



e-Scotia

Newsletter of the Anglo-Scottish FHS

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Anglo Scottish Family History Society

Welcome: To another edition of our Brexit-free newsletter. Our Branch meeting this month incorporated the Branch AGM followed by members sharing the heirlooms that they found had helped them in their research or which they found intriguing as to what they meant for family research. Again we include some news of events and reference some research sites that you may find helpful.

Enjoy.

Editor.

Annual General Meeting

Our chairman, Michael, began the meeting by welcoming everyone, then moved on to share with us the report that he had prepared for the Society AGM in April covering events in the ten Branch meetings held over the past twelve months. We welcomed three "outside" speakers who gave talks variously on DNA, Death Records and 1st World War research. We enjoyed two tours, one to Elizabeth Gaskell House and another of the resources at Manchester Central Library. Three further meetings then gave the opportunity for sharing research and seeking help from other members in our own research. At all Branch meetings the morning help desk was used, but not extensively. Altogether a fruitful year and everyone acknowledged that it met the expectations of members.

The meeting then went on to elect the committee for the coming year. Membership of the committee had numbered eight but Dave Hartley indicated that, for various reasons, he did not consider that he could continue in the role. We thank Dave for the contributions



Michael
Couper
Chairman



Yvonne
Gill-Martin



Linda
McInnes



Hilary
Harigan



Ina
Penneyston



David Muir



Mark
Campbell

he made to the Branch during his four years of service. The remaining seven members of the committee indicated their willingness to continue and their continued position was endorsed by the Branch by a unanimous vote.

Members Heirlooms



Hilary brought along a number of items she inherited from her mother's belongings, including this war service badge. This badge was worn by women involved in munitions work and was used as evidence that they were involved in war work and not avoiding any involvement. It was a symbol of societal pressure to be seen to engage in war work and how desperate individuals were to let others know that they were so involved.

Other heirlooms shown by Hilary were badges, known as "Sweetheart Badges". These were worn by women whose family member, husband or boyfriend was in the forces and fighting on the front. The symbolism involved in the first one was unclear to most of us. The central feature appears to be the red rose of Lancashire, but whether or not it was particular to Lancashire was unknown. Perhaps it represented the Lancashire Regiment. Can anyone enlighten us? The horn motif appears on a number



of light infantry badges. A more obvious "Sweetheart Badge" was the Royal Air Force badge seen on the left. I recall an elderly acquaintance wearing such a badge well into the 1960's/70's as a memento of her father, a fighter pilot, who died in WW2.

Members Heirlooms (cont.)

Linda brought along a number of items that she had discovered in a rubbish bin having been discarded by a relative. Amongst these were letters from her father to his wife and Christmas cards expressing affection and concern. Two of the items were New Testament booklets that had been issued to her father while he was serving in the Royal Air Force during the 2nd World War. These were clearly standard issue and indicate a time and presumption that religious affiliation and concern were taken for granted. Along with these was another booklet of more general interest and contained flying codes for a number of various scenarios. Linda's father was ground crew and so his ownership of such a booklet suggests that he was the recipient of coded messages from pilots in the air reporting back to base. One such code referred to a submarine being spotted. Other codes referred to the weather conditions and seeking permission to land despite poor weather. Intriguing for Linda was the fact that at the back of this booklet were two pages of names and addresses of various women. However her father had ended the war injured in hospital and it is likely that these were no more than the contact details of the nurses who looked after the men. However the list amused family members.



Michael brought along a military compass that he discovered amongst his father's property although it had in fact been passed down from his grandfather. He was an officer in the Royal Artillery during WW1 and served in France from 1914 until 1918 and survived the duration. This particular compass however did not in fact belong to Michael's grandfather as it is stamped with another officer's details. How the mix-up came about is unknown. The compass impressed all of us as a significant piece of micro engineering. It possessed various components including, not only a compass on a gimbal with a retaining button, but also viewfinder. If that compass could talk about what it had seen?

Yvonne brought to our attention the various sources of information that can be used to fill out a picture of our ancestor. The focus of her research was her aunt, Florence Conkleton. Florence was born in 1915 in Northumberland. She never married and lived all her life in the family home. By profession she was a nurse. Apart from birth and death certificates, there was, apparently, little more to know about Florence. Yet, Yvonne was able to throw more light on her by dint of reference to other sources. Research of local newspapers highlighted the village she lived in and even had photographs of the street and house. Telephone directories gave details of her address and telephone number. Research of military records threw up a defence medal and a National Identity Card. The message was clear. Whilst we may have limited information through the usual sources, there are other sources that we can look at that can, with a little effort, bring our ancestor to life. Never give up!

Scotlands People and the release of Highlands and Islands Emigration Society Records

If any of your ancestors emigrated from Scotland to Canada, Australia, the USA, New Zealand or South Africa, then this is great news. The emigration records of the HIES have all been digitised and are free to search on the Scotlands People site. There is a great article and information about the resource to be found here ([Click](#)) and this also takes you to the search page.



I have made mention of the HIES in a previous [e-Scotia](#) newsletter and I can only encourage you again to have a look at the article about it in the National Records of Scotland site ([Click here](#)) which also takes you to the SCAN site on the same topic. Well worth a look.

Age and Wisdom: *By the time you are 80 years old you have learned most everything.*



All you have to do now is try and remember it.

George Burns



Searching OPR's in Scotlands People:

Thought you might find this little piece of information interesting. Whilst preparing recently to give a presentation on Scottish family history research prior to 1855, I had cause to make use of the OPR's in Scotlands People. I noticed that in their "Recently improved service improvement" section they indicated that it was now possible to carry out a search in the OPR's, inserting the parent's names as an additional filter. Sounded good, however, I could not see this facility. I e-mailed Scotlands People asking for clarification. As usual their response was rapid and excellent. However their explanation was rather puzzling. They told me that the parent filter is available only after inserting the name of the person you are seeking and entering this on the system. I was looking at births in the OPR's and so entered the name I was interested in and pressed "Search". Sure enough, on the next page offered, there was the option of entering the parents' names. However listed in the index of names I had entered was also a column listing the parents of these people. It seemed to me therefor that the parent filter option on the page it was, was somewhat redundant, and would have been better placed on the initial search page. I e-mailed them back about this and received the following response from the archivist:



.....there is a reason why the parents' names search is on the search results page (in the 'refine search' options) and not on the initial search page.

The reason is that (as you'll no doubt have spotted) many OPR index entries do not have both parents' names. Until 2 years ago, the initial OPR search page included fields for parents' names, but this resulted in thousands of failed searches. Users kept entering parents' names and kept getting zero results. It was one of the most complained about aspects of the site.

There is a basic rule of thumb that the more complicated you make the initial search the more likely the search will fail, as all it takes is one thing (a name, a date, a district) to be different or absent entirely from the data for the search to fail.

I appreciate that it means experienced researchers do a two-part search (a simple search then a refined search, once you get a feel for the data your searching in), but, conversely, you don't get find that the majority of your initial searches fail (without you seeing the data structure that might be causing the search to fail).

So there you have it. A perfectly reasonable explanation based upon experience. Can't argue with that.

Find My Past: recently announced a number of new Scottish records: with the following announcements:

Scotland, Antenuptial Relationship Index 1661-1780

"Do you have ancestors that were members of the Church of Scotland? Search over 31,000 antenuptial records from Kirk Sessions registers to find out if there were any family members who were summoned to the ministers and elders of the church to deny or confess their sin as a child had been conceived out of wedlock."

Scotland, Dundee & Forfarshire (Angus) Hearth Tax 1691

Did you have Scottish ancestors from Dundee and the county of Forfarshire (Angus)? Search over 50,000 Hearth Tax records from 1691 to find out the number of hearths found within their home. Details like these will provide you with clues about the family's wealth and status.

Scotland, People Of Banffshire 1334-1851

Explore more than 28,000 extracts taken from original Kirk Session minutes. Responsible for parish business, and the morals of the parishioners, the Kirk Session was the lowest level of a church court and minutes typically contained a detailed account of the parish business.

All of these and more are of course accessible on the Find My Past web site under the "Scotland" heading.

Remember though that it is a pay to view site - unless of course you can get to your local library.



Morayshire records: a new website was drawn to my attention and I pass it on to you. ([Moray Records](#)) It will be of interest if you have any family connections in Moray. The site gives the opportunity to search by surname, occupation, or cemetery records. I must say that I did not find it the most attractive or user-friendly site to manipulate but once I got into it there does seem to be a fair bit of information there. Interestingly there is also the option of using/creating a family tree. Have a look and see what you think.



Friends of Dundee City Archives: ([Click here](#))

Some of you will have guessed by now that I am from Dundee and, given that I edit this newsletter, I make use of all the privileges to promote it!!! I must say though that this site was passed on to me by someone else and it is well worth a look. If you too have any association with Dundee and the surrounding area then this is for you. There is a vast array of archive material to look at including the absent voters list from 1919. I was particularly interested in the "Register of Milk Suppliers 1883-1922" given that I used to deliver milk in Dundee as a lad - although not so early on I hasten to add.



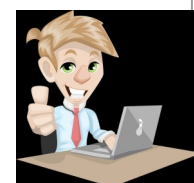
The Oxford English Dictionary and Scotland: an announcement in the "Metro" newspaper was drawn to my attention the other day;

"The word 'bawbag' has been officially added to the Oxford English Dictionary. Editors included the slang term for scrotum along with more than 40 other Scottish words. The entry for bawbag says it is a 'disparaging form of address' to describe 'an ignorant, obnoxious, or otherwise detestable person'. Other words include 'bampot'—a foolish or annoying person; 'weegie'—a derogatory term for a Glaswegian; and 'bidie-in' - an unmarried person living with a partner. The OED said 'There is a long and colourful tradition of insults in Scottish culture.'

I can only agree and I am sure we can all think of many more. Dare I ask for suggestions? Perhaps not!

Anglo Scottish Branch Meeting 13th April 2019—Manchester Central Library 2.00 p.m.

These days, all of us who are involved in family history research make great use of the internet. Given that there is so much "on line" we probably do so much more than searching around "hard copy" as we had to do in the past. This means that we become familiar with the internet sites that we use most often. In a general discussion we realised that some of us know of some sites that others had not heard of and thought it a good idea to offer the opportunity of sharing this knowledge. Hence the theme of April's Branch meeting which is entitled, **"Your favourite web site"**. Why not give some thought to what sites you use and find most useful then share these with us. We will have an internet connection and large screen so that we can all have a good look at what is available. Don't worry if you think you are not very good at using a computer. Someone else will do that for you. Just let us know some of the sites you have found helpful, particularly in your Scottish research.



Don't forget the Help Desk.and speaking of internet research, don't forget about the help desk that is available to you from 10.30 until 12.30 on the day of the Branch meeting. It is situated on the 3rd floor of the library. Exit the lift and turn right and you will see us all there ready to welcome you and help if you need it.

Hopefully you will have seen , somewhere, this information about our fabulous “Scottish Heritage Day” to be held at Manchester Central Library on Thursday, 16th May. Don’t miss the chance to book.



Anglo Scottish Family History Society

Presents

“Scottish Heritage Day”

with a special visit by

Scotland’s People and the National Records of Scotland

at

Manchester Central Library

Thursday, 16th May, 10.15 - 3.30

Society Members - Free. Non-members - £3

Programme

10.15. **Registration and Reception**

10.45. **Secrets of the Royal Mile** - a history of Edinburgh by Ed Glinert who will walk us through some of the historical secrets of Edinburgh by way of the alleys and back streets of the town.

12.00. Lunch Break

1.00. **Scotland’s People** - a talk by Iain Ferguson, Scotland’s People manager, giving hints and tips on how to get the most out of the website

National Records of Scotland - a talk by Tessa Spencer, Head of Learning, National Records of Scotland looking at some of the many and varied records held from Court records to Parish records

(Following each talk there will be the opportunity for questions of the speakers.)

Booking essential: only via [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk) on MLFHS web site; www.mlfhs.org.uk. after 6th April 2019



Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society

