bank has become. From now on, I, like you, choose only to deal with a flesh-and-blood person.

My mortgage and loan payments will therefore and hereafter no longer be automatic, but will arrive at your bank by cheque, addressed personally and confidentially to an employee at your bank whom you must nominate. Be aware that it is an offence under the Postal Act for any other person to open such an envelope. Please find attached an Application Contact Status which I require your chosen employee to complete. I am sorry it runs to eight pages, but in order that I know as much about him or her as your bank knows about me, there is no alternative.

Please note that all copies of his or her medical history must be countersigned by a Solicitor, and the mandatory details of his/her financial situation (income, debts, assets and liabilities) must be accompanied by documented proof.

In due course I will issue your employee with a pin number which he/she must quote in dealings with me. I regret that it cannot be shorter than 28 digits but, again, I have modelled it on the number of button presses required of me to access my a/c balance on your phone bank service. As they say, imitation is the most sincere form of flattery. Let me level the playing field even further. When you call me, press buttons as follows:

- 1) To make an appointment to see me
- 2) To query a missing payment
- 3) To transfer the call to my living room in case I am there
- 4) To transfer the call to my bedroom in case I am sleeping
- 5) To transfer the call to my toilet in case I am attending to nature
- 6) To my mobile phone if I am not at home
- 7) To leave a message on my computer a password to access it is required
- 8) To return to the main menu, and to listen to options 1 to 8
- 9) To make a general complaint or inquiry, the contact will then be put on hold, pending the attention of my automated answering service. While this may, on occasion, involve a lengthy wait, uplifting music will play for the duration of the call.

Regrettably, but again following your example, I must also levy an establishment fee to cover the setting up of this new arrangement.

May I wish you a happy, if ever so slightly less prosperous, New Year.

Your Humber Client

Myrtle J Watson

Remember. This was written by an 98 year old woman.

DOESN'T SHE MAKE YOU PROUD!

Contributed by Anne Rutherford