A milestone in Crosshill
Contributions for the Spring 2005 issue of *Ayrshire Notes*, including information about the activities of Member Societies, should be sent before the end of January to Rob Close, 1 Craigbrae Cottages, Drongan, Ayr KA6 7EN, tel. 01292 590273.

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Further information about the AANHS (Ayrshire Archaeological & Natural History Society) and its publications will be found on the society’s website: [www.aanhs.org.uk](http://www.aanhs.org.uk)

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*Cover illustration*

This is one of the surviving milestones on the turnpike road from Maybole, through Crosshill and Dailly, to Girvan. The road was turnpiked under the 1774 Ayr Roads Act. The hidden mileage to Newtonstewart is 31, by the Balloch road, which departs from the other here. It was turnpiked under the same act. See ‘Historic Milestones’, page 27.
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Ayrshire Stallion Leaders

When farming in Scotland experienced radical changes after the Second World War, one of the many rural scenes to disappear was the sight of a solitary man, walking the country roads from April to late autumn, accompanied by a large, impressive horse. This would be a Clydesdale, a noble animal well-known for its endurance and dignity. It might be up to 17 hands high and in the walking season it caught the onlooker’s eye with its flowing mane, docked tail, white feathered feet and, usually, a white blaze on its face. The man who accompanied the horse would be a stallion leader, chosen from the more skilful grooms of a pedigree Clydesdale stud. He toured an assigned district with the stallion to serve the mares in far-flung farms, and so to maintain the breed, which would carry out all the heavy draught work in the course of the farming year. Though dressed like most of the farm workers of the time, he was as impressive as his horse in his self-assurance, purposeful air and resolute step.

After the war, when the tractor and lorry replaced the heavy horse, many thousand draught horses were slaughtered and left the scene as if overnight. In 1947, one hundred thousand were put down and a similar number the following year. The figure eventually ran in to millions as the transfer to motor transport increased. The Clydesdale had been a daily presence on the roads and a wonder to every watchful child. They had graced the landscape for generations. Farmers, farm workers, delivery men and roundsmen had sustained with them an affair of mutual devotion throughout their working lives.

I had interviewed a number of surviving grooms in Ayrshire in the 1980s. Three of them – Ben Boyce, Bob McClymont and John Fleming, all then living in retirement – were happy to draw upon memories of lives of achievement and much pleasure.

Ben Boyce was employed by J & R Smith, of Nether Newton, Newmilns, as a stallion leader from 1936 until 1946. He travelled two seasons in County Durham, to Chester-le-Street and Seaham Harbour, and “liked it fine.” In 1944 he remembered 1,780 horses going through Lanark market in four days. The grooms attending took their refreshments in “The Silver Bell”, where stories and experiences were shared. In the train to the great Scotstoun Show, Ben Boyce recalled a minister coming into the compartment and saying, “I suppose you gentlemen are in the horse business; you’ll not be able always to tell the truth.” One of them called Davie Riddell replied, “It widnae be sae bad if lees could dae it.” The care of stallions and their presentation to the mares was a highly skilled job, not always apparent to ministers and other laymen.

Service charges varied between breeders. When Ben travelled to Mull in 1940 he journeyed light with a coat and oilskins, and a notebook. Food and laundry would normally be supplied at the farms. Fees were between £2 and £3, with better horses perhaps up to £5. When asked about grooms with a horse companion, he recalled only one, an old fellow in County Durham with his own old stallion called Jolly Boy. He travelled with a pony and Ben Boyce found it strange watching them approach, the groom on his pony with the stallion alongside. He put it down to him being too old to walk the great distances.
Walking Season, 1939. Cornfallow was offered to the Vale of Garnock Horse Breeding Society from George Alston’s stud at Loudounhill.

Bob McClymont was a stallion leader with the breeder George Alston of Loudounhill, from 1936 until his last walking season in the Crieff district in 1949. A groom’s fee was 2s 6d (12½p), rising to 5s (25p) after the Second World War. Sometimes an unofficial fee could be earned on the quiet. An old groom told him when he started, “Ye’re nae dampt use if ye cannae get a new suit o’ claes and a pair o’ buits oot o’ it.” Mr McClymont believed his job was like a disease: you became attached to the horses and foals and knew them all their lives. Grooms had a pride in their work; when you first came out leading a stallion “ye stuck your kist oot. Ye were a man.”

Dressing and grooming was part of the stallion leader’s duties. Raffia plaits were attached to the horse’s mane until after the shows and inspection by the farmers. Purely decorative, they might help to give the right signals to a group who could be a delegation from an agricultural association, looking for a horse for the travelling season. Bob McClymont enjoyed the life, and in the walking season he was always welcome in the Ayrshire dairy farms. The folk were interested in horses and farm workers are in the kitchen with the family. In the north-east of Scotland it was rougher in the bothy life. Not everyone
was keen, though, on horsey talk. Some grooms found employment in winter at the threshing mill, working from McQuaters depot in Maybole. An old frequenter of the Kings Arms, where the McQuater men met, was spied one night in another pub. When challenged, he said he was fed up with the chat in his usual howff: “If ye don’t gae hame wi yer een fu o cauff [chaff] ye gae hame in foal.”

“Loudoun Security” (24,299)

Pedigree
SIRE- “Winiflaw Aristocrat” (23,019)
DAM- “Nethermin’s Boss” (63,788)
by “Damman” (20,359)
2nd DAM- “Sharkadale Gloria” (63,340)
by “Golden Victor” (10,137)
3rd DAM- “Duchess of Sharkadale”
(19,814) by “Tullibardine” (16,848)
4th DAM- “Dall of Sharkadale” (17,061)
by “Prince of Marisburgh” (14,852)

TERMS-
£2 10/- at Service and £4 10/- when Mare proves in foal. Groom’s Fee, 5/-
N.B.--While every care will be taken in trying and serving mares, the owner will not be responsible for any loss or damage caused thereby.

For further particulars apply to the Secretary, Mr. J. K. Beattie, or the Groom,
Mr. J. Brown.

Stations
Saturday to Monday—Halkies (Mr. Phillips)
Monday mid-day—Auchendolich (Mr. Grant)
Monday night—
Tuesday mid-day—Little Kenny (Mr. Lyon)
Tuesday night—Gallowau (Mr. Weighton)
Wednesday mid-day—Longbank (Miss Rough)
Wednesday night—Kinlity, Cornuchy (Mr. Fearn)
Thursday mid-day—Easter Oathlaw (Mr. Whiston)
Thursday night—Kilbull (Mr. Ewart)
Friday mid-day—Herdhillmair (Mr. Lackie)
Friday night—Greenbank (Mr. Duncan)

Season 1950, presenting Loudoun Security to the Kirriemuir District Agricultural Society showing its pedigree, terms and stations on the itinerary. Latterly stallions travelled by horse box to agreed collection points.

The scale of the work can be judged when between Turnberry and Girvan a stallion would serve 85 mares. This was only one estimate given by the breeder George Alston of Loudounhill. Other stallions might be working in the same area. With the horses you had to be in control, but without being cruel. One groom, for example, spoiled a very good horse named Cornfallow by overworking it. Bob McClymont got it back after a season and had no end of bother with it, as it had established dominion over the groom. Horses sense your feelings if you are scared or tentative, he said. An unlikely candidate for stallion leader was a wee fellow called ‘The Gas’, a terrible blether, who came through from West Lothian to lead a stallion there. On seeing the diminutive figure with the huge stallion disappearing up the road to Darnell station, George Alston turned to Bob, and said, “What dae ye think will happen?” The Gas was full of confidence, but never came back for a repeat season. The grooms also had their sad times. One leader went off to Galloway and his stallion died. Another was sent, and it died too. Still another was dispatched, but the groom came home with a halter. There was grass sickness in Galloway at that time.
Catalogue of the final sale of the Clydesdale stud of the Kilpatricks of Craigie Mains.

Craigie Merryman went to Canada for 450 guinease. The best in the sale, Craigie Gallant Hero, sold at 2600 guineas.

The third informant of the great days of the Clydesdales was John Fleming, head groom at the renowned stud of James Kilpatrick of Craigie Mains. Kilpatrick had won the premier stallion prize, the Cawdor Cup, three times at the annual show at Scotstoun. The big event of the year was the stallion contest on the first Wednesday and Thursday in March. The trains went right into the showground. The grooms left Craigie on Tuesday to walk to
Kilmarnock station with the horses. At Craigie Mains there were thirty to forty stallions with four or five mares for breeding and about three work-horses.

Craigie True Form owned by James Kilpatrick of Craigie Mains won the Cawdor Cup for the best male at the stallion show in 1948.

Fleming’s own concern over the work was apparent. The stallions in earlier days were docked. It made them tidier and allowed better action; but the docking was very cruel and he said he never liked it. A big knife was used and the rump cauterised with a hot iron to stop the bleeding. Later, a vet’s certificate was obligatory until it was finally legally condemned. Afterwards only the hair was cut.

Craigie Mains had horses travelling all over Scotland, as far afield as Orkney, as well as into England. Two travelling stallions went to Durham, and it was possible to collect a pound fee on the side. The official fee in the late 1920s and the 1930s was an average of £2 to £3, and the same again if it was in foal. The best horse at home was between £5 and £10. Mares also travelled to Craigie Mains, paying a standard fee of £15 and another £15 if in foal. Sometimes a mare was sold away and farmers cheated, claiming they were not in foal.

The stallions had a working life of up to twenty years. The grooms travelled light with a razor in their pockets, and few other personal items. The stallion had a belt and the groom strapped his coat on top for bad weather, and possibly his leggings also. On each side would hang the horses’ boots. These boots, made of leather, were in the shape of a foot, and with a buckle and strap. The boots were worn when the stallions were with the
mares to avoid injuries. Horses travelled out from farm to farm in different areas. Those for Ayrshire, three in all, left Craigie Mains on Monday morning. One was the Kilmarnock horse; it would reach Barassie on Monday night, Springside on Tuesday night, Moscow on Wednesday, Carnell on Thursday and outside Ayr on Friday. It came home on Saturday or Sunday.

John Fleming’s favourite stallion was Craigie Commodore. He served twelve mares one Monday and when John returned for foal money he had to collect for fourteen foals. He judged that a good stallion should have a bright eye, nice head, long neck, short back, big broad quarters, hough well up in the leg, short above, a deep belly and heart, and long silky hair. The fore legs should be well in below with big solid feet to carry them. Stallions were well-couthered during the season. They might get a bottle of stout with two eggs mixed in it at night, over and above their usual meals: quite often eggs would go a-missing on the farms.

It was a good life, better paid than other farm workmen, but the pitfall for the grooms on the road was their fondness of drink. They pulled up at pubs, and they drank at the shows. This brought about rivalry among them, and arguments began over stallions. One old Aberdonian that John Fleming knew who travelled in South Ayrshire used to get fu’ every Saturday on his way back. He would be found lying at the side of the road with his horse grazing nearby. His boss put him in the car, but John had to bring the horse home. The old fellow, refuting the myth about Aberdonians, always gave him a sixpence the next day.

John Fleming’s father was head groom at Craigie before him. When John started at eighteen there were five grooms. When the stud at Craigie Mains closed in 1961 he was the only groom remaining. The dispersal sale after the death of Mr Allan Kilpatrick was held at Ayr Auction Mart in October. Six horses were sold. Craigie Gallant Hero went for 2,600 guineas; another, Craigie Merrymen, followed what was then the trend and was earmarked for Canada. Already the best of the breed were being bought for studs in that country, though also in the USA, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and even Russia; one has sold latterly to Japan for £20,000. By the 1980s the best stock had been acquired by breeders abroad, and an American-bred colt, Zeus, became the supreme male champion, winning the Cawdor Cup at Scotstoun. It was at this period that controversy developed among members of the Clydesdale Horse Society. It was suggested that selective introduction of the English Shire Horse should be used to improve the home-bred Clydesdale. Up until then every horse had been bred “according to the [stud] book”, rather than the blood-typing being advocated to ensure a clean pedigree.

The great days were long gone since James Kilpatrick of Craigie Mains and William Dunlop of Dunure Mains, world class breeders, had their celebrated litigation over the ownership of the stallion Baron of Buchlyvie. The case went to the Court of Session, and finally to the House of Lords, which found in favour of Kilpatrick. The horse was sold at Ayr Mart, in 1911, for £6,500, which is possibly half a million pounds in today’s money.

When John Fleming left Craigie Mains he believed the day of the Clydesdale stud was over. He found employment as a grain-store foreman, with steady hours and he was at home every weekend. His wife was happier with the new regime, but he himself thought
that it could not be compared with his work with the horses and he was to have no more pleasure, as he said, in the birth of the wee foals

Jim Mair


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**Deerness Covenanter Memorial**

There is on the East Mainland of Orkney a memorial to the approximately 210 Covenanters who were drowned there in December 1679. Of this memorial I knew two things: firstly, that of the victims, most of whom had been captured at the Battle of Bothwell Bridge, some must have been from Ayrshire; and secondly that the memorial had been built in 1888 “at the instigation of a South American visitor to Orkney.”¹ A visit to Orkney in June this year gave me the opportunity not only to visit the memorial, but also to see whether I could learn some more. I was particularly interested in the fact that none of the standard references, such as Burgher, gave an architect, while the “South American visitor” seemed too implausible to be true.

Following their defeat at Bothwell Bridge on 22nd June 1679, nearly 1200 Covenanters had been taken prisoner by the Crown armies of Charles II. Some were executed, and many were subsequently released under an Act of Indemnity proclamation of 14th August that year. However, an earlier order in the Privy Council, made on 4th July, had ordained that all “Ministers, Heritors and Ringleaders” were to be prosecuted and banished to slavery in the American plantations. William Paterson, a merchant in Edinburgh, contracted to undertake the transportation, and it was he who chartered the Crown of London, captain Thomas Teddico, to take the prisoners across the Atlantic. The Crown sailed from Leith on 27th November, and put in at Deersound, Orkney, on 10th December; she sailed again that evening and was almost immediately wrecked at Scarvataing, about a mile west of the Mull Head of Deerness.² Thomas Brown, a writer in Kirkwall, recorded the event in his diary: “Dec 10th being Wednesday at 9 in the evening or throbout the vessel or ship called the Crown wherein was 250 of the wigs or thereby taken at Bothwell Brigge to have been sent to Virginia parroshed at or near by the Moull Head of Deerness.”³ The names of the known Ayrshire victims are included below as an appendix.

“It had often been proposed that some fitting memorial should be erected over the graves of those Covenanters, whose sworn adherence to the Protestant faith had cost them their lives, but it was only on 22nd December 1886 that any definite steps were taken.”⁴ On that date a public meeting, chaired by Samuel Reid,⁵ Provost of Kirkwall, was held in the Old Town Hall, Kirkwall, and it was agreed that a subscription appeal should be made. Reporting a subsequent meeting of the Committee, in March 1887, at which the wording of the appeal was approved, it was noted that, “as our readers will recollect, it is now a
considerable time since this matter was first advocated to writers in these columns, in connection with which Dr Gunning of Edinburgh and Rio Janeiro promised a subscription of at least £50.”

It was undoubtedly this promise of £50 which had spurred the people of Orkney into action, and in “Dr Gunning” we have the “South American visitor”.

Robert Halliday Gunning, (1818-1900) then, is the person who did most to bring about the erection of the Deerness Memorial. Without his promise of £50 it is unlikely that the project would ever have been begun, especially when it is realised that the total sum subscribed was less than £100. In a recent article, Thomas W Baillie traces Gunning’s life and career.

Gunning was born in Ruthwell, and grew up in Kirkbean, New Abbey and Dumfries. He qualified as a surgeon at Edinburgh in 1839, and in 1849 he left for Brazil, where he remained in practice for 33 years, returning in 1882. He described his practice in Rio as “lucrative”, while from 1872 to 1878 he worked at Palmeiras in the gold-rich north-east highlands of Brazil. His wealth enabled him to support causes he held dear, and bodies to benefit from his largesse include Edinburgh University, the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh.
and the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Many of the awards and lectureships that he endowed, often known as Victoria Jubilee Prizes, are still presented. He married twice, though there was no issue from either marriage, and he died in London in March 1900.

Gunning was a religious person, and was a close associate of Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847), one of the major players in the 1843 Disruption. While we do not know when Gunning visited Orkney, nor why he was particularly moved to support this project, we can see that an upbringing in south-west Scotland, and an association with Chalmers, would have made Gunning a natural enthusiast for the Covenanters, and for honouring their memory. Gunning’s involvement appears to have been, in part, through the Reverend William A Kyd, “now in Tasmania, but who had been for some time doing work in Orkney in connection with the United Presbyterian Church. It was he who first of all corresponded with Dr Gunning, and obtained from him the handsome donation of £50.”

The inscribed plaque on the Deerness Memorial.
In July 1888 it was reported to a meeting of the Memorial Committee that the monument was then being built, and would be completed by early August. It was described as a 40 foot high obelisk, in Orkney stone, surmounted by a crown, and with a granite slab carrying the inscription. Subscriptions at that date were £97. There is no mention of either an architect, or of the contractors for the building.

Report in *The Dundee Advertiser*, Friday, August 17, 1888.

The inauguration took place on Wednesday 22nd August 1888. “There was a large and enthusiastic gathering of people from the surrounding districts, and many came great distances. Five or six brakes carried a number of leading citizens from Kirkwall. The day ... was a characteristic Covenanters’ day. In the morning and forenoon a dense fog hung over the islands, shrouding every object in that mist which so often saved the lives of the Covenanters ... but long before the monument was reached the veil had been lifted from the earth, and the ceremony of inauguration took place under a bright sun and a refreshing breeze.” “By one o’clock over 500 people had assembled round the monument.”
According to one report, “if the weather is favourable the steamer Lizzie Burroughs is to make a special trip from Kirkwall to Deerness.”

At the inauguration, a history of the movement for the erection of the monument, a list of subscribers, a copy of the subscription appeal, local, Edinburgh and Aberdeen papers, and a Bible, as well as a set of jubilee coins were placed in a bottle. The bottle was placed in a recess in the south-west side of the monument, and over this recess was placed the granite slab with this inscription:

For Christ, His Crown and Covenant. Erected by public subscription to the memory of 200 Covenanters who were taken prisoners at Bothwell Bridge and sentenced to transportation for life, but who perished by shipwreck near this spot, 10th Dec. 1679.

Unfortunately, the names of the designer and contractors remain unknown. Although £100 seems a paltry sum, even by the standards of 1888, the Committee had sufficient money left over to erect a further monument. This is in Kirkwall, and takes the form of a red and grey Aberdeenshire granite drinking fountain almost immediately in front of St Magnus Cathedral. Put up in 1890, it was not universally loved: “an absurdity in polished granite, utterly out of keeping with its surroundings.”

The design is by James Hutcheon of Aberdeen, but he is unlikely to have been the designer of the Deerness Memorial. This fountain is on the site of the Old Town Hall, where the first meetings of the Committee had been held.

Appendix: Ayrshire Victims of the Crown Shipwreck, 1679

Auchinleck Andrew Richmond
Barr Alexander Burden
Colmonell John McClellan, Thomas McClurg, John McCormock
Dalmellington Walter Humper senior, Hugh Simpson
Dalry David McCubbin, William McCulloch
Dreghorn James Bouston
Fenwick David Bitchet, William Bitchet, Andrew Buckle, David Currie, James Gray, Robert Tod, John White, John Wylie
Galston George Campbell, James Young
Girvan William Caldwell
Kilmarnock James Anderson, Robert Anderson, William Brown, John Cuthbertson, Thomas Finlay
Kirkmichael John Brice, Robert Douglas, James McConnell, John McTire, Robert Ramsay
Kirkoswald Thomas Germont, John White
Loudoun Thomas Wylie
Mauchline William Drips, William Reid
Maybole Mungo Eccles, Thomas Horn, Robert McGarron, John McHarrie, John McWhirter, William Rodger
Muirkirk John Campbell, Alexander Paterson
Ochiltree Andrew Welch
Old Cumnock John Gemil, James Mirrie
Stewarton Andrew Wylie, Robert Wylie, Thomas Wylie
Straiton George Hutcheson, Alexander Lamb, James McMurrie

Rob Close

2 This paragraph owes much to the work of Robert B Miller, Richmond, VA, who has researched the history of the Crown, and presented a copy of his work to the Orkney Library and Archive.
4 *Dundee Advertiser*, 17th August 1888.
5 Samuel Reid (1825-1912), a merchant and shipowner, was Provost of Kirkwall from 1876 until 1887. At the same time as he was chairing the Deerness Memorial Committee, he was also building for himself a house, Braebuster, on Deerness. The architect of this house was Thomas Smith Peace (1845-1934), Kirkwall.
6 *Orkney Herald*, 2nd March 1887, 4c. The earlier correspondence in the paper has not been traced.
8 *The Orcadian*, August 25th 1888, 5a.
9 “blue stone taken from the beach below”: *The Orcadian*, 25th August 1888, 5a.
10 *Orkney Herald*, 18th July 1888, 5a.
11 *Orkney Herald*, 29th August 1888, 7a.
12 *The Orcadian*, 25th August 1888, 5a.
13 *Dundee Advertiser*, 17th August 1888. It is not known if this sailing took place.
16 My thanks are due to Dane Love for providing this list, which appears in his *Scottish Covenanter Stories*.
17 Walter Humper junior survived, as did Hugh Cameron and Quintin McAdam, both also from Dalmellington. Other Ayrshiremen to survive the wreck were George Dunbar (Craigie), Andrew Thomson (Dundonald), Robert Wallace (Fenwick) and Patrick Watt (Kilmarnock). Andrew Thomson was among the 9 survivors who are believed to have escaped to Ulster: see J Thomson, *A Cloud of Witnesses*, 1714, quoted by Robert Miller (cf fn 2)
18 These five are also commemorated by a memorial stone at Kilmarnock Laigh Kirk. First erected in 1823, the stone was repaired in 1846. A new stone was put up c.1996.

Information from Stuart Wilson.
Drowned while hunting with his otter-hounds

I am indebted to Drew Moyes for spotting a memorial stone in the churchyard in Elsdon, Northumberland, with an Ayrshire connection. It bears the following inscription:

‘Erected by a few friends to the memory of John Gallon, who was drowned while hunting his hounds in the River Lugar, Ayrshire, July 16th 1873, aged 59 years.’

It is a memorial stone rather than a headstone, since John Gallon’s remains were presumably interred in Ayrshire.

A stretch of the Water of Lugar in the vicinity of Slatehole Bridge.
From the First Ordnance Survey, 1860.

John Gallon was master of the otter hunt which met at 7.30 that morning at Barskimming House, which stood above the River Ayr. Upstream, a little way above Barskimming Old Bridge, the Ayr is joined by the Water of Lugar. The otter hounds headed up the Lugar towards Ochiltree. From the account of Gallon’s death in the Ayr Advertiser (see below) it is apparent that he met with his misfortune downstream of Slatehole Bridge, where the river is constrained in a narrow defile between high banks of sandstone rock crowned with trees. The rest of the party gathered at the bridge. When he failed to make an appearance and they did not hear the cry of his horn, they began to search for him. Slatehole Bridge spanned the Lugar almost due north of Slatehole Farm. Tracks to it on either bank of the Lugar can be seen on the O.S. One Inch Series map, Sheet 67, published in 1964, though with no trace of a bridge. The O.S. Landranger 1:50,000 map, sheet 70, published in 1988, shows a track on the right bank only.
A recent inspection of the site revealed the remains of the bridge on the left bank. The substantial buttress stands above the present level of the water, and above it the sandstone blocks of the sides of the bridge extend up to the parapets and road surface. It was a narrow bridge, suitable for pedestrians and possibly horses, but not for carts and carriages.

The remains of Slatehole Bridge on Lugar Water

‘Melancholy Accident’

From the Ayr Advertiser, Thursday July 17th, 1873, 4e.

‘Yesterday morning the pack of hounds belonging to J. Gallon, Esq., near Newcastle, met at Barskimming House at 7.30. A considerable number of lovers of the sport mustered, and a start was made under the guidance of the well-known and highly appreciated master, Mr John Gallon. The hounds at once gave tongue, and went at a rattling pace up the Lugar for about a mile above Barskimming House, where a precipitous rock on either side of the stream, with an extremely narrow border below on which to pass, renders following the bed of the river almost impossible. Here Mr Gallon must have endeavoured to pass, but the other followers (none of whom were at the time in sight of him) left the bed of the stream lower down, and through plantations took the nearest course to Slatehole Bridge, to await his arrival with the hounds. His non-appearance, however, at the expected moment created no great surprise, as it was thought he had either got before his friends or taken a
nearer way to a bend further up the river (the hounds being in full cry), but on their going about a mile further on, they fancied he could not have gone so far without their hearing his horn, or some other symptom, and resolved to turn back in search of him. On arriving at Slatehole Bridge they learned that no trace of him had been see, and after sending scouts up and down the river unsuccessfully, their most anxious fears were aroused. A raft made of a cart and ladders was constructed, and a grappling iron procured from a smithy near at hand, and after about an hour’s dragging the body was found about 150 yards below the bridge. The unfortunate gentleman had thus lost his life while hunting and cheering on his hounds at the sport he so dearly loved. We understand that he could not swim. Mr Gallon as for the last 40 years been well-known and justly esteemed by all lovers of otter hunting as a thorough-going and most energetic amateur master and huntsman, and his loss will be sincerely regretted by all sportsmen on both sides of the Tweed. He was in his 61st year, and leaves a widow to lament his untimely fate.’

David McClure

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Scotland’s Churches Scheme

Scotland’s churches constitute a significant part of the nation’s ecclesiastical heritage. The wonderful diversity of the buildings and the peacefulness of their sanctuaries are both an attraction and a source of spiritual uplift for the visitor – whether the purpose is
to join in worship, access a place of private prayer or enjoy the artistic, architectural and historical heritage of the building.

To encourage “open doors” Scotland is fortunate to have a unique Trust which advises and assists churches in this ministry of welcome.

Scotland’s Churches Scheme is an ecumenical charitable trust, providing an opportunity to access the nation’s ecclesiastical heritage and at the same time giving the individual church a greater profile with “open doors” to its own community. In assists churches in membership to:

- work together with others to make the Church the focus of the community;
- open their doors with a welcoming presence;
- tell the story of the building (however old or new), its purpose and heritage (artistic, architectural and historical);
- provide information and care for visitors, young and old.

The Scheme has grown rapidly since its inception in 1994 and there are now over 900 Churches in membership, operating an “open doors” policy. These churches are spread across Scotland - and across all the denominations. They contain a significant part of the nation’s heritage (over 500 are listed buildings, a quarter being Category A).

In Ayrshire, there are over one hundred churches in membership, giving details of their architectural and artistic features; service and opening times; and special events. The Scheme’s local Representative in the county is Joan Fish (tel: 01292 272654) of St Andrew’s Parish (Ferguson Memorial), Irvine. Joan would be delighted to advise any churches interested in joining or receiving the Scheme’s publications.

While we are interested in opening this wonderful heritage to visitors and to the parish community we are also keen to provide the opportunity for local access for spiritual quiet, at times other than services. We are not, therefore, solely interested in buildings with
artistic, historical or architectural features but in all churches, old and new, urban and rural – they are all an integral part of their communities and many have a fascinating story to tell.

The Trust publishes a comprehensive guidebook, Churches to Visit in Scotland, well received by local communities and visitors. Area maps with references and clear directions enable the visitor to access the church, however isolated. There are three Ayrshire sections – East, North and South, with many of the churches illustrated with John Hume’s line drawings (three of which are reproduced here). The current edition features Our Lady and St Meddans, Troon, on the front cover, and the first new millennium church, Mansefield Trinity, Kilwinning, on the back cover.

The book is available at price £8.99, plus post and packaging, from Scotland’s Churches Scheme, Dunedin, Holehouse Road, Eaglesham, Glasgow G76 0JF. Churches can obtain a good discounted rate on 6 or more copies, with free delivery. [Phone 01355 302416, fax 01355 303181, or e-mail fraser@dunedin67.freeserve.co.uk for details]

The Scheme is developing rapidly and advises churches with, for example, “know-how” booklets on researching your history, presenting your story, visitor welcome and security. We would be delighted to see more Ayrshire churches joining us. If you would like more information, please contact us at the Eaglesham address.

Brian Fraser

1 Of course John R. Hume is also the author and illustrator of the latest publication of the AANHS, Vernacular Building in Ayrshire.
Norris McWhirter

The recent death of Norris Dewar McWhirter, one of the founders of the Guinness Book of Records, will have been noticed by readers of Ayrshire Notes. His twin brother, Ross, was killed in 1975.

On reading the obituaries for Norris McWhirter, it struck me that this is an Ayrshire surname, and that there could be a connection with Ayrshire, and so it proved. What follows is based largely on standard references, such as Who Was Who, and the useful Maybole-orientated website, richpetit.com,¹ which has an extended McWhirter family tree, but does not make the direct connection with the twins.

The twins’ great great great grandfather was a William McWhirter, who was born in 1723 in Minnigaff, Kirkcudbrightshire. He married, about 1763, a Jean Gibson. No date of death has been found for either of them.

His son, also William, was born in Maybole on the 1st July 1773. He worked as a weaver, and later as a carter. He married (before 1799) Agnes Newall, from the Kirkcudbrightshire parish of Kells: she was born in 1774, and was dead by 1821. This William was alive in 1851, but had died by 1863.

This William had a son, Anthony, born in 1812. He is the twins’ great grandfather. He was a tanner to trade, but also appears to have served some years as a police constable. Although born in Maybole, he passed most of his adult life in Ayr. He was married twice, firstly in 1833, and secondly, in October 1850, to Jane McDowall. He had six children by his first marriage, and one son by the second marriage, and it is through this son that this lineage descends. Anthony McWhirter died, on the 9th August 1863, at 3½ Sandgate, Ayr.

The twins’ grandfather was William McWhirter. He was born on 27th May 1851 in Mill Street, Ayr. He became an electrical engineer. In 1881 he was living in Barrow in Furness, Lancashire, and his occupation is given in the Census for that year as “telegraph linesman apparatus maker”. By 1885 he had returned to Scotland, and was living in Govan. He, too, was married twice, firstly in 1872, and secondly in 1885. Again, too, descent is through the second marriage. His second wife, who he married at Horsecleugh Farm, Cumnock, was Margaret Kennedy Simpson. She died in 1916, and William McWhirter died, on 6th March 1933, at his home, “Longhurst”, in Clarkston.

The twins’ father was William Allan McWhirter. He was born in Govan on 14th September 1888. He had a lengthy career in journalism and newspaper publishing. From 1919 until 1925 he was a director of the Daily Record, and in the latter year (the year of the twins’ birth)² he moved to London, as a managing director of the Sunday Pictorial and the Daily Mirror. During these years he was, at various times, editor of the Sunday Mail, the Weekly Record and the Sunday Pictorial, and was also editor-in-chief of the Daily Mail, and the Sunday Despatch. In 1936 he was the President of the London Ayrshire Society.³ He died on the 16th May 1955 at his home, “Aberfoyle” at Winchmore Hill in North London. As a newspaperman, W A McWhirter was aware of the importance of facts, and accurate
facts. This was a discipline which he instilled in his sons, and which led ultimately to the Guinness Book of Records.

Rob Close

1 Seen 30th July 2004.
2 His wife (the twins’ mother) was Margaret Williamson, from Giffnock, whom he married in 1922.
3 Ayrshire Post, 20th May 1955, 18e. This obituary of W A McWhirter fleshes out some of the detail found in the sources cited in the introduction.

Ayrshire Federation of Historical Societies

New Secretary

After months (years) of pleading, my prayers have been answered, and the Federation now has a new Secretary. Her name is Pamela McIntyre, and she can be contacted at 5 Eglinton Terrace, AYR KA7 1JJ.

Pamela is an archivist, and worked for 7 years in the archives at Heriot-Watt University. For the past 12 months she has been working, part time, at the Ayrshire Archives Centre in Ayr.

We welcome Pamela to the team, and look forward to the Federation benefiting from her enthusiasm and interest in community history.

Rob Close continues as Treasurer, and Editor of Ayrshire Notes. He might now be able to devote more time to the Ayrshire Records Series.

Troon Conference 2004

The biannual Conference is nearly upon us, and we look forward to seeing many of you there. The date is Saturday, 30th October 2004. The theme is Medical History, and the speakers are:

James Beaton, The History of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow
Helen Dingwall, Medicine and Surgery in Early Modern Scotland
Brian Moffat, Recent Discoveries at Soutra Medieval Hospital
Rab Houston, How to Cure the Mentally Ill in 18th Century Scotland

The day will begin at 10 a.m, and close at around 4 p.m. As is usual, there will be a lunch break, when delegates can make their own arrangements.

The cost of the day is a remarkably good value £10. Cheques, &c., payable to AFHS, should be sent to Rob Close, at 1 Craigbrae Cottages, Drongan, AYR KA6 7EN.
Swap Shop, 2004

The Swap Shop for 2004 will be held on Sunday, 14th November 2004, beginning at 2 p.m. The venue is the Smith and Archibald Lace Mill, West Donington Street, Darvel, where we shall be the guests of Smith & Archibald (Darvel) Ltd.

This is one of the last traditional lace mills still working in the Irvine Valley, and we shall have an opportunity to see the mill, as well as engage in the usual AFHS round table discussion.

Society Secretaries and individual members of the Federation will be mailed separately about this shortly.

We hope for a good turn out both at the Troon Conference, and at the Swap Shop.

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Diary of Meetings September 2004 to May 2005

AANHS Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society. Meetings in Carnegie Library, Ayr, at 7.45 p.m.
ASA Alloway & Southern Ayrshire Family History Society. Meetings in Doonfoot Primary School, Abbots Way, Doonfoot, at 7.30 p.m.
BHS Beith Historical Society. 7.30 p.m.
EAFHS East Ayrshire Family History Society. Meetings in Gateway Centre, Foregate Square, Kilmarnock, at 7.30 p.m.
KCCS Kyle and Carrick Civic Society. Meetings in Loudoun Hall, Ayr, at 7.30 p.m.
KDHG Kilmarnock & District History Group. Meetings in Kilmarnock College at 7.30 p.m.
LDHS Largs and District Historical Society. Meetings in Largs Museum at 7.30 p.m.
L(MS) LDHS, Marine Section. Meetings in Largs Museum at 7.30 p.m.
LNAFHS Largs & North Ayrshire Family History Society. Meetings in Largs Library at 7.30 p.m.
MHS Maybole Historical Society. Meetings in Maybole Castle at 7.30 p.m.
PHG Prestwick History Group. Meetings in 65 Club, Main Street, Prestwick, at 7.30 p.m.
SHS Stewarton Historical Society. Meetings in John Knox Church Hall, Stewarton, at 7.30 p.m.
TAFHS Troon @ Ayrshire Family History Society. Meetings in Portland Church Hall, South Beach, Troon, at 7.30 p.m.
WKAS West Kilbride Amenity Society. Meetings in Community Centre, Corse Street, West Kilbride, at 7.30 p.m.
### September 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 6</td>
<td>MHS</td>
<td>David Hunter</td>
<td>Our Carrick VCs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 9</td>
<td>EAFHS</td>
<td>Members Night</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 14</td>
<td>LNAFHS</td>
<td>David Rowand</td>
<td>Scottish Legal Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 21</td>
<td>TAFHS</td>
<td>John Roxburgh</td>
<td>Cemetery problems</td>
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### October 2004

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 4</td>
<td>KCCS</td>
<td>Dan Coughlan</td>
<td>The Paisley Shawl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 4</td>
<td>L(MS)</td>
<td>Craig Osborne</td>
<td>Scott’s of Bowling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 4</td>
<td>MHS</td>
<td>Tom Barclay</td>
<td>Covenanters in the Carolinas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 5</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>Patrick Parsons</td>
<td>The Tinker, The Priest and Flodden Field</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 7</td>
<td>BHS</td>
<td>Valerie Reilly</td>
<td>Christmas Customs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat 9</td>
<td>LNAFHS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coffee morning in Dunn Memorial Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 14</td>
<td>EAFHS</td>
<td>tba</td>
<td>Ayrshire Archives</td>
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<td>Thu 14</td>
<td>AANHS</td>
<td>Ralph</td>
<td>The Natural History of the Clyde Kirkwoodo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Islands</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 14</td>
<td>PHG</td>
<td>Jim Allan</td>
<td>North Ayrshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 19</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>Susan Smith</td>
<td>A Kirk in Ruins – Loudoun Kirk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 19</td>
<td>LDHS/LNAFHS</td>
<td>Alastair Dinsmor</td>
<td>History of Glasgow Police 1800 - 1975</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 26</td>
<td>WKAS</td>
<td>Siobhan</td>
<td>Local Material and Holdings of the RCAHMS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 28</td>
<td>AANHS</td>
<td>Malcolm MacCallum</td>
<td>Museum of Flight, East Fortune</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 28</td>
<td>BHS</td>
<td>John Millar</td>
<td>Lithuanian Adventure</td>
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### November 2004

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 1</td>
<td>L(MS)</td>
<td>Alastair McFarlane</td>
<td>Associated British Ports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 1</td>
<td>KCCS</td>
<td>Michael Donnelly</td>
<td>Scottish Stained Glass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 1</td>
<td>MHS</td>
<td>Marion Stewart</td>
<td>Dumfries and Galloway Archives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 2</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>Robin Blair</td>
<td>Heraldry in Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 4</td>
<td>PHG</td>
<td>Tom Macfarlane</td>
<td>The History of Western SMT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 9</td>
<td>LNAFHS</td>
<td>Desmond Rowe</td>
<td>William Shakespeare – The Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu 11</td>
<td>AANHS</td>
<td>Alison Sheridan</td>
<td>Who Were Scotland’s First Farmers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu 11</td>
<td>EAFHS</td>
<td>Lorna Cawood</td>
<td>Culzean Estates – the Kennedy Family and Estate Records</td>
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*Ayrshire Notes* 28, Autumn 2004
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tue 16</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>Richard Oram</td>
<td>Commerce Meets the Cloister – Melrose Abbey’s Ayrshire Estates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue 16</td>
<td>TAFHS</td>
<td>John McGill</td>
<td>In Pursuit of Sir William Wallace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu 25</td>
<td>LDHS</td>
<td>William Gibb</td>
<td>Kelso Land</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 25</td>
<td>AANHS</td>
<td>Eddie Haggarty</td>
<td>Strathclyde Seen from the Police Helicopter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 30</td>
<td>WKAS</td>
<td>Charles Milligan</td>
<td>Access and You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue 30</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>Dauvit Brown</td>
<td>The Founding of Scotland c.850 to c.1250</td>
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**December 2004**

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thu 2</td>
<td>PHG</td>
<td>Jim Irving</td>
<td>South Africa – The Rainbow Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 6</td>
<td>KCCS</td>
<td>David Wilbraham</td>
<td>Scottish Environmental Protection Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 6</td>
<td>L(MS)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Members’ Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu 9</td>
<td>AANHS</td>
<td>Neil Dickson</td>
<td>Brethren in Ayrshire: A Sect in Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue 14</td>
<td>TAFHS</td>
<td>Charles Magorian</td>
<td>Auld Scots Lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue 14</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>Jenni Calder</td>
<td>Scots in Canada: A New World Across the Waters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 15</td>
<td>LDHS</td>
<td>Open Night</td>
<td>“Come Talk About Largs” We will attempt to answer your questions</td>
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**January 2005**

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<thead>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 10</td>
<td>L(MS)</td>
<td>Bill Mann</td>
<td>All in a Day’s Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 10</td>
<td>KCCS</td>
<td>David Hopes</td>
<td>The Distributed National Burns Collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 11</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>Neil Dickson</td>
<td>Brethren in Ayrshire: A Sect in Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 11</td>
<td>LNAFHS</td>
<td>Elizabeth Carmichael</td>
<td>Digital Ancestry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 13</td>
<td>EAFHS</td>
<td>Andrew Dick</td>
<td>Covenanters of Ayrshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 13</td>
<td>AANHS</td>
<td>Sean O’Reilly</td>
<td>Keeping Good Biggins – The AHSS and Conservation in Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 18</td>
<td>TAFHS</td>
<td>Ian Kennedy</td>
<td>1855 – The Introduction of Official Registration</td>
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<td>Thu 20</td>
<td>LDHS</td>
<td>Elinor Simey</td>
<td>The Clarsach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 25</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>Kevin Wilbraham</td>
<td>The Relief of Poverty in Ayrshire, 1560 to 1845</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Speaker</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 25</td>
<td>WKAS</td>
<td>Russel Coleman</td>
<td>Archaeology of the Three Towns Bypass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 27</td>
<td>AANHS</td>
<td>Christopher Lowe</td>
<td>Recent Excavations on Inchmarnock</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 27</td>
<td>BHS</td>
<td>Andrew McCallum</td>
<td>Anzio Beachhead</td>
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**February 2005**

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<tr>
<td>Thu 3</td>
<td>PHG</td>
<td>tba</td>
<td>Scottish Wildlife Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 7</td>
<td>KCCS</td>
<td>Gill Smart</td>
<td>Global Warming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 7</td>
<td>L(MS)</td>
<td>Nick Kamenos</td>
<td>The HMS Dasher Disaster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 7</td>
<td>MHS</td>
<td>John Steele</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 8</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>Geoff Bailey</td>
<td>Recent Discoveries on the Antonine Wall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 8</td>
<td>LNAFHS</td>
<td>Roderick Grahame</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 10</td>
<td>AANHS</td>
<td>James Dickson</td>
<td>Ancient Glacier Bodies: Oetzi and Kwaday Dan Ts‘inchi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 10</td>
<td>EAFHS</td>
<td>Charles Magorian</td>
<td>A look at the Scottish Dialect</td>
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<td>Tue 15</td>
<td>TAFHS</td>
<td>Pete Wadley</td>
<td>Family Records in the National Archives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 22</td>
<td>WKAS</td>
<td>Rob Close</td>
<td>Architecture of West Kilbride</td>
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<td>Tue 22</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>John Steele</td>
<td>The Dark Secrets of HMS Dasher</td>
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<td>Thu 24</td>
<td>AANHS</td>
<td>Zoë Smolka</td>
<td>Red Squirrel Conservation in South Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 24</td>
<td>BHS</td>
<td>Elaine McFarland</td>
<td>Death Mourning and Commemoration in 19th C Scotland</td>
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<td>Thu 24</td>
<td>LDHS</td>
<td>Edwina Proudfoot</td>
<td>Scottish Church Heritage Research</td>
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**March 2005**

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<tr>
<td>Thu 3</td>
<td>PGH</td>
<td>Peter Livingston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 7</td>
<td>L(MS)</td>
<td>Doreen Grove</td>
<td>Cumbrae Rocks</td>
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<td>Mon 7</td>
<td>KCCS</td>
<td>Doreen Grove</td>
<td>Defence of Britain Project</td>
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<td>Tue 8</td>
<td>KDHG</td>
<td>Olive Geddes</td>
<td>Wish You Were Here! Travellers’ Tales from Scotland, 1890 to 1920</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 8</td>
<td>LNAFHS</td>
<td>Christopher Fleet</td>
<td>Mapping Out Your Family History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu 10</td>
<td>EAFHS</td>
<td>Ian Johnson</td>
<td>Lifeboats of Ayrshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu 10</td>
<td>AANHS</td>
<td>Ian Campbell</td>
<td>Men Must, However, Eat</td>
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Recently South Ayrshire Council (Roads Policy Services) appealed for information concerning the removal of a ‘Historic Milestone’ from the junction of the A77 and B7035 during roadworks. At this approximate location was the junction of two turnpikes: the ‘road leading from Ayr by Mauchline, Sorn and Muirkirk towards Douglas, so far as that road is within the said county of Ayr’ [Ayr Roads Act 1767]; and the ‘road from Monkton through the lands of Prestwick, by St Evox to Coylton, passing through the parishes of Monkton, St Evox, and Coylton’ [Ayr Roads Act 1805].

There are many more milestones (including mileposts and direction stones) in Ayrshire than one might suppose from a perusal of the OS Landranger maps of the county. These maps show only the milestones and mileposts on our A and B roads. They omit the many to be found on roads which, though minor now, were part of the turnpike system. They also omit a number of stones which indicated direction only, which may be why the missing St. Evox stone was not on OS Landranger sheet 70.

I have observed other disappearances over the past fifteen years. This, together with the ease of publishing on the Web, has inspired me to set up an Illustrated Catalogue of Ayrshire Milestones. This can be found at: www.ayrshirehistory.org.uk/milestones or by going to www.ayrshirehistory.org.uk and clicking the ‘milestones’ button. Apart from providing a pictorial record of all the extant stones, this will set them in the context of the turnpikes, so that the overall pattern of the remaining stones and the significance of each individual stone can be appreciated. I hope that this catalogue will inspire others to take an interest in the preservation of our historic milestones.

David McClure
AANHS Publications

available from Ronald W. Brash MA, Publications Distribution Manager
10 Robsland Avenue, Ayr KA7 2RW
Further information about the AANHS (Ayrshire Archaeological & Natural History Society) and its publications will be found on the society’s website: www.aanhs.org.uk

A Scottish Renaissance Household (MacKenzie) £3.00
Plant Life in Ayrshire (Kirkwood/Foulds) £4.20
The Barony of Alloway (Hendry) £3.60
Robert Adam in Ayrshire (Sanderson) £3.60
The Cumnock Pottery (Quail) £5.00
Tolls and Tacksmen (McClure) £3.60
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