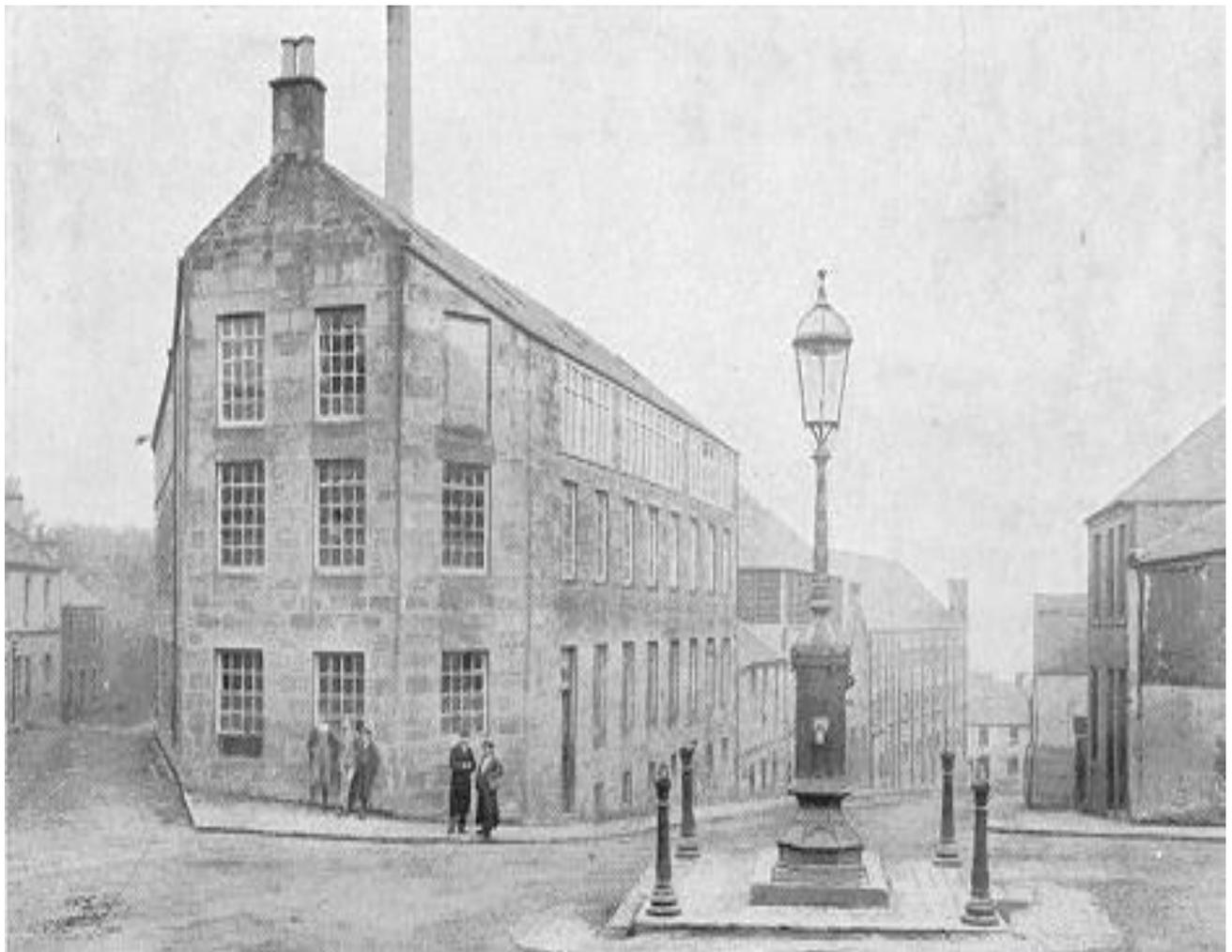


Autumn 2022/2



St Cuthbert Boot and Shoe Factory *Courtesy of Maybole.org*

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## **Ambition and Leather**

### **A look at the forgotten history of the people involved in Maybole's Boot and Shoe Industry by Simon Glendenning**

There have been many publications written about the history of Maybole by such historians as the Rev. Abercrummie, Rev. Lawson and most recently James T. Gray. These historians speak of Maybole's boot and shoe industry in their work but either briefly touch on the subject or omit any reference to where they acquired their information. As Maybole goes through its regeneration process, now is the right time for a new investigation into its lost industry while it looks to the future. This article hopes to be a precursor to a larger publication on the subject. It is a fascinating story that sees a whole town changing from one craft to another and individuals leaving their mark on the town that can still be seen today if you know where to look.

To understand why the town of Maybole became famous throughout the country for its boots and shoes, the 18<sup>th</sup> Century must first be discussed. The Old Statistical Account of Ayrshire, and its section about Maybole, written by James Wright in 1792 makes it clear that the only industry in Maybole at the time was weaving. Wright goes as to say that it was carried out so prolifically that people would not believe the volume of products the town could make<sup>1</sup>. Wright believed that Maybole had a flourishing weaving industry and says that 80 looms were in operation in a Parish of 800 people above the

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<sup>1</sup> Sinclair, Sir John. The Statistical Account of Scotland, Maybole, Ayrshire, Vol. 3, Edinburgh: William Creech, 1792, p. 219. University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow. (1999) The Statistical Accounts of Scotland online service: <https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk:443/link/osa-vol3-p219-parish-ayrshire-maybole> (Accessed 02 September 2022)

age of 8 years old, meaning that ten percent of the population could be engaged in weaving. Indeed even today, despite there being no handloom weavers in Maybole, it has left its mark. Most people would be able to tell you where to find the ‘Cairders Burn’ for example.<sup>2</sup>

By the next Statistical Account compiled in the 1840s, the weaving industry although still very much the dominant production activity, was in serious decline<sup>3</sup>. In a footnote added just before publication, George Gray says Glasgow had lowered the buying prices of woollen goods and almost completely stopped the supply of weaving webs. The result of this is the grim statement that – “Many of the weavers have been thrown idle and reduced to a state of starvation.” The once prosperous and profitable weaving industry was about to become extinct. The reason for this was the invention of Power Looms by the likes of Cartwright, Jeffrey, and Bell<sup>4</sup>. If the people of Maybole were to survive this period, they would need to find another craft.

There were some in the town who were engaging in other forms of production before the decline in weaving. A newspaper article about a court case involving a Maybole man written in 1800 lists his occupation as shoemaker<sup>5</sup>. Arguably the person

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<sup>2</sup> The ‘Cairders Burn’ is located on the road out to Kildoon Hill and is named after the process of ‘Carding’ wool, for weaving.

<sup>3</sup> Gordon, J. ed. *The New Statistical Account of Scotland / by the ministers of the respective parishes, under the superintendence of a committee of the Society for the Benefit of the Sons and Daughters of the Clergy.* Maybole, Ayrshire, Vol. 5, Edinburgh: Blackwoods and Sons, 1845, p. 372. University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow. (1999) *The Statistical Accounts of Scotland* online service: <https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk:443/link/nsa-vol5-p372-parish-ayrshire-maybole> (Accessed 02 September 2022), Wright may have appraised Maybole earlier than this as he does not mention shoemaking.

<sup>4</sup> Hunt, D. (2022) *Cartwright, Edmund* Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4813> (Accessed 02 September 2022)

<sup>5</sup> *Caledonian Mercury*, (1800), ‘Ayr Circuit Court’, Monday 22 September, p3 Available at: <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000045/18000922/016/0003?browse=False> (Accessed 02 September 2022)

responsible for turning the fortunes of the town was John Gray. The Rev. Lawson even names him as one of the ‘pioneers’ of the industry in Maybole in several of his publications. Gray began the first shoe factory in Maybole in 1838 in Inches Close<sup>6</sup> and produced hand-sewn footwear employing the skills of those who had previously worked with woollen textiles in the weaving industry. Hand sewing was a basic way of making footwear and despite the advances in technology in weaving, this had not yet caught up with the shoemaking trade. It was not until 1853 with Thomas Crick’s riveting machine that the process began to change. Brenda White suggests that the birth of Maybole’s boot and shoe industry began at this point<sup>7</sup>. This is highly probable because with the introduction of mechanisation in any manufacturing process, output increases. This allowed John Gray and Co to build the Ladywell Tannery and Shoe Factory.

Another pioneer of Maybole’s boot and shoe industry was Charles Crawford who was already a shoemaker in 1837<sup>8</sup> and like Gray, could see how the unemployed weavers could be used in a different industry. Crawford built the St Cuthberts Boot and Shoe factory in 1860 alongside his nephews Robert Crawford and James Ramsay. This partnership was to prove so successful that Robert Crawford after learning the trade, decided to set up his own factory 20 years later<sup>9</sup>. Robert Crawford set up the Kirkwynd factory in the area that once contained John Gray’s first factory. St Cuthberts was passed to James Ramsay in 1883 after Charles Crawford retired<sup>10</sup>. James

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<sup>6</sup> Ayrshire Historical, Commercial and Descriptive 1894, p83

<sup>7</sup> White, B. (1984), ‘The Ayrshire Boot and Shoe Industry 1839-1939’, *Scottish Industrial History*, Vol 7.2, p2, Available At: <https://busarchscot.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Scottish-Industrial-History-Vol-7.2-1984-compressed.pdf> (Accessed 02 September 2022)

<sup>8</sup> Pigot & Co. Directory of Ayrshire 1837, p272

<sup>9</sup> Ayrshire Historical, Commercial and Descriptive 1894, p81

<sup>10</sup> Ibid p79

Ramsay became Provost of Maybole between 1894-1905 and was present at the last meeting of the Parish Council in 1929 before it changed to the Town Council<sup>11</sup>. Not only was James Ramsay a well respected Town Provost, but a good businessman who expanded on the work of Charles Crawford by building an extension to the St Cuthberts factory in 1883. While Maybole had Gray and Co in Ladywell, Ramsay in St Cuthberts and Crawford in Kirkwynd, the town was at the height of its production.

Another interesting person involved in this industry was Thomas Aitken Gray who arrived in Maybole in 1860 to work for his uncles at John Gray & Co. Like Robert Crawford, Thomas Gray learnt how the business worked and decided to join in the lucrative trade by purchasing the Lorne tannery in 1875<sup>12</sup>. Gray expanded this factory so that it contained 95 tanning pits and added electric lighting to ensure that maximum production was gained during the winter months. Thomas Gray believed that the industry would flourish and in order to reap the most benefit he had to continuously expand his business<sup>13</sup>. Extensive advertising was taken out by Gray in many Scottish newspapers. On the surface, it seemed that Gray was every bit the successful Victorian businessman with a good business and a family. However, his continual expansion produced increasing debt and on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 1894, he decided to take drastic action. Gray boarded a train bound for London and as the train approached Glasgow, he jumped from it as it passed

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<sup>11</sup> *Maybole Home Page*, (2022), Available At: [https://www.maybole.org/community/council/last\\_meeting\\_maybole\\_parish%20council.htm](https://www.maybole.org/community/council/last_meeting_maybole_parish%20council.htm) (Accessed 02 September 2022)

<sup>12</sup> White, B. (1984), 'The Ayrshire Boot and Shoe Industry 1839-1939', *Scottish Industrial History*, Vol 7.2, p4, Available At: <https://busarchscot.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Scottish-Industrial-History-Vol-7.2-1984-compressed.pdf> (Accessed 02 September 2022)

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*

over Victoria Bridge<sup>14</sup>. Gray's body was found possessing a copy of the 'Tit-bits' and 'Today' magazines. 'Tit-bits' covered insurance for £100 while 'Today' covered for £1000. It would seem it was customary for Victorians to travel with these publications in case of an accident. The Scotsman newspaper indeed reports this as an unfortunate accident and says that he had 'fallen' from the train. On one hand it could be interpreted that this was in fact an accident but a later advert in 1897 to announce that T.A. Gray's creditors would receive dividends would point towards Gray attempting to secure a future for his family. Further research is required to investigate whether this worked.

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century was prosperous for Maybole and the town was making its name throughout the country and empire. To illustrate this point, the next page contains a comparison of two different years – 1883 and 1897.

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<sup>14</sup> *Aberdeen Evening Express*, (1894), 'Sad Railway Accident', Tuesday 17 April, p3 Available at: <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000444/18940417/036/0003?browse=False> (Accessed 02 September 2022)

1883 <sup>15</sup>			1897 <sup>16</sup>	
Factory	Employed	Weekly output	Employed	Weekly Output
John Gray & Co.	498	4,500	325	3,400
T.A. Gray	283	3,000	Deceased	Deceased
Charles Crawford	156	2,000	Deceased	Deceased
Robert Crawford	118	1,500	300	3,400
James Ramsay	51	550	470	6,300
Others	78	810	No Data	No Data

John Gray & Co. were the top producers in 1883 followed by their nephew, T.A. Gray whose rapid growth was clearly gaining results. In 1857 James Ramsay's careful expansion enabled his factory to become the top producers.

There was one famous product that all these factories were producing, 'The Maybole Tacketty'. It was so called because of the number of hobnails or 'Tacketts' that were to be found on the sole. These were waterproof country boots that enabled farmers and gamekeepers to safely navigate their way over rough terrain. They were also popular with children because they could slide when it was icy and create sparks on pavements. McCreath's, who were in business until the 1960s, even produced leather satchels and football boots for children. The Maybole Tacketty was made right up until the 1990s by the last surviving Bootmaker, Dick Goudie. Goudie gave an

<sup>15</sup> *The Carrick Directory* (1883)

<sup>16</sup> Lawson, R (1897) *The Capital of Carrick* p52

interview in the 1980s for Westsound radio and when asked what he thought about Wellington Boots (Gum Boots as the interviewer calls them) he replies “Forget about these Gum Boots! A lot of rubbish in comparison with what I’m making!”



*A Pair of Tacketty Boots Image courtesy of South Ayrshire Council*

Wellington Boots

were the downfall of the Maybole boot and shoe industry. Leather boots were more expensive to make as Goudie says in the same interview but his reasoning for people wanting his boots rather than Wellingtons was that at the end of a working day their feet would not be sore. It would seem that most farmers preferred the cheaper Wellingtons and Maybole did not change its production to accommodate demand.

Today, there are no factories or workshops producing boots in Maybole. The past industries have not been forgotten, but the people involved with them have. During research for this article, a number of names have been found that have not been mentioned in great detail by past local historians. These include: J M Runcie, G Dick, McGarvie & Co., G & N Mulvein Ltd., Alexander Devlin & Co and Thomas Murdoch & Samuel Stanton.

<sup>17</sup> *Ayrshire Sound Archive, 'The Last Bootmaker In Maybole', Ayrshire Archives ACC 08/135 (Accessed 05 July 2022)*

Many of the records related to these people and businesses are in the National Records of Scotland and warrant further research to produce a detailed outline of the full impact on Maybole from the Boot and Shoe Industry.

Some of this impact has been felt in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in a number of ways. In 2002 it was discovered that a block of flats built on the former site of the Lorne tannery 50 years prior had begun to sink into the remains of the Tanning Pits<sup>18</sup>. The residents were evacuated after large cracks were discovered in the brickwork of the building and after investigation the council discovered that the foundations had fallen down one of the pits. In 2019 a heritage trail was created in the town which involved the placement of boot shaped plaques in the locations of the former factories so that the past heritage of Maybole was remembered. While the regeneration of the town continues, plans are in place to modernise this trail with further information.

The boot and shoe industry of Maybole's past has been fascinating to research and this will continue. It was entwined in the social history of the town and there are many great stories still out there waiting to be discovered and told.

Simon Glendenning

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<sup>18</sup> *Maybole Home Page*, (2022) Available at: <https://www.maybole.org/news/archives/february2002.htm#getout> (Accessed 02 September 2022)

## The Puffer Kaffir by Professor Elaine McFarland

### The Ship

The *Kaffir* was launched from the Kirkintilloch yard of J. Hay & Sons Ltd in 1944. She was one of hundreds of Victualling Inshore Craft (VICS) commissioned by the Admiralty during World War Two to provide lighterage for their warships and merchant convoys. When the official order was cancelled before completion, the ship was bought for J. Hay's expanding



coasting business.

*Kaffir in Troon Harbour Copyright Scottish Maritime Museum*

The *Kaffir's* name (meaning a black South African), may grate on sensitive modern years, but no slur was intended in the early 1940s and most of the Hays fleet were given 'ethnographic' names, including the *Slav*, *Cretan*, *Inca*, *Saxon* and *Cuban* among others. The new ship was just over 60 feet long, with a gross tonnage of 97 tons. Like most of the Admiralty VICs, she was steam powered and equipped with a twin-cylinder compound engine.

For almost thirty years, the *Kaffir* had an uneventful working life, transporting bulk cargoes around the harbours of western Scotland. A rare break from routine came in May 1958 when she took part in the first outside broadcast from the Highlands, enabling onboard camera operators to film *The Legend of the Loch* at Loch Ness. In 1961, like many puffers, she was refitted with a six-cylinder Albion diesel engine, losing her distinctive puffer funnel in the process. Seven years later she passed into the ownership of Glenlight Shipping, following the merger of Hay Hamilton Ltd and Ross & Marshall Ltd.

## The Wreck

The *Kaffir's* long career ended in bizarre fashion on the night of 23 September 1974. She was tied up at the wet dock of Ayr's North Harbour, having spent the afternoon loading 120 tons of coal for Rothesay. She was scheduled to sail at 4 am the next morning, but her regular engineer had gone down with 'flu. This meant that her skipper, Charlie Marr, had to phone the owners for an urgent replacement. While they waited for



*Kaffir Ayr Harbour @ Emma McRae*

him to arrive, Marr and the deckhand decided to adjourn to a nearby bar. Luckily (or so it seemed at the time), John Henderson of Pollokshaws had phoned Glenlight Shipping earlier in the day looking for a job and was told to report to the *Kaffir*. He was in a celebratory mood as he headed to Ayr and decided to have a few drinks before he joined his new ship: 'but not to the extent that I was stupefied', he later insisted.

As the evening wore on, Captain Marr sent his deckhand to see if the relief engineer had appeared. The man ran back within minutes to tell the skipper that not only was the engineer missing, but so was the boat! Sobering up fast, the skipper informed the coastguard. He was soon off in the pilot cutter in pursuit of the missing puffer, accompanied by the coastguard and police, but it was too late. She had run aground on the rocks north of the harbour entrance. Boarding the vessel, the police discovered Henderson and he was immediately arrested. Captain Marr insisted on staying on board overnight in the hope he could re-float her at high tide, but her running gear was fouled and badly damaged and she drifted ashore again. The next morning a Sea King helicopter was scrambled from HMS Gannet at Prestwick to winch the protesting skipper to safety.

When John Henderson appeared at Ayr Sheriff Court the next month the 'Para Handy Puffer Theft' was front page news – not surprising since the *Vital Spark* series based on Neil Munro's stories had recently been shown on the BBC. It was revealed that Henderson had nine previous convictions, including one for attempted car theft, but he denied any wrongdoing in this case. He claimed that he was only acting 'out of loyalty to the company', and when the crew failed to show up that evening, he presumed that they were in the pub and decided to take the boat to Rothesay himself. He later realised that this was not a good idea and tried to turn back, but he had missed the harbour entrance as someone had moved the lights. All this cut no ice with Sheriff George S. Reid, who sentenced him to six months imprisonment for theft.

After further attempts to salvage the *Kaffir* failed, she was declared a total loss with an estimated insurance value of £20,000. Plans to tow her off with tugs and sink her in deeper

water also came to nothing. Her wreck is still clearly visible where she grounded in a position some 200 metres north of the Monkey Pier. The constant battering of the waves has broken her into two sections lying at right angles to the shore, with the stern section closest in. Depths around the wreck vary from four metres at high tide, to less than a metre low spring water tide. According to local legend, her cargo burned brightly in the fireplaces of Ayr for many months.

### Sources

*Ayr Advertiser*, 1974

*Ayrshire Post*, 1974

P. Moir and I. Crawford, *Clyde Shipwrecks* (1988)

L. Paterson, *Light in the Glens: The Rise and Fall of the Puffer Trade* (1973)

J Nain Collection, Highland Photographic Archive, High Life Highland



*Wreck of Kaffir* copyright Emma McRae

*Thanks to Tom Barclay of the Carnegie Library, Ayr for assistance with this research.*

## **The 1923 British Open Golf Championship**

**by J F Jamieson**

Next year 2023 will see the hundredth anniversary of the British Open Golf championship being held at Troon for the first time. Since this was the first time that Troon Golf Club hosted the British Open and it is appropriate to recall the personalities and processes involved in bringing this august event to Troon Golf Club (since 1978 Royal Troon Golf Club).

James Clarence Lawrence Jenkins was the leading amateur golfer in the pre First World War era. The 1891 census shows him aged 7 years of age living with his family Wellshothill, Wellshot Drive, Dummour Cottage, Cambuslang. He was the second son of Margaret Jenkins and was born in Strathbungo Renfrewshire. His father was James G Jenkins, an iron and steel merchant and both his parents are shown as having been born in England. His date of birth was therefore in 1884. He attended the High School of Glasgow.

By 1901 the family had moved house but remained in Cambuslang. Their new address was Douglas Drive Airedale Cambuslang. James C L Jenkins was elected Burgess of Glasgow in 1900 as the younger son of his father in the Hammermen Guild. The company's address was 124 St Vincent Street Glasgow and the Post Office directory (available from the National Library of Scotland online) describes the company as iron, steel and ore merchants in 1924-1925. By this time James C L Jenkins' home address was Minto, Prestwick.

James C L Jenkins joined the army on the outbreak of war when he was aged 30. On his attestation papers, his occupation is given as assistant manager still living at Airedale, Cambuslang (available online from Find My Past). He was posted as a

private in the Cameron Highlanders and sent for initial training to Aldershot. He was five feet seven and three quarter inches in height. After being wounded in action in 1915 when his leg was pierced by a bayonet he recovered in camp at Rouen. He was awarded the British War Medal as part of the Expeditionary Force in France. A further gun shot wound to the neck in 1915 led to a spell in Staffordshire Infirmary. In 1917 he was awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty Medal Card available from the National Archives Discovery catalogue on line).

Jenkins was the only member of Troon Golf Club to have won the British Amateur Championship which was held at Sandwich in May 1914. He won this beating C O Hezlet of Royal Portrush. The Sketch recorded on 7th May 1914 (again available in newspapers and periodicals on Find My Past) stating that Jenkins plays off 4 at Troon. Jenkins was a member of a famous golfing family and he played for Scotland against England in 1908 and 1912. In 1911 and 1913 he reached the 6th round of the amateur championship and was a semi-finalist in the Irish Championship on 1911. The Evening News reported on 25 May 1914 his two brothers had hurried down from Glasgow for the presentation of the cup. His brother Patrick G Jenkins, then aged 25 golfer who commenced to swing a club when he was about 10 and at first took up the game when he was on holiday at Carnoustie.” The Prestwick and Troon Times however states that he took up golf when at Dunblane and flourished under the tuition of Willie Fernie, the professional at Troon. His brother said to the papers “Willie Fernie is our pro at Troon and perhaps he has influenced our brother’s style.” Jenkins was a had also reached the Irish Championship final two years before. Patrick Jenkins’ name is on the Kilmarnock War Memorial as he was killed in France on 9th April 1917 while serving with the Queens Own Cameron

Highlanders. He was buried in France. His other brother was Ronald Jenkins. A telegram was sent to Troon announcing the victory in the amateur championship in 1914 and the flag was hoisted over the clubhouse. Jenkins travelled from Sandwich to London in the company of Hezlet and they became friends. The Evening News went on to state "Mr Jenkins is a finished non smoker and took no alcohol during the championship week. Jenkins had five brothers who were all scratch golfers. The Newcastle Daily on 25th May 1914 reported that there were about 2000 spectators and Mr Jenkins learnt his golf at Troon which is now his home. The paper further reported that the 6th provided a wonderful hole of the match and was won by Hezlet using a niblet to get his ball out of the bunker. The Hamilton Herald and Lanarkshire Weekly News reported on 13th April 1907 that James L C Jenkins was on the committee on Cambuslang Golf Club. The Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser on 22nd September 1906 described Jenkins' record score over Westburn Links beating his previous record of 71 by one stroke. In 1921 Jenkins contested the Amateur Championship at Royal Liverpool Golf Course but was unsuccessful.

By 1941-42 Jenkins' home address was The Hermitage, Troon. He died in 1964. The Glasgow Herald in December 1964 records his death in Ballochmyle Hospital aged 81. The obituary mentions that he achieved the rank of captain during his army service in World War I and also that his sister Dorothy was Scottish Women's Amateur Golf Champion in 1912. Dorothy subsequently married becoming Mrs Cruickshank and went to live in India where she still competed in the occasional golf tournament. Jenkins was captain of Troon Golf Club from 1945-1948 and twice won the silver cross at St Andrews. He

was 8th overall in the British Open Championship in 1914 which was held at Prestwick and was on the Scottish International team in 1908-1912, 1922, 1926 and 1928. Jenkins was probably instrumental in bringing the Open Championship to Troon for the first time in 1923.

Other memorable players in 1923 included the following Americans. Gene Saracen was aged 22 and the winner of the US Open in the previous year. He was expected to do well but in the event he failed to make the cut by one stroke.

Walter Hagen, the USA golfer was the British Open Champion of 1922 and was also expected to do well in the Championship. The Shields Daily News on 23rd June 1923 contained the following report ...Hagen Discontented ...asserted that the officials and spectators at Troon had treated the Americans in an unsportsmanlike manner and resolved that he was never again to play in England (sic) unless he was assured of better treatment. Hagen alleged that the worst example of bad sportsmanship was the eleventh hour prohibition of the use of punched clubs and the derisive attitude of the spectators which hampered the Americans' play. On his return to the USA he went on to apologise for his comments and became reconciled to competing in Britain again.

The unexpected winner of the 1923 Open was Arthur Havers. The British press lauded the return of the claret jug into British hands rather than the predominant Americans.

Arthur Gladstone Havers was born in Norwich on the 10th June 1898 and died 28th December 1980. He was the son of a steward at Royal Norwich Golf Club. In height he was six feet one inch. His two principal successes were the 58th Open Championship in 1923 and in the following week the Glasgow Herald Tournament at Gleneagles. He had qualified for the

Open in 1914 when he was then aged just 16. He became the professional at the following golf clubs Moore Park, West Lancashire, Combe Hill (where he was in 1923), Sandy Lodge and Frinton. The course at Troon lived up to its 'breezy links' reputation and the weather was rainy and bordering on stormy during the championship although the weather proved to be more clement on the final day. Indeed the Sheffield Independent of 16th June 1923 described the conditions as 'fought at first under the most cruel weather conditions and concluded in perfect weather'. The newspaper then went on to describe the large crowd which attended the Open and estimated that there were 40000 in attendance. The cup was presented by Sir Alexander Walker acting captain of Troon Golf Club.

Hosting the Open in 1923 was a great accolade for Troon Golf Club as the Portland Course had only just been restored to playing condition following its requisition by the Army in 1916. It was used as a grenade school during World War I and restored and redesigned by Dr A Mackenzie in the 1920s. Occasionally bits of grenades are unearthed during modern day course reconstruction.

The illustrations in this article are taken from the Ross Coubrough scrap books in the archives of Royal Troon Golf Club. Coubrough was an enthusiastic secretary of the golf club and his scrap books compiled mostly in the 1910s and 1920s provide a glimpse into the life and personalities belonging both to the town of Troon and the golf club at this time. They are held under the reference RTGC6. Most of the information in this article including the illustrations is taken from scrapbook 3 reference RTGC6/3. The page numbers differ between the digitised copy and the original so they have been omitted as the result would have been somewhat confusing.



## Ayrshire Conference Flyer



**Ayrshire After Dark: An Historical Encounter with the Supernatural**      Saturday 8th October 2022

11:20am Chair's Welcome  
*Abigayle Brown (AFHS)*

11:30-12am 'Ayrshire - Most Haunted? One County's Ghost Story'  
*Elaine W. McFarland*

12-12:30am "Witches and the Devil" - What did Robert Burns and his Ayrshire Contemporaries Really Believe?  
*John Burnett*

12:30-1pm "Hidden works of darkness": The Witch hunts of Ayrshire'  
*Michelle D. Brock*

To reserve a place on this FREE event please email [craigbraecottages@gmail.com](mailto:craigbraecottages@gmail.com); a Zoom link will be emailed nearer the date.

## **Ayr Arts Guild**

Tickets are now on sale for two concerts:

Thursday 22 December: *Christmas Classic 2022* by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra,

and Wednesday 4 January 2023: *Viennese New Year* by the SCO. Ayr Gaiety Box Office

## **Ayr Music Club**

Sinopia String Quartet – Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October, Alloway Church Hall.

Tickets - £15.00 School pupils and students Free.

[www.ayrmusic.club.co.uk](http://www.ayrmusic.club.co.uk)

Sunday October 30 - Ayr Choral Autumn Concert

An Atlantic Voyage - Music by American and Scottish composers conducted by Andrew McTaggart joined by narrator Stuart McKinlay and piano accompanist Claire Haslin, 7.30pm, Ayr Town Hall, New Bridge Street, Ayr, KA7 3LW, Tickets available from Ayr Choral members, Gaiety Box Office or Ayr Choral website [www.ayrchoralunion.net](http://www.ayrchoralunion.net), £10 stalls, £15 balcony/gallery.

## **Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society**

Winter Lectures – Session 2021-22

In the winter there is a series of lectures which are usually

illustrated. These will all be on Zoom and held on Thursdays at 7.30pm.

13 October 2021 Climate Change and Conservation Sara Crofts, CEO ICON

27 October Architecture & Conservation of Commonwealth Graves CWGC

10 November TBA

24 November Ayr Burgh Charter Julie Vallius, University of Glasgow

8 December Social Event – Time & Location to be confirmed

12 January 2022 'My Worthy Friend': The Wodrow-Kenrick Correspondence 1750-1810 Dr. Emma Macleod, University of Stirling

26 January Earning a Living: Women and Work in Medieval Scottish Towns Professor Elizabeth Ewan, University of Guelph

9 February Mesolithic to Medieval: Excavations at Chapeldonan, Girvan Kenneth Green, GUARD

23 February A New South-West Framework for ScARF Jennifer Allison, ScARF

10 March TBA. Followed by short AGM

23 March Social Event – Time & Location to be confirmed

## **Outings**

St John's Tower, Ayr Web Site: <https://aanhs.org/> Email: [info@aanhs.org](mailto:info@aanhs.org) Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/theaanhs/>

The Society's specialist fields of interest are the archaeology, antiquities, local history and natural history of Ayrshire. Membership includes institutions, universities and libraries throughout Britain and the world. Dovecot, Eglinton Park, Kilwinning Please pass this on to anyone who you think may be interested in the work of the Society. Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society Founded 1947 Scottish Charity No SC044758

### **President's Comments**

Once again, suddenly, it is September, and as summer gives way to autumn, we begin to think about the forthcoming winter. And that, for us, means the AANHS winter season of talks. For the last two seasons, as you know, these have been held on Zoom. We have had considerable debate on how to proceed for 2022-2023, more so than last year. I know some of you will be disappointed, but we have agreed that all lectures will be delivered by Zoom. This has been a hard decision to make, but I think that, firstly, we do not wish to lose the new contacts we have made over the past two years, and, secondly, there is still much uncertainty in the world, and we hope, as last year, making this decision now brings certainty and clarity. As always, we owe a great debt to Billy Young, who puts considerable effort into creating an interesting and varied programme. Once again, he has succeeded: the programme is enclosed in this mailing. You will see that we have used the

scope given us by Zoom to have speakers from a distance, including the University of Guelph, in Canada. We organised a series of local visits through last winter, as a way of meeting the needs of those of you who relish the contact with other members. We aim to repeat this again this winter, and details will be sent out once confirmed. It is perhaps worth noting also that the Covid restrictions are much relaxed, and that it is not impossible for two or three to gather together around one computer or TV set, rather as in the early days of TV. This year, for the first time for 3 years, we have had summer outings. These have been to Kirkcudbright, to see the magnificent Galloway Hoard, and to the Burrell Gallery in Glasgow, where our guides were two society members, John and Denis Rattenbury. Both trips were enjoyed greatly by those who went and it is a relief to see such outings back in the society's programme. My thanks go to Sandra Carolan, who organised these visits. Those thanks are tinged with sadness since, for personal reasons, Sandra has resigned from her position as outings organiser. She has held this post since 2014, delivering many high quality and interesting visits. She will be a hard act to follow, and leaves with my sincere thanks. She will be a hard act to follow, but if you feel you have the necessary skills and commitment, please let me, or another member of the committee know. As well as Sandra, the committee has also said farewell to Anne Milligan, who has made many pertinent contributions to our discussions. We hope to see both Sandra and Anne regularly at our winter meetings, and wish them well. We have recruited to the Committee Nora Salesbury, from Prestwick. Nora has been a regular throughout the Zoom years

and joined many of last winter's visits. She is also on the Council of the Scottish Local History Forum, and will provide a useful link between us and community history at a national level. Additionally, Gordon Higgs has agreed to assist Denis with the management and development of the Society's online presence. This is an increasingly important part of our activities, and we thank Gordon for doing this. Our publication in early 2022, Thomas McClelland: Ayr in the 1790s, has been well received, and provoked much debate. We are frequently asked if there is any more – sadly that is all that appears to survive, but we would be very happy to publish other diaries or journals from Ayrshire, so please check your attics. Our next publication, by Bruce MacCowan, will feature the considerable history of curling in Ayrshire. The last year has not been easy for anyone – perhaps a little easier than the first months of Covid. We've tried – successfully, I think – to keep the cohesion of the society, and to keep finding reasons why you should re-join (or join) the Society. I think it is important to look forward and embrace the new reality, and grasp the opportunities it offers the Society. I must close, as always, by thanking the rest of your committee. I can only repeat what I said last year, 'without them, the society could not function'. This year they have kept my feet on the ground. With best wishes for the forthcoming winter and hoping to see you at our winter meetings. Rob Close

## **Publications**

A list of currently available publications is available on our web site. Back-dated publications still in print and some second-

hand out of print monographs can be purchased from Ian Holland at [treasurer@aanhs.org](mailto:treasurer@aanhs.org) We also publish along with the Ayrshire Federation of Historical Societies a twice-yearly miscellany of short articles and book reviews. These are available as downloadable pdfs from the AANHS web

### **Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, Alloway.**

#### Note change of date\*

A new series of free Highlight Talks starts this September at the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, Alloway. The talks are held on Wednesdays commencing at 2.30pm and finishing at 3.30pm. All welcome.

Places for the talks can be reserved by booking on Eventbrite or contacting the Museum. Unreserved seats will be allocated on a first come first served basis on the day.

The first talk in the new 2022/2023 series is on \*Wednesday 21st September. Our speaker, Bill Boyd, will talk about The Goat Fell Murder of 1889 and give his take on it. Goat Fell is a Mountain on Arran now owned by the National Trust for Scotland. Come along and hear all about the horror and controversies surrounding this crime.

This October there are free Highlight Talks at the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum. On Tuesday 11th Donny O'Rourke, poet, editor, songwriter, teacher, translator, presents Robert Burns: Supperman and Supperhero. There are no Pushkin Picnics or Shakespeare Shindigs so why do we, uniquely, invite the whole World to dine and drink a toast in honour of our Laureate's Immortal Memory?

On Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup>, author Carolyn O'Hara gives us *Finding Oculeus: A Journey Back to Ayr in 1898*. Based on columns from the *Ayrshire Post* written by her Great Grandfather. Complaints about potholes, foul mouthed school pupils and the appearance of the motor car. A riveting glimpse into a time gone by Melvyn Gibson, Volunteer Guide Highlights Talk Organiser, Robert Burns Birthplace Museum

## **Kyle and Carrick Civic Society**

### Public meetings 2022-23

Monday 3 October *Sheriff and Lord-Lieutenant Iona*  
McDonald OBE

Monday 7 November *Setting Ayr's Nethermills Weirs Back to Work* Joe Fergusson

Monday 5 December *From 'Toilet' to 'To Let'* Brian  
Williamson

9 January *Prestwick Saltpan Houses* Arnie Green

Monday 6 February *Seafield Craftsmanship, Then and Now*  
Kirsty Menzies

Monday 6 March *Are We There Yet?* Bruce Keith

Meetings are held at The Local, Ayrshire Housing, Main Street, Ayr.

Doors open 7.15 p.m. All welcome

**Maybole Historical Society** has been wound up and a new Carrick Historical Society has been formed.

### **North Ayrshire Family History Society**

Last session 2021/2022 the society held regular monthly meetings on Zoom. In April they had a successful Afternoon Tea fundraising event and in May they were able to hold an in person AGM again. The new session which starts on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September, with an informal evening, when members are invited to bring a photograph or an object belonging to their family and share its story.

On Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September one of the members, John Riddell will deliver a talk on 'Fife & Fairlie' in Fairlie Village Hall. In his presentation John explores the development of the William Fife yacht building yard once located in Bay Street, Fairlie and discusses how the yard contributed to the expansion of the village from a few fishermen's houses to that which exists today.

On Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October Ken Nisbet will be speaking to our members on 'Newspapers for Family History Research'. Ken is well known to our members and is currently the chairperson of SAFHS

On Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November Richard & Fiona Williamson will give a presentation on 'Walking Round Alloway, including Rozelle, Belleisle and Cambusdoon'. This will include stories about the families who lived in these former mansions.

On Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December June Wiggins will be talking to us about 'A Servant's Life' This will be followed by refreshments and the annual Christmas Social.

Meetings will be held at 7.30pm in Largs Museum, Manse Court, Largs this session, with the exception of the talk on 'Fife and Fairlie', which will take place in Fairlie Village Hall.

## **Prestwick History Group**

Season 2022 – 2023

Meetings for 6<sup>th</sup> October, 3<sup>rd</sup> November and 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022, will be held at 7.30 pm in Prestwick Community Centre, Caerlaverock Road, Prestwick, as 65 Club Hall, Main Street, Prestwick, will undergo extensive repairs and renovations by South Ayrshire Council.

Meetings held in 65 Club Hall, Main Street, Prestwick, at 7.30 p.m. from February, 2023 onwards.

Open to anyone interested - no membership - come and tell your tale.

Meetings last approximately one hour with a break around 8.30 p.m. for tea or coffee and biscuit followed by discussion on topic of the night or any other matter raised.

We will try to answer your questions. If unable to answer we will try to find out and advise you at a later date.

A donation at the end of the meeting is appreciated to cover costs of providing tea or coffee and biscuits along with running expenses of the Group.

Prestwick History Group starts on 6 October, 2022 and meets on the first Thursday of the following months starting October, November, December, 2022 and February, March, April and May, 2023.

- 6 October 2022      The History of The Broadway  
PowerPoint Presentation by Kyle MacFarlane
- 3 November 2022    Commonwealth Graves Commission.  
PowerPoint Presentation by Ken Nairn.
- 1 December 2022    Prestwick Now and The.  
PowerPoint Presentation By Alasdair J Malcolm  
and Alex Young
- 2 February 2023    TBA
- 2 March 2023        TBA
- 6 April 2023        TBA
- 4 May 2023          TBA

Convenor: Alisdair W. R. Cochrane, 12 Westbourne Gardens,  
Prestwick, Ayrshire, KA9 1JE  
Telephone: 01292 - 470234

Sponsored by Prestwick Community Council and The 65 Club  
and organised by Prestwick History Group.

### **Royal Aeronautical Society - Prestwick Branch – Lecture programme 2022/23**

Monday 10th October Prestwick Branch Falklands  
Deployment 1984 - Lecture by Jock Heron.

Lecture theatre No 2, Ayr Campus of the UWS at 6.45 pm.

Visitor entry fee £4.00. Free parking in No 2 Car Park.

### **Scottish Ornithological Club**

Autumn programme.

Meetings held at Monkton Community Church and Pioneer Cafe. Meetings commence 7 for 7.30pm

Tuesday September 13th Speaker Tom Byers Live meeting

The following meetings are in Monkton with Zoom presentations by remote speaker

Wednesday September 21<sup>st</sup> Tom Moore RSPB "Inch Marshes"

Wednesday October 19<sup>th</sup> Ciaran Hatsell and June Lane "The Gannet"

Wednesday November 23<sup>rd</sup> Q&A with Tim Birkhead " Birds and Us. A 12,000 year history"

Wednesday December 23<sup>rd</sup> Mary Colwell & Dave Parrish "The curlew"

### AANHS Publications

Publications of the Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society (AANHS) are available from Mr Denis Rattenbury, 4 Ewenfield park, Ayr KA7 2QG

☎01292 280593 email: [info@aanhs.org](mailto:info@aanhs.org)

Further information about the AANHS and its publications will be found on the society's website: [www.aanhs.org.uk](http://www.aanhs.org.uk)

Armstrong's Map of Ayrshire 1775 (reprint 6 sheets) £12.00

Antiquities of Ayrshire by Grose (edited by Strawhorn revised 2010) £4.00

11 Robert Adam in Ayrshire (Sanderson) revised 2010 £4.00

13 Toll and Tacksmen (McClure) £1.50

20 Historic Ayr: A Guide for Visitors 2nd edition £2.50

30 The Early Transatlantic Trade of Ayr 1640-1730 (Barclay & Graham) 104 pages £4.50

33 Dr John Taylor, Chartist: Ayrshire Revolutionary (Fraser)  
112 pages £4.00

35 The Masters of Ballantrae (Hunter) 30 pages £4.00

37 Historic Troon and Its Surroundings 40 pages £3.00

38 Excavations in Ayr 1984-1987 (Perry) 140 pages £9.99

39 The Church Buildings of Ayrshire (Hume) 94 pages £7.50

41 Mining and Quarrying in Stevenston (McLatchie) 210 pages £9.50

42 The Battle of Largs (Cowan) 95 pages £8.00

43-45 Ayrshire Collections – 128 pages £7.50

Ayr Jails by Jane Jamieson

Kilwinning Revisited by Margaret H B Sanderson

A Bonnie Lass by Petra Baillie

47 Watermills of Arran by Alastair Weir 71 pages £6.00

48 Oculeus: The Musings of a Liberal Victorian in Ayr by  
Carolyn O'Hara 140 pages £8.00

49 Ayrshire Castles from Kings to Covenanters 121 pages  
£10.00

Ardrossan Castle Revisited by David H Caldwell

Turnberry Castle and Countryside by Piers Dixon and William Wyeth

Seagate Castle with Some Family Resemblances by Aonghas Mackechnie

Ayr as a Garrison Town by Louise Turner

Castle Restoration in Ayrshire by Michael C Davies

51 The Diary of Thomas McClelland: Ayr in the 1790s by Alex F Young and Rob Close £10.00