



SAFHS BULLETIN

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November 2021

www.safhs.org.uk

Executive Committee – Acting Chairman: Stephen Benson; Deputy Chairman: Vacant Secretary: Ken Nisbet; Treasurer: Christine Thomas; Bulletin Editor: Alison Murray; Member: Alison Murray; Member Alex Inglis

The Scottish Association of Family History Societies 32nd Annual Conference 2022

**The Scottish Association
of Family History Societies**

'Hard Times!'
SAFHS Conference Saturday 9 April 2022

Discover how to trace the lives of your ancestors during their hard times through poor relief records, health records, criminal records and more. Free on Zoom and Facebook.

safhs.org.uk
Scottish Charity Number SC029006

National Records of Scotland: AD5/22

We are pleased to announce that next year's Scottish Association of Family History Societies 32nd Annual Conference 2022 will once again be held live online in association with www.scottishindexes. The Conference 'Hard Times' will include six talks from well known speakers who will give an insight into some of the records and resources available when researching the lives of those affected by poverty, illness, crime and hard times in general.

Our Patron: Dr Joseph J Morrow, Lord Lyon King of Arms has kindly agreed to officially 'open' the conference that will go out via a Zoom Link and will be shown live through our Facebook Group. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/safhs>

Our SAFHS 2022 Conference Speakers

Details of our programme of talks will be made available on our website

www.safhs.org.uk



Myko Clelland – Find My Past



Ken Nisbet – SAFHS/SGS



Fiona Musk – NHS Grampian Archive



Emma Maxwell – Scottish Indexes



Irene O'Brien – Glasgow City Archives



Jill Williams – Irish Genealogist

Our Committee - Who Are We?

SAFHS Chairman



Steve Benson

My interest in genealogy started with “oral history” – stories from grandparents and my parents about their ancestors. I have a fairly complex family history – my parents were second cousins.

I first became involved with SAFHS while an Executive Committee member of the Federation of Family history Societies, now The Family History Federation when I became the Federation’s representative to SAFHS. We were working together on the SAFHS conference at Dunfermline, and I was later elected to be SAFHS Vice Chairman to build on the relationship.

My wife Jennifer is Australian – we met on a 39-day coach/camping trip, while I was working in Sydney for British Railways. We went out for five weeks afterwards and became engaged. Next year is our 30th wedding anniversary. We have three grown up sons and a granddaughter.

We are both heavily involved with several family history societies and find we have little time for our own research. I have got back to about 1780 while my wife has managed to trace her ancestry to 1760 in England and while her own family originally went out from Sussex as free agricultural settlers, she also has an ancestor on the First Fleet and several convict ancestors in the family.

I am now retired but find plenty to keep me occupied.

SOCIETY NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS



CAITHNESS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

<https://caithnessfhs.org.uk>

The Society has not met in person since lockdown in March 2020. However, during that period, we were able to produce a new publication "Stroma Cemetery" - a photographic and transcription record of the memorials on the island of Stroma (now uninhabited and situated just off the Caithness coast). Our Journals were also distributed electronically during this period and probably will continue for the foreseeable future.

We were delighted to welcome well-known genealogist, tutor, and author Chris Paton as our guest speaker to the Society's September meeting. This was conducted using Zoom and attracted members from across the world as well as those who lived locally. Chris's talk 'Genealogy without Borders' was very well received, and many questions were asked following the presentation. Unfortunately, we did not manage to video record it, but one member sent an audio version which has allowed members unable to attend to at least listen to it. It made the evening such a pleasurable experience to put names to faces.

In April 2021 we launched a newer, more user-friendly website which allows members to log in and place private and public documents there. Members can also update their profile page to give details of their family history research.

Although unable to meet in person for such a long time the committee kept in touch by Zoom and also held a belated 2020 AGM which saw everyone continue in post until the 2021 AGM. Once again, we were delighted with the response to that meeting. The 2021 AGM has just taken place as our first 'in person' event which unfortunately had a very poor attendance, the result being that all the previous office bearers will remain in post meantime.

Future talks are being organised and will probably be a mixture of online and 'in person'.

Contact: Nancy Swanson, Secretary Email: nems623@btinternet.com



Fife Family History Society (SCIO)

www.fifefhs.org

Scottish Charity No: SC051133

Since we last reported in November last year, Fife FHS continue to work from home. We are starting to see some light at the end of the tunnel and hope to resume our activities within Cupar Library soon. We aim to be able to offer a visit 'by appointment' only set up that will fit in with the activities already provided by the library.

Enquiries through our website contact form have increased during lockdown by an amazing 50% and our Research Co-ordinator Ian McIntyre is extremely organised and efficient when it comes to dealing with this. Membership is also up by 30% since March 2020 although the surge from then has tailed off. We even have a member in French Guiana!

We have continued our Trustee meetings on Zoom, and we have a monthly sociable Zoom for all our volunteers. This has been a fantastic way of keeping in touch since we can't meet in the library. Here are some of our volunteers enjoying last year's Mocktail/Cocktail party. Ian is the chap in the DJ.



Governing Document – SCIO News

Our Trustees have been working with Fife Voluntary Action and we now have a new 'all singing, all dancing' Governing Document. We formed a sub-committee as it was a daunting task but with professional advice and help, we managed to achieve this earlier in the year. With our members approval (at the AGM) the Trustees were able to take this forward and

then to apply to OSCR to change our charitable status. From 1st November 2021 we will be known as Fife FHS (SCIO), a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Fife Cultural Trust

We are in partnership with FCT who look after the museums, libraries, archives, and venues in Fife. We are pleased to have been able to donate funds to each of the Fife libraries who have a Local Studies Officer in place. Cupar Library have used their allocation to purchase an A2 Digital Scanner. This will allow some of their large map collection, photographs, and newspapers to be digitised. They can now also meet requests from members of the public by providing digital images that are of a superior quality and size.

Cupar's Celebration Weekend

Fife FHS and other likeminded organisations have joined forces in support of Cupar Development Trust. In September a weekend of celebration was brought together in the town. The Farmer's Market provided an excellent platform for our society to have a large stall and thanks to the sunshine we were kept busy predominantly selling a lot of books. This was made possible using our new SumUp card reader (to be recommended). Our Patron Dr Joseph Morrow, Lord Lyon King of Arms kindly paid our stall a visit. This was after his town centre proclamation where he unveiled an interpretive sign next to the Market Cross. Lyon also officially named the town's 'Grotesques' that adorn the exterior wall of the Duncan Institute which houses the library and is home to Fife FHS. It was a very good weekend thanks to the sunshine and the visitors to the town. (Cont)



Fife Heritage and Family History Event

The Corn Exchange in Cupar will be the venue for our next event on Saturday 19th April. Fife Folk Museum, St Andrews University, Markinch Heritage, Fife Archive, OnFife Libraries and Cupar Museum & Heritage Centre have all already agreed to join us. The event will be sponsored by Fife FHS and admission will be free to the public and stall holders. There will also be a sale of surplus library stock (Fife) and as there is a Cupar in Bloom Coffee Morning and Farmer's Market on at the same time, there will be plenty going on for visitors and locals.

You can find out more on our website and social media channels. www.fifefhs.org

You can contact me:

Alison Murray

chairman@fifefhs.org

Mobile: 07967 742486

WEST LOTHIAN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY



WLFHS Update

The Society is taking a balanced approach to opening up and will work to a three-month plan. Our latest review in October agreed not to fully open for invited speakers or full members' nights but also to acknowledge that as restrictions are easing we will open up our visitors' helpdesks at Linlithgow and Livingston. It goes without saying that our visits to New Register House have also been put on hold in the meantime and we look forward to being able to resume our attendance as soon as we feel ready.

Website: www.wlfhs.org.uk

Our website has contact details, including direct email addresses, for our librarian and volunteers help line. Amongst other things you will find a comprehensive resource section that can be accessed by everyone, as well as a members only section and forum.

Facebook page: west lothian family history society – wlfhs

Our Facebook page gives up-to-date information, with changes relating to covid which affect us. It also keeps members up-to-date with things that may be of interest to them, such as videos, on-line courses and conferences.

Outlook: wlfhs@outlook.com

If you need help with your research, we have an Outlook email address where our volunteers would be pleased to give any assistance.

Linlithgow Library

Our volunteers at our Linlithgow helpdesk meet within the Local History Library and offer to assist any visitor by appointment on Tuesdays. To make an appointment:

- Contact: Linlithgow Library by telephone: 01506 283880
- Message: West Lothian Council: Museums and Local History on Facebook
- Email: museums@westlothian.gov.uk

In addition, we also offer appointments on Fridays, depending on volunteer availability. The Friday appointment will need to be made in advance stating your arrival time to allow for an available volunteer to come and meet you in the History Library. If you wish to make an appointment for Friday then you should contact Emma Peattie, email Emma.Peattie@westlothian.gov.uk

So far, visitors have been few but this has given our volunteers an opportunity to proof-read what has been transcribed during lock-down.

We are not equipped to take card payments so visitors should be prepared to pay by cash for Scotlands People vouchers and printouts of documents.

Livingston Torridon House *[NOT the Lanthorn – please note!]*

The Lanthorn is now closed for structural repairs, and we now have space for our helpdesk within the library at Torridon House, Almondvale Boulevard, Livingston, for our members by appointment only. It operates on alternative Mondays and Thursdays and other days depending on volunteer availability.

During lockdown we have not been idle and have located some unknown local archives which have yet to be published, therefore we have been working on drafts of West Lothian War Hospitals from 1914 to 1919 and Whitburn Parish Kirk Mortality Records from 1839 to 1856, which may fill in any existing gaps for family history researchers. We have also completed a first draft of the local history of many West Lothian towns and villages which will be of great interest to those who wish to build a picture of the places their ancestors lived and worked.

Our membership remains at £10 for single members, £15 for a couple from the same household and £12.00 for overseas membership. We have renewed existing membership at no charge for a year. We welcome new members at our current subscription rates.

We will continue to send out our journal, the "Oaktree", in PDF format and answer queries [if we can] on our forum.

For further information contact: Secretary, West Lothian Family History Society, c/o 21 Willowpark, Fauldhouse, West Lothian EH47 9HN

Email: sec@wlfhs.org.uk

Membership Enquiries: member@wlfhs.org.uk



East Ayrshire FHS

www.eastayrshirefhs.co.uk

Meetings: We are happy to report that, for the first time since early March 2020, we were able to resume members meetings on 2nd September. We have been meeting each Thursday afternoon since then, from 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm, in the **Take A Bow Opportunity Centre, Kilmarnock**. This includes the meetings with speakers on the second Thursday of the month which were previously held in the evening in a separate venue.

Annual General Meetings: The 2020 AGM had to be postponed twice due to the pandemic and was eventually held online on 1st October 2020 using Zoom. We were able to hold the postponed 2021 AGM in person on 9th September. Hopefully the next AGM will be held at its usual time in May.

Programme of talks etc: To date, a syllabus has been arranged until the end of 2021, with speakers in October and November and a Members Social in December.

On 14th October **Barbara Graham** gave a fascinating talk about **Mary Somerville – Queen of 19th Century Science**, now often referred to as “the lady on the £10 note”. Mary Somerville (previously Greig, née Fairfax) was born in 1780. In her early years she received little education – her mother taught her to read but did not teach her to write. However, in adult life, Mary went on to study mathematics, astronomy and physics and became a renowned scientific writer. She became one of the first two females to be made honorary members of the Royal Astronomical Society. Because of the ill health of her husband William Somerville, Mary moved to Italy in 1838 and she made her home there until her death in 1872 at the age of 91. She is buried in the English Cemetery, Naples.

Bob McMillan had been due to give a talk about **Ayrshire At War** at one of the cancelled 2020 meetings. We are delighted that he will now be able to present his talk to us on 11th November, which seems a very appropriate date.

Publications: Details can be found on the Shop pages of the EAFHS website.

Contact: Secretary, East Ayrshire FHS, % Dick Institute, Elmbank Avenue, Kilmarnock, KA1 3BU

Email: enquiries@eastayrshirefhs.co.uk



Aberdeen & North-East Scotland Family History Society

www.anesfhs.org.uk

ANESFHS thanks all well-wishers for their sympathies received on the deaths of two of our longest-serving and most dedicated volunteers. Jean Shirer, an ANESFHS co-founder in 1978, and well known to many from family-history fairs and bookstalls, died on 25th September after failing to recover from a post-operative stroke. On 4th October, we learned of the death of Gay (Gabrielle) Murton, a former Society chairman and an ANESFHS stalwart from the 1980s until retiring in 2019 at her 80th birthday. She had been living with cancer for a number of years. Both ladies were much-loved colleagues and will be sadly missed by so many.

Our Research Centre in King Street reopened at the start of May after lockdown and has welcomed a slowly growing number of visitors from locally and from further afield. Volunteers are continuing to transcribe and index the 1911 census for Aberdeen city and shire – a long-running project that we hope will be complete before the 1921 census is released! Members can access the transcriptions and indexes in our Centre, both on paper and now also on our Society's intranet.

Members' meetings have been taking place online since May 2020 and are still very popular with members around the world and are sometimes also attended by other users of our Facebook Group. At some of our local-area Groups' venues, we have also begun trialling hybrid meetings, where members may opt to come along on the day or to log in to the online sessions from wherever they are in the world.

Ivor Normand

For a list of future talks and events, please visit www.anesfhs.org.uk

Hobby and Craft Shows at SEC Glasgow



In previous years SAFHS had booked a Stand at the above Hobby & Craft Shows in both March and October. Because of Covid they have not taken place during the Pandemic.

FHF (*Family History Federation*) in England normally have a stand at all the Hobby & Crafts Shows organised by ICHF, except the Glasgow show. However, this year because we (SAFHS) had not booked a stand, FHF decided to take a Stand at the Glasgow Show last week.

Their Chairman, Steve Manning contacted me asking if we would like to help out. Most of the volunteers who normally come and staff the stand still felt the need to not attend, which I understand. Myself and a few other LFHS members did staff the stand with Steve Manning.

The event was well attended with wider passages, hand sanitising and most people wearing face coverings.

If SAFHS wish me to book a SAFHS Stand for next year's 2 events I would be happy to continue organising the stands.

If we are going to have the Stand next year will society Reps, if possible, please arrange to send me some of their societies "Flyers". I only have a few in stock for A&NES FHS, Borders FHS, Renfrewshire FHS, West Lothian FHS, Shetland FHS and Orkney FHS, but I need more from each of you. All other societies we have either used all flyers we had, or we have never had any, but would like you all in stock.

Please send to: - Lanarkshire Family History Society, FAO Bob Stewart, C/o North Lanarkshire Heritage Centre, High Road, Motherwell. ML1 3HU.

Bob Stewart
Publications Co-ordinator.
Lanarkshire Family History Society

Borders Family History Society



Our research rooms have reopened! Our Research Team is now available on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 52 Overhaugh Street, Galashiels or by appointment. If you are looking for assistance with your family history research, contact us to arrange a visit. We will be reducing our hours over the winter and the Christmas & New Year period but look forward to welcoming more visitors in 2022.

And we have recently started our Sunday meetings at St Peters Church in Galashiels. At the end of September, we enjoyed Pat Littlewoods talk on Picture Postcards – the social media of the early 20th century and in October, we heard Sir Hew Strachan’s expert talk on The Scottish Soldier in WWI.

Our November talk is Poaching and the Game Laws in South East Scotland by David McLean on Sunday 28th Nov at 2.30pm.

Planned for 2022

February 27th	Margaret Fox	Traquair's Tenants, Cottars and Workers
March 27th	Speaker to be confirmed	
April 24th	Wendy Tait Mayfield	Researching Tales of the Tait
May 29th	Jared Squirrel	The Men of Stobs

Our Monumental Inscriptions project continues with the publication of transcriptions for Jedburgh Castlewood & Galahill cemetery. Over 2,200 memorials have been recorded in the cemetery which opened in the mid-19th century, together with transcriptions of War Memorials and Rolls of Honour in the churches and in the town. Now available as an A5 booklet for £12.00 plus p&p. BordersFHS has published over 38,000 monumental inscriptions for burial grounds throughout the Borders and has transcribed and photographed many more. These are all available for reference by anyone researching their family history.

Indexing of Police & Criminal records is one of our long-term projects where we now have almost 25,000 individual arrests – a great resource.

The Society now holds the Clan Elliot genealogy research collected over many years by the Clan genealogist, Ken Blaiklock. We hope to continue to grow the Elliot family trees and widen the range of information available to all Elliot researchers.

If you are unable to visit Galashiels, we offer a Research Service. Contact us via our website, email, Facebook or by post. We can help you break down those brick walls and source information on your ancestors and their families. The Society gratefully appreciates the many volunteer members who keep the Society running and welcome visitors to our Archive & Research Room

Address: 52 Overhaugh Street, Galashiels, TD1 1DP
Website: www.bordersfhs.org.uk
Research – research@bordersfhs.org.uk
Enquiries - info@bordersfhs.org.uk
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BordersFHS>
Twitter: @bordersfhs

Elma Fleming
Oct 2021

SAFHS Executive Member

Alex Inglis

Following an appeal at the SAFHS Council Meeting last month, Alex Inglis, Fife FHS Rep has come forward to join us. Alex is a Trustee of Fife FHS and also The Scottish Pottery Society, Alex is bringing a width of skills with him to the Executive, including photography and digital media, website management and online ecommerce. We would like to warmly welcome Alex to the team.



SHARING SHETLAND

Free Virtual Conference
27 November 2021

Shetland Family History Society presents:
'Sharing Shetland'
Four presentations
Live Q&A with our expert panel
4 pm to 9 pm UK time
www.shetland-fhs.org.uk

Photo Courtesy of Shetland Museum and Archives

Scottish Charity Number SC020018