

Milngavie & Bearsden Historical Society

Newsletter September 2015

Dear Members and recent visitors,

May I wish everyone a warm welcome to the start of the 2015-16 session of the Milngavie and Bearsden Historical Society. I am sure that the programme that the committee has set up will be of interest to everyone as it includes a wide variety of subjects.

I would also like to give a big “thank you” to Hamish MacDougall, the outgoing chairperson, for the hard work that he has put into the Society and for his dedicated and enthusiastic term of office. He took over the position a few years ago but is continuing on the committee to lend his knowledge for the new session.

The Society is there for those interested in history. The committee try to find subjects which will be of interest to the general listener, but are always interested in knowing what you, the members, would like to hear about, so please feel free to tell us. If there is a topic that you think would be appreciated by the members please let us know by speaking to one of the committee or emailing us at enquiries@mbhistorical.org. This year’s programme is complete but any suggestions will be added to the list for consideration for future sessions.

On another note, I always enjoy the final night of the year at the AGM which is also our Members’ Night where short talks are given by members on topics of interest to them. Although a long way away, if anyone might be interested in giving a ten minute talk about anything historical, please have a think about giving a talk on Members’ Night and let a member of the committee know (help can be provided to produce a slide show)

The only way this Society can continue is if people actually come along to the talks. Please do come along, and if you have friends who may be interested, please encourage them to come along also.

Enjoy the session and I look forward to seeing you at the first talk.

Jim Beck - Chairman

Visit to Maryhill Burgh Hall

We arrived at Maryhill Burgh Hall in brilliant sunshine on the 20th April. We entered through the only part of the fire station still standing - the outside wall. The four arches, through which the fire engines used to rush out of the fire station when it was in operation, are still preserved. They are now graced by four stunning silver wrought iron gates by the sculptor Andy Scott depicting firemen in period dress with their period equipment. It was an impressive start to the tour. Crossing the courtyard we reached the foyer, which had facsimiles of the stained glass panels illustrating the local industries with men and women in ordinary work clothes going about their normal daily life. They were designed by Stephen Adam and were unusual for their

time as most stained glass depicted religious themes or wealthy and important people. They were at eye level and lit from behind so that we could have a good look at the significant detail which the artist had included.

We met our guide there and he provided a lively commentary as he introduced us to the various parts of the building. The most important part of the building was the main hall which is very impressive but made more so by the eleven stained glass panels set high in the windows protected by plate glass. There are in all twenty panels but the other nine are in the Peoples' Palace in Glasgow Green where they were taken to protect them. The Trust has high hopes that they will all be returned to Maryhill eventually.

On the opposite side of the hall there are modern stained glass panels which illustrate life in Maryhill today

We then saw the various artefacts connected to the building or to Maryhill generally which had been collected from far and wide - especially worth mentioning is the rather strange key and fish slice presented to one of the Provosts.

We then adjourned to the café to enjoy a welcome cup of coffee and some delicious home baking

What initially started out as a mission to save these unusual stained glass panels has developed into a splendid centre for all the people of Maryhill including a swimming pool in what was the old wash house, a children's nursery, classes of all kinds and a place to hold concerts, birthday parties, weddings, funerals. It also provides office space for local businesses and because of the acoustics in the main hall the orchestra of Scottish Opera and others rehearse there. It was a stimulating afternoon

Visit to Scone Palace

Everyone arrived at Milngavie Station sharp and the bus filled up and headed towards Perth and Scone Palace on a very pleasant and sunny day, albeit a rather cool one. Arriving at the Palace the bus pulled in to the car park, but quickly had to move to avoid a rather grumpy Oyster Catcher which found the gravel an ideal location for its nest.

First call for most was the café and lunch, while a few avoided the initial rush and went for a walk around the beautiful grounds before having something to eat.

A guided tour had been arranged for 1 pm and everyone duly gathered on the steps to the front door where a couple of pictures were taken, before the tour started. The palace has been the home for generations of the Earls of Mansfield for 400 hundred years. Our guide was very knowledgeable about the history of the family, the building and its contents, making it a fascinating hour and a half. As we were a Historical Society, she told us afterwards, she had actually extended the tour especially for us. Despite the extended tour we still had time afterwards to investigate the grounds, including Moot Hill where the Kings of Scots were crowned, with its replica of the Stone of Scone. A small chapel also sits on Moot Hill.

The grounds are of great interest with some magnificent specimen trees of some

considerable age. These include a Douglas fir (the first place in Britain that it was introduced) named after the famous botanist David Douglas, who came from Scone and was a gardener to the Earls.

Avoiding the Oyster Catcher, we finally embarked onto the bus mid afternoon and our driver got us happily back to the station in Milngavie.

A very enjoyable time was had by all, and thanks must go to Margo for all the arrangements.

Programme for 2015-16 Session

To be held in **Kilmardinny House.**

Monday, October 5th, 2015

CHRISTIAN CADELL – THE WITCH PRICKER OF NAIRN.

Susan Morrison the well known historian and comedienne tells the bewitching story of this extraordinary character living in the 1660s. Not for the faint hearted.

Monday, November 2nd

DR. JOHN RAE AND THE NORTH WEST PASSAGE

Dr. David Lawson with his affection for Orkney where John Rae was born relates the courageous journey taken by him through the Arctic and beyond to find this elusive seaway. His pioneering work is at last being appreciated albeit a century after his death.

Monday, December 7th

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ISLANDS OF LOCH LOMOND.

Fiona Baker is a consultant archaeologist. She was responsible for The Loch Lomond Survey carried out between 1995-98 which was commissioned by the Friends of Loch Lomond. She works all over Scotland at present dealing with river hydro schemes

From January meetings to be held in St. Andrews Church, Park Rd, Milngavie.

Monday, January 11th, 2016.

THE ART OF FORGERY.

Professor Roy Burdon gives an insight into whether it is Fake or Fortune. The historical problems which confront potential art buyers and art forgers will be explored along with forgers' preferences and reasons for pursuing the trade.

Monday, February 1st

WORKING CLASS COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE, 1855-1939

Professor Eleanor Gordon will focus on the diverse nature of the working class family and will illustrate how premarital sex, cohabitation and marriage breakdown are by no means new phenomena.

Monday, March 7th.

A HISTORY OF THE GLASGOW VETERINARY SCHOOL

Professor Oswald Jarrett tells of the modest beginnings in a small shoeing forge in

Sauchiehall Lane in 1862 to the present large complex at Garscube Estate. The School has been at the forefront of innovation in animal welfare, public health, basic research and veterinary education. Recent research has been done on the feline leukaemia virus.

Monday, April 11th.

AGM AND MEMBERS' NIGHT.

The Local History Group meets monthly in Brookwood Library, on the Wednesday following the lecture meetings at 7.30 p.m

Committee Members for 2015/16

Joyce Avery
Jim Beck
Margo Currie
Dorothy Easson
Jean Forrest
Hamish MacDougall
Effie Murray-Smith
Jim Sheldon

Subscription Form

The subscription for 2015-16 is £15. Please complete the form below and send it with your remittance to the Treasurer - Mr. J. Sheldon, 69, Clober Road, Milngavie, G62 7SU. Please enclose a s.a.e.

Cheques to be made payable to "Milngavie and Bearsden Historical Society".

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