

# Aberdeen & North-East Scotland Family History Society

Journal No. 170 • May 2024



*Sampler stitched in 1843 by Jean Beattie, aged 14, of Glenbuchat  
(photograph by her great-granddaughter Buzzy Garden, no. 12916)*

## Membership Details

**New members** pay the annual rate, and your subscription runs for exactly one year from the date on which you join. Further details are available on our **website**. Membership of the Society entitles you to receive the quarterly Journal. There is a discount for e-members who opt to download the Journal digitally instead of receiving printed copies.

**Family membership** is available for two named persons at one address. Please nominate one surname for registration purposes.

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### **ANESFHS website and Members' Forum**

In order to get the most from your Society membership, you should register on our new website. Go to [www.anesfhs.org.uk](http://www.anesfhs.org.uk) and click on the Register link at the top right of the screen. For further assistance, please visit [www.anesfhs.org.uk/how-to-register](http://www.anesfhs.org.uk/how-to-register)

Once you have registered, you can access our growing list of very useful members-only features:

- All our Journals from 1979 onwards
- Monumental Inscription look-ups for many North-East Scottish graveyards
- A Members' Forum for exchange of ideas, assistance with “brick walls”, and much else.

### **General Data Protection Regulations, 2018**

Members' details are stored on computer for administration and research purposes only, and will not be lent or sold to a third party. We require only your name and address – all other details are optional.

We may occasionally send e-mails to Society members only, concerning Society membership, appeals for volunteer help or promotional information, using the e-mail address you have provided. You may choose to unsubscribe from these e-mails. For further details of data protection, please contact the Society in writing.

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## Society Reports, News and Information

### Chairperson's Report

I reported in Journal 169 on our gratitude that our Finance Team is now headed by Margaret Stevenson. Margaret becomes Finance Coordinator, with Sheila Symons the reporting Trustee on the Board. The development of a more clearly-defined Finance Team is a positive step forward and helps to spread the load. A teams-based approach to many parts of the Society's key functions has to be the way ahead.

Gavin Bell is our long-serving co-ordinator of the recording and indexing of Monumental Inscriptions (MIs) and their publication. He recently presented an outline of all this work to the Board of Trustees as part of his intention to "pass the reins" to others. Gavin's detailed overview and written report are very valuable to the Trustees as we assess what is needed to continue the many successes and achievements of the Society's MI work.

Over the last 5½ years, we have refurbished the Research Centre and back office through our members' generous donations to the Granite Roots Appeal. That covers our linked premises at 158–164 King Street – but we also own 136 King Street. This was used as a training centre and back-office annexe, then became a store for records, stock, equipment and furniture during all our renovations. Meanwhile, ancestor-research courses have moved online, and printed publications have become generally much less popular.

Over the last year, a few volunteers have worked hard to tidy up no. 136, donate surplus IT equipment to a recycling project, and shift some records and other items back into our Research Centre. Everything in 136 is now accessible, the ground floor is open and airy, and we are about to paint the frontage when this summer brings a dry spell.

*chairman@anesfhs.org.uk*

Bert Lawrie No. 17901

—oOo—

### Obituaries

#### June Melvin (member no. 834)



We are saddened to record the death of another former colleague, remembered with great affection by past and present volunteers at King Street. June McBeath Melvin joined our Society in 1986, being particularly interested in researching her McBeath family. Her working life was in insurance-company accounts, and she soon began helping to transcribe records before becoming a valued member of our Finance Team and briefly acting as our Treasurer.

Because June was "back office", she was less well known to Centre visitors, but when I was Chairman I soon realised her pivotal role in keeping us financially secure. I appreciated June's patience in explaining the system in a way I could understand. She was meticulous in her work and often spotted inconsistencies which others had missed. Nothing was too much bother for her, and she would work at a problem until she had discovered the cause and made the necessary corrections.

June was profiled in Journal 114 (February 2010). Born in June 1940, she was raised on a farm near Maud, and educated at Whitehill and New Pitsligo. She married Bill in 1963 in

Aberdeen, and loved spending time with grandchildren although their family is scattered. All her life, June was interested in history, old photographs and local research. ANESFHS was truly her “home from home”, and she loved meeting volunteers and other members.

Although she lived in Laurencekirk and didn't drive, June regularly came to King Street two or three times a week and was always willing to help with Society activities beyond the Centre – bookstalls at local fairs and so on. When we purchased 136 King Street, June and Bill joined us on a Sunday afternoon to help with cleaning, clearing and sorting out. Bill steadfastly supported June in everything, although his own health was not great. They were a lovely couple, and we send our sympathy to him and to their family.

Like many of us, June was “old school” and eventually felt it was time to take a back seat. We missed her company and were so pleased when she took part in the Society's Zoom meetings during the pandemic. From the comments she made, she was clearly still well informed and interested in family-history research. June never pushed herself forward, but she was a most capable and efficient colleague and a good friend. We shall miss her.

*liz.foubister@anesfhs.org.uk*

Liz Foubister No. 6129

### **Paul Hudson (member no. 2428)**

We were shocked to learn that Paul Hudson had died suddenly on 1<sup>st</sup> April. Paul lived near Nottingham in the East Midlands of England and had become well known to many Society members since our online meetings began four years ago. He was polite, inclusive and ever ready to contribute to discussions from his wide-ranging knowledge and experience.

Paul was born in 1947 and happily admitted to having no North-East or even Scottish ancestry at all, but he had extensively researched his wife Jean's Benzie family after obtaining a Certificate in Scottish Family History Studies from Stirling University, and so he knew a lot about Scottish as well as English records. He joined ANESFHS in 1989, made many happy trips to King Street and the North-East, and was delighted when online meetings eventually allowed members to meet virtually and to become much more involved in helping each other.

In addition to genealogy, his real passion was first aid. He was a member of the St John Ambulance Brigade from the age of 15, spending many hours at public events providing first-aid cover for nearly 60 years, and was a Serving Brother of the Order of St John (broadly equivalent to an MBE in the first-aid world).

Paul was what we'd call a “lad o' pairs”: he had worked as a computer auditor with Nottinghamshire County Council, and his interests ranged across church architecture, his local church community and a great deal else. He even had a go at interpreting the Doric, as spoken by his wife's relatives in Buchan. He once dared to challenge his mother-in-law about her use of electrical adaptors – before he knew she was a physicist!

A devoted family man, he had also become well established in our ANESFHS “family”. We'll miss his contributions to our meetings, and we send our deep condolences to Jean and to their Hudson clan. I thank Jean for her additions to these memories of Paul.

*ivor.normand@anesfhs.org.uk*

Ivor Normand No. 4161



## Members' Meetings

### Alison Spring, "From Scotland to Mississippi: The Crofter's Son"

17<sup>th</sup> February 2024



Alison Spring was one of the star turns at the SAFHS Conference in April 2023, and we were delighted to welcome her back for this meeting. Alison is a professional genealogist whose talks abound in hints and tips about useful resources for family historians. She has traced relatives who have migrated to many countries, and her DNA matches frequently show links to the Scottish diaspora across the globe. Based near Glasgow, she enjoys sharing her research skills with like-minded enthusiasts. Passionate about helping others to research their family tree on a budget, she blogs as the "Frugal Family Historian".

In this talk, she traced the life of Lachlan McAulay, a native of the Western Isles who moved to Glasgow and from there to North America. She was able to track his movements through statutory records and more unusual resources such as Poor Law records and newspaper archives. She uncovered information about the different types of work he carried out as he moved from Alabama to Hattiesburg, Mississippi and also unearthed fascinating snippets, such as a small newspaper item relating the fact that he had received a visit from a brother of his who was residing in Nova Scotia, and whom he had not seen for 15 years. This last item really brought home the emotional challenges for the migrant who might rarely, if ever, see close family and friends once they had ventured abroad to make their fortune. It was a heartening story of an individual who left school aged 14 in Scotland with limited prospects but who rose to become City Commissioner and a Justice of the Peace in Hattiesburg. Alison reminded us that American newspaper archives and local history societies and museums might be good sources of information when trying to trace emigrant family members. A good start can also be made on sites like Ancestry and FamilySearch. As ever, she produced a helpful list of resources which we share here.

#### Free websites covering information in the presentation:

Library of Congress, Chronicling America: <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>

FamilySearch: <https://www.familysearch.org/en/>

Dr Sophie Kay's blog: <https://parchmentrustler.com/family-history/mind-the-gap/>

The Knights of Labor: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Knights-of-Labor>

Find a Grave: <https://www.findagrave.com>

Hattiesburg Area Historical Society: <http://www.hahsmuseum.org>

#### Using wildcards to search databases:

<https://www.futurelearn.com/info/courses/genealogy/0/steps/13012>

#### Subscription websites mentioned in the presentation:

<https://www.newspapers.com>

<https://www.ancestry.co.uk>

#### Alison's social media and contact information:

The Frugal Family Historian: <https://scotsancestors.blogspot.com>

Facebook: Scottish Ancestral Research: Genealogy Detective <https://www.facebook.com/scotsancestors>

X (Twitter): Alison Spring <https://twitter.com/FrugalFH>

E-mail: [acspring@gmail.com](mailto:acspring@gmail.com)

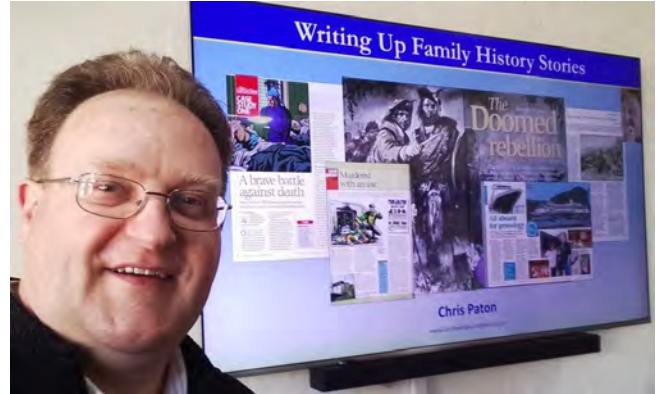
Website: <https://scotsancestors.weebly.com/presentations--talks.html>

## Chris Paton, “Writing Up Family-History Stories”

16<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Chris Paton lived up to his reputation for being a lively and entertaining speaker when he addressed Society members in Aberdeen along with a large online audience. His topic – how to write up your stories and researches– struck a chord with many members. Chris’s credentials are second to none, as his extensive publishing record shows. As well as magazine articles, he has a lengthy list of helpful “how to” books and a vigorous online presence with a daily blog and website.

In a methodical approach, he encouraged us to think carefully about **what** the core story is, **how** best to set it out, **who** we are writing for and **where** to get it published.



A good way to compile material is by writing a little at a time, perhaps by keeping a diary. In the same way that *we* are interested in our forebears’ stories, future readers will want to know about *our* experiences too! For this reason, in addition to his professional output, Chris maintains a family story for his children which he updates as circumstances change.

Readers are engaged by stories, and this is different from a detailed record of dates, places and a list of who begat whom. It’s advisable to maintain a formal tree, for example in one of the standard software formats, and that’s the place to keep all the detailed information you have patiently pieced together. For publication, it’s best to be selective and identify the things that are unusual and interesting, and to focus your story on that. Chris gave the example that, in researching his own family tree, he had discovered that each of his Paton antecedents had been born in one country but had died in another – and, coming from Northern Ireland himself and settled in Scotland, he was likely to maintain that tradition.

Your core story will often require further research as you try to fill in the background. It may lead you to find out about different sorts of records, like the Land Register, maps or gazetteers, as well as the basic birth, marriage and death sources. Chris’s main stroke of luck was when, exploring the death of his 4g-grandmother, he found she had died in violent and mysterious circumstances on a farm at Forgardenny, Perthshire. As he researched the story, he found out that this was the oldest unsolved murder in Scotland – and this detail, along with the newspaper and legal records of the investigation into her death, provided the peg on which to hang a story that was easy to promote to magazines as a potential article. In fact, it spurred him to do so much further research that he was able to produce a successful book, *The Mount Stewart Murder*.

Happily, Chris encouraged us by saying there are no formal rules on how to write your story. The aim is to produce an interesting narrative that is well told. As it’s about family history, readers will be interested in your methodology for compiling your material, as well as in the story itself. Articles should be accessible and not too technical or academic, as the aim is to engage the reader first and foremost.

He listed some potential outlets, including the glossy family-history magazines which may have a three-month lead-in time to publication. Family History Society journals are one of the best ways to start [*agreed! Ed.*]. Chris suggested pitching an idea first rather than

sending in a full article straight away. The pitch should go to the publication's editorial team and should set out the key idea, what your credentials are for writing it up (that is, why you are the best person for this job), what the purpose of the article is, and what makes it special or unique. Once you have been given a green light and a remit, you should stick close to the agreed word count, and avoid waffle or repetition. Check that your grammar and spelling are correct, and just accept that the editors may cut or adjust your material to fit the available space, and that many publications do not send out proofs for correction. Remember you should seek permission first when writing about living people. Many publications will welcome good-quality photographs, but you must make sure you own the copyright or have permissions in place that will allow the images to be shared publicly – that means no screen-grabs or downloads from Ancestry or any other website. If your story is published, then you shouldn't repeat it in a different publication for at least a year, unless it's an agreed reprint.

Chris also touched on some of the electronic outlets for your stories, such as blogging or maintaining a website – and we hope he will cover these aspects in more detail when he speaks to our Edinburgh Group in September. It's sure to be another cracking session.

## **Kim Smith, “Richard Irvin & Sons: The ‘Founder of Steam Trawling’”**

**20<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

Kim Smith is an archivist with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives, focusing mainly on Shire records. She chose to give us an insight into a collection she catalogued in 2023: DD2865, Richard Irvin & Sons Ltd, trawler owners and fish salesmen.

The company was founded in North Shields, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, with business sites also across the North-East of Scotland, including Aberdeen and Peterhead. The founder, Richard Irvin, was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1853 in North Shields to a shipwright, John Irvin, and his wife Sarah Drummond. Richard worked in the family's marine store business as a boy and went on to marry 20-year-old Ann Logan Driver (1851–1934), daughter of farmer John Driver, in 1873 in nearby Tynemouth, Northumberland.

Richard bought his first sailing smack in 1872 and established himself as a fish salesman, auctioning the catches of other boats as well as his own, and selling boats and other trawl gear. Around 1877, he saw the opportunity for vessels powered by steam. He converted a paddle tug into a steam trawler and became one of the first to successfully change from sail to steam. He reputedly said: “Take my word, if you go into steam, you will never come back into sail”.

We can find him and his family in the 1891 census for Tynemouth. He was 38, married to Ann, and his job title was given as “fish salesman”. By this point, they had eight children: John, Richard, Catherine, George, Thomas, Sarah, Annie and Ethel.

In 1896–7, the firm became known as Richard Irvin & Sons, with Richard's eldest sons, John Hannel Irvin and Richard Irvin junior, as partners. John later became joint managing director, and Richard jnr was company secretary. By 1904, the company had 60 trawlers under its control, rising to 80 by 1907, thus ranking as one of the largest firms in the fishing industry. It became a limited company in 1907, amalgamating the many fishing interests and businesses of the Irvin family and their associates. The office was registered in North Shields, with local boards in Aberdeen, Fraserburgh, Peterhead and Great Yarmouth. The minute books for 1907–14, held in the Archives, record all these changes.



The value of fish sold annually reached £250,000 in 1908 and £750,000 by 1913, but the onset of war in 1914 changed things, and the Admiralty used 100 of the company's 120 vessels during the war. The rest were regarded as supporting war work by sourcing food.

Beyond his business interests, Richard Irvin became a Tynemouth town councillor in 1890, was elected mayor in 1897 and was re-elected in 1898. He was an alderman from 1903 until 1920. The death of a younger son, Thomas Irvin (b.c. 1884), who was killed in action during the Great War on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1916, greatly affected Richard, who died on 19<sup>th</sup> December 1920, aged 67, in Tynemouth.

Sir John Hannel Irvin (c. 1874–1952), the eldest son, joined the company as an office boy aged just 13 in 1887, working up to clerk at age 17. In 1895, aged just 21, he moved to Aberdeen to lead the business there. John was married first to Mary Anne Boak and later to Agnes Margaret Watt. He had a son, Richard, and daughters Christina and Ethel. We find the family in the 1911 Aberdeen census, living at 16 Forest Road.

John's son, Richard, later became a director for the firm. His daughter Christina became Mrs Stansbury and moved to live in South Africa, while Ethel became Mrs Cradock of Aberdeen.

John was elected as a Harbour Commissioner of the Aberdeen Harbour Board in 1902, and became convenor of the Finance Committee in 1911. He was also part of the Dock and Harbours Port Association, being president in 1941 and 1942.

Additionally, John Irvin proposed the formation of the Loss of Life at Sea Fund after the great storm of 1900, where he lost two vessels, the *Bernicia* and the *Ben Nevis*, with many crew members. This fund later became known as the Aberdeen Steam Fishers Provident Society. John served as the Society's president for 47 years. (The Archives hold these records, catalogued at DD3223.)

The collection holds two newspaper scrapbooks, which include many articles about John's disappearance and capture during the Great War. He was a prisoner of war from 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1916 until after the Armistice in November 1918. He had a government appointment in connection with food supplies and was captured while on board the Dutch mail steamer *Prins Hendrik* when she left Rotterdam.

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES:—  
 IRVIN, NORTHSHIELDS. TELEPHONE NOS 501-502.  
 IRVIN, ABERDEEN. TELEPHONE NOS 2520-2521.  
 IRVIN, GREAT YARMOUTH. TELEPHONE NO 19.  
 IRVIN, PETERHEAD. TELEPHONE NO 44.

Richard Irvin & Sons. LIMITED

STEAM FISHING VESSEL OWNERS,  
 Licensed Auctioneers & Fish Salesmen,  
 NORTH SHIELDS, ABERDEEN, PETERHEAD,  
 & GREAT YARMOUTH.

SEASON BRANCHES  
 LOWESTOFT, BUNCRANA,  
 LERWICK, CASTLEBAY,  
 STORNOWAY, DOWNINGS BAY,  
 MALLAIG, BLYTH

North Shields 21st Mar. h, 1919.

John Irvin was later appointed chairman of the Aberdeen Port Emergency Committee (1936–9), working to ensure that the machinery at Aberdeen Harbour was all in order in case war was declared. Additional records (1940–52) about Sir John H. Irvin can be found in the Aberdeen Harbour Board Collection under reference AHB/1/1/195.

Richard Irvin & Sons Ltd went into administration in December 2018, although offshoots still exist today. The records held by the Archives, including ledgers, journals, balance sheets and employee wage lists, provide a wealth of information about the company and its staff. Some documents list crew members and the boats they worked on, with personal details including their address and wages. Elsewhere, there are repeated instructions that no ice cream was to be provided!

Kim’s talk was well received by our Zoomers and “roomers”, and we hope she will return on a future date with another example of the fascinating materials held in the Archives.

Contact [archives@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:archives@aberdeencity.gov.uk) for more information on how to consult the Archives’ holdings; and see later in this Journal for more information about the Archives.

[journal@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:journal@anesfhs.org.uk)

Journal Team

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## Moray/Banff Group Report

Our January face-to-face meeting at Elgin Library on the subject of “Family Heirlooms” was such a success that we opted to repeat the theme for our February online gathering. On the day, we saw images and heard fascinating stories about many treasured items. Most of the objects displayed and discussed had little or no intrinsic value, but each held priceless memories for their custodians. Among the items were: photographs (people and places), furniture (including a carpenter’s toolbox), samplers and tapestries, medals and (last but not least) images of the Aberdeen Cookery Book and a recipe for gingerbread.

The plan for our March face-to-face meeting at Elgin Library was to use the new, large screen in the Activities Room, to which we would be allowed to connect, which would be an improvement on our small projector beamed on to the wall. For a topic, we planned to explore some of the websites we regularly use, and perhaps some of the less common ones. We had a lively and interesting workshop-style session, with some useful websites and hints suggested by the attendees. In addition, as always seems to happen at this style of get-together, we managed to solve a handful of each other’s “brick wall” problems.

The success of the January/February follow-up on the same theme encouraged us to repeat the subject of the March face-to-face meeting for our April online event, which attracted at least 140 Zoom attendees – perhaps a record for the Society? Although we concentrated on main websites such as ScotlandsPeople, Ancestry, Find My Past and LIBINDEX, many other websites – often unknown to most of us – were considered, as were techniques for using them. Such was the level of interaction, the typed Zoom Chat stretched to 20 A4 pages – perhaps another record for the Society? Those who attended will, by now, have received a copy of this and of the presentation document put together for the session.

*Report by Doug Stewart (No. 563)*

As ever, keep an eye on the Society website’s Events pages for syllabus updates.

[moray.banff@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:moray.banff@anesfhs.org.uk)

Mary Evans (Group co-ordinator)

No. 1975

## Edinburgh Group Report

### Shona Kerr, “Viking Genes”

23<sup>rd</sup> March 2024

We had interest from all around the world in this talk. Family historians love a bit of DNA exploration and are even more engaged when it may tell us about the Viking inheritance in Scotland. We are especially fortunate that Edinburgh University is the home of a series of genetics research projects which come under the banner of “Viking Genes”. Dr Shona Kerr is their Project Manager and undertook to lead us through the main aspects of these studies and their implications.

Through its various stages, Viking Genes has recruited 10,000 participants with ancestry from the Northern or Western Isles of Scotland and is now able to use kinship patterns to uncover genetic changes and return “actionable” genetic results.

Shona began by explaining a little about DNA and how gene sequencing works. The commercial tests we know through Ancestry, FTDNA and others might be called “entry level” and, if compared to a TV signal, would be identified as giving a low-resolution overview. Exome sequencing, used, for example, by the NHS, will be focused on certain areas of interest. The Viking Genes project carries out both Exome and Whole Genome sequencing, which is comprehensive – and therefore more time-consuming and expensive.



**“Genotype”** = A, C, G or T  
measured at ~one million places

- Low resolution
- OK for ancestry analyses
- (Little or) no health data
- Used a lot in research

**Exome Sequence**  
~3% of the genome – the genes

- High res
- Not much “junk”
- Misses a few important things
- Used in research and NHS

**Whole Genome Sequence**  
~3 billion base pairs

- High res
- Lots of “junk” DNA, but also
- Some important things
- Used in research mainly

Genes are a “recipe book” for proteins, and DNA variation changes the amount, structure and function of the different proteins we each generate, for example keratin, which makes hair and nails. Analysing and comparing results across a wide range of samples in a population allows researchers to identify patterns in the distribution of results in health-related measures such as height, BMI and cholesterol. This may include identifying “actionable” markers, i.e. those which indicate that an individual, though not ill at present, may carry a gene linked to serious, but treatable, conditions.

As the Orkney and Shetland Islands had comparatively self-contained populations over a long period of time, they provide a useful starting point for identifying distinctive genetic variations that have a higher incidence in those communities. Notably, the project identified a gene (BRCA1) which indicated higher-level chances of breast and ovarian cancer in families with Westray ancestry. While health services offer “cascade testing” to immediate family members of a patient with one of these conditions, understanding

inheritance patterns and networks can identify individuals who are likely to carry the gene, and who would be missed by ordinary screening strategies.

The Viking Genes website has powerful stories from project participants who were alerted to potential health threats and who were able, working with NHS Grampian Health, to begin preventative treatments rather than having to wait until after becoming ill. One individual, who carried a gene linked to a potential problem with heart rhythms, a condition which her daughter has inherited, put it this way: “It is possible that taking part in Viking Genes has saved our lives.”

These projects are among the first to tackle reporting actionable findings to volunteers, and the team has now developed an ethically-approved procedure to include reporting to volunteers from the first rounds of research. The project hopes to encourage other screening programmes to provide feedback to volunteers in a similar way. A BBC Scotland programme in early June 2024 will raise awareness by featuring some of the volunteers’ stories. You can find these stories and other information about the Viking Genes projects on the Edinburgh University website at <https://viking.ed.ac.uk>.



Shona showed us a map of participants which proved that many people of Orcadian and Shetland descent are now living in North-East Scotland and the Lothians, as well as now being distributed round the world, notably in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It was a fascinating chance to learn some of the cutting-edge applications of genetics and DNA research beyond simply using it to complement a family tree.

[edinburgh@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:edinburgh@anesfhs.org.uk)

Elaine Petrie (No. 22949) and Ivor Normand (No. 4161)

## And What About the Vikings?

People from Orkney and Shetland have the highest degree of “Norse blood” in the British Isles and Ireland, and the developing study of “archaeogenetics” tracks ancient genetic markers across Europe. Professor Jim Flett Wilson, lead researcher with Viking Genes, is an Orcadian and keen family historian and has identified potential Nordic markers by comparing DNA from present-day volunteers and from skeletons believed to be Norse and even Neolithic. Jim Wilson and Craig Sinclair, another Viking Genes team member, are volunteer administrators for Family Tree DNA projects on both Orkney and Shetland DNA, where people with Northern Isles surnames or family-line connections can share

their results to identify original heritage lines and their interconnectivity. Jim and Craig would be glad to have you add your results if you fit the criteria.

Lectures by Jim Wilson cover the patterns of Viking genetic inheritance, comparison of DNA results from ancient skeletons and how DNA can identify the ancient male progenitor of people sharing a surname, like Flett or Sinclair. YouTube links to these are:

- “Viking II” launch lecture, January 2020: <https://youtu.be/so2CUeTTnw0?feature=shared>
- “Following the Fletts”, Orkney Science Festival, September 2023: <https://www.youtube.com/live/d3imWWhG0BQ?si=FMAGuaa3vIHirnl>

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## **Southern Ontario Group Report**

### **Malcolm Archibald, “Men, Women and Whaling”: Scottish Whaling Heritage**

**27<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

Over 50 ANESFHS members and guests Zoomed in to hear Malcolm Archibald, a prolific Scottish author, give a wonderfully informative talk. Malcolm gave many examples of men and women who were involved with this industry in some way. He named specific captains and quoted from the ships’ logs. Maps were used to show sailing routes, and old photos showed ships in harbour but also stuck in ice jams around Greenland and Canada.

Malcolm explained the many uses of all of parts of the whale, and where the processing took place. Locations were mentioned, such as Dundee, where boys would skip school to watch the whaling fleet; and Peterhead, in which the captains had to wait for the crew to sober up from “The Foy” (pre-sailing party) before departing the next day. These parties took place because the men would be gone for at least six months at sea, and it was a very dangerous job.

Not only were there the dangers from whales that fought back, but also the ship could be crushed in the ice, you could contract scurvy, there were wicked storms and bad accidents – and, once you survived all of that, you could end up being pressganged into the Royal Navy when you finally returned.

Malcolm also touched on the men’s superstitions, hobbies and vices. The men were paid meagrely unless they were part of the crew that killed the whale; and the women who were left at home might only receive a small portion of these wages. Otherwise, they had to find a means to survive at home as well.

Women had many roles besides being whalers’ wives, mothers or daughters. One woman in Orkney, Mrs Humphrey, opened her home for scurvy victims. There were women who had the nasty job of cleaning the whale bones; Inuit women who bore mixed-race children; and a few women who went along with their captain husbands and who even owned ships.

Malcolm did much of his research at the McManus Museum in Dundee, where he was formerly a researcher. He has written three books on Scottish whaling (among other subjects) – and we certainly enjoyed his expertise on this topic.

Our next meeting will be on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> September, when Lara Haggerty of the Innerpeffray Library in Perthshire will tell us about the history of the first free lending library in Scotland and will touch on the history of the local people who stayed, as well as those who emigrated elsewhere. We look forward to seeing you all then.

Inquiries for Malcolm and his books can be directed to [malcolm.archibald@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:malcolm.archibald@yahoo.co.uk); and see <https://nextchapter.pub/authors/malcolm-archibald>.

[ontario@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:ontario@anesfhs.org.uk)

Susan Brouwer No. 20475

co-organizing with Rod Coates (No. 18349) and David Joiner (No. 16651)

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## **ANESFHS Australia & New Zealand Group Restarting**

Our Group of ANESFHS members held no meetings in 2023 because organisers were too few and too busy elsewhere, but we are glad to report enough interest in restarting online meetings. Just in time for this Journal, our next meeting is on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June at 4pm AEST (7am in the UK if you'd like to join in!).

Registration for the Zoom link is now open when you log in to the Society's website. We look forward to seeing a lot of you there, and to developing a programme of speakers and topics for a regular schedule of meetings. Details will appear on the website as we confirm them. At our second meeting, a librarian will talk on researching in New Zealand.

[australia@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:australia@anesfhs.org.uk)

Robin Price No. 18058

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## **Library Report**

We recently had a very interesting talk, described in this Journal, from Chris Paton. Chris is a well-known professional genealogist and family historian who has written extensively on the subject. We have most of his books, but one we didn't have, and have just bought, is his *Sharing Your Family History Online: A Guide for Family Historians* (Pen & Sword, 2021). This is a practical guide to family-history collaboration, with chapters on the use of social media, software packages, DNA testing and how to share and preserve your research. It's packed with case studies and useful tips.

Chris's talk to the Society was about "writing up family-history stories". Society member Robert Will has written and published a family story, *Black Day in Longside: The Murder of Margaret Keith*, which is now in our library. The book is well illustrated, extensively researched, and described in detail in an article later in this Journal.

Two other recent acquisitions are both about Aberdeen. *Aberdeen City Centre Heritage Tour* is published by the City Council and gives a unique insight into the city's history. A location map helps the reader to follow a timeline of events and to discover how Aberdeen has changed over the years. The book draws upon the extensive photographic collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums, Aberdeen City and Shire Archives, and the Local Studies department of the Central Library. Some landmarks are no longer there, while others have not changed in the past couple of hundred years.

Jack Gillon's *Aberdeen in 50 Buildings* explores the city's history through a selection of its greatest architectural assets, from notable buildings such as the Music Hall, the new Town House, and Marshall Mackenzie's extension to Marischal College, which is the world's second largest granite building and the most ornate, to more recent architectural additions like the University of Aberdeen's new library. In many cases, earlier photos are shown alongside the recent ones.

In both of these books, the photographs are accompanied by short histories. They would make a useful introduction to Aberdeen for visitors who are unfamiliar with the city.

When visiting our Research Centre in King Street, forget about the computers for a bit and head downstairs to the library. You'll be amazed at the wealth of information it contains.

*library@anesfhs.org.uk*

Margie Mellis

No. 2090

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## Scotland's Churches Trust

Our members might be interested in the appeal from Scotland's Churches Trust (SCT) for volunteers to record redundant churches in Aberdeen and other areas. This appeal, and the high number of churches being closed, were mentioned in our Library Report in Journal 169, but unfortunately the details were omitted [*The Editor apologises for this omission*].

Bruce Mann, Archaeologist with Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service, recently summarised the situation:

With the Church of Scotland's church closure/rationalisation programme well under way, Scotland's Churches Trust is taking a role in coordinating emergency recording of buildings to be closed or already closed for worship. Given the important part that most of these buildings play, often as significant local works of architecture in a settlement, Scottish Churches Trust has developed rapid recording strategies for volunteers. It is actively looking for volunteers from amongst congregations or former congregations and anyone else interested in the history and architecture of church buildings to help with recording. Volunteering could be an excellent opportunity to see some important architecture in a complete form before a period of uncertainty over buildings' futures.

Individuals interested in volunteering for this project should contact Scottish Churches Trust directly at *director@scotlandschurchestrust.org.uk*. Further information can be found at the SCT website: <https://www.scotlandschurchestrust.org.uk/blog/scotlands-closing-churches/>

*margie.mellis@anesfhs.org.uk*

Margie Mellis

No. 2090

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## Research Centre Report

I'm the Centre Manager, responsible for ensuring that there are volunteers on every shift, ten shifts a week, who are capable and trained to help members and visitors with their research. When you contact us by any method, I do my best to ensure that you are given the most suitable help for your query. All our volunteers are good at basic searching and establishing family trees, and some have more specialist knowledge.

We are a FamilySearch Affiliate Library member, which gives us access to many more databases of records than you can ordinarily access. We are still discovering the full range of this vast resource! One of its everyday main uses is for the Old Parochial Records (OPRs), whose index has come a long way since the IGI. We can access the British Newspaper Archive (BNA) and Ancestry among many other resources; and more records are coming online all the time.

Covering our local counties, we have a huge range of Memorial Inscription (MI) booklets. Gavin Bell and his team have, over the years, worked meticulously to produce around 80 publications. These are a fantastic resource, especially because some gravestones, even if they can still be located, are no longer legible due to weathering and damage.

We have a complete index to the 1911 Census for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. This transcription project took ten years, and we owe a huge vote of thanks to the team of volunteers near and far who organised the project, transcribed handwritten records and produced the index. All these files are available in both paper and computerised form, but only within our Research Centre.

Our reference library is another great resource and is a place to lose time in. Seeing is believing! Recently we have reverted to ringing a bell to alert visitors to 4pm closing time. You'll never be locked in, as volunteers have to exit through the library to lock up!

Attendance at the Centre can vary, but generally Friday is our busiest day. We do not operate a booking system, but if you are coming from a distance and for a short time, I would recommend contacting us, and we'll book a seat for you and/or track down any records, gravestones or local sources you may be looking for.

This is nowhere near an exhaustive list of what is available. Do come and visit, have a look round, and chat with others. Family historians are, in general, a friendly group of people – and many a new avenue of search has come to light over a cup of coffee or tea.

I must also mention the *Family Record*, our “yellow book”, famous the world over. It is fantastic value at only £4, and so handy for quick reference. It doesn't go offline when there is no signal! It can be packed in the bottom of a suitcase or backpack and is there, waiting for notes to be jotted down in pencil in any location. It also makes a great gift, when completed, for family members near and far.

*barbara.lamb@anesfhs.org.uk*

Barbara Lamb (Centre Manager)

No. 20206

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## Write for Your Journal!

The Journal Team was delighted when no less a personage than Chris Paton encouraged Society members to get their stories into print via the Society Journal. That prompted some questions about preferred format and length of items – so, here are some hints and tips to help you in getting that precious research into shape for your readers. Remember that the Journals are online when you log in to the Society's website, and this is a great way to conserve your research for those who come after.

### Topics

We are interested in pretty much anything that interests you. Ideally it should include some family-history details, as this will be useful to others trying to make connections between family lines. If the facts, figures, names and dates are slowing down the story, it's easier to list them at the end in a short “Genealogical appendix”.

While you will have spent many hard hours researching the “begottens and begats”, do remember that a general reader – including your future family members – will be more interested to know what makes this particular family or person interesting. What's the story that will hold the piece together?

Ideally, we'd like articles to have a connection to Aberdeenshire and North-East Scotland (the old counties of Kincardineshire, Banffshire and Moray), but articles that demonstrate how you uncovered your story or introduce us to unusual source records will be helpful to other Society members starting their own voyage of discovery.



As well as stories about people, we are interested in items about places and objects with a North-East connection. What's tucked away in your family treasure chest? Have you got old letters or photographs that give an insight into what life was like for your forebears?

### **Formats**

The inside back cover of every Journal has a section on "Journal Submissions" with the deadline for the next issue and helpful information about how to submit articles for consideration. Here's a summary of the key points:

Please type your article in an editable electronic format, such as Microsoft Word, and send it by email attachment to [journal@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:journal@anesfhs.org.uk). Or, if it's short, just type it into your email message.

Around 600 words makes a page of text in our present format. An article of 2–3 pages is fine. Remember it will appear longer if space is required for images. Longer articles can be spread over two Journal issues, and we are always glad to have short items of a few sentences or a paragraph or so, as these snippets can help us fill a page at the layout stage.

We like to maximise space for stories, so please **don't** use footnotes. However, a short list of the most important sources is always helpful for other researchers.

Digital images of any photographs, diagrams or illustrations are also welcome. Please send them as separate files, **not** embedded in the text file. Save them in a high-resolution format and bear in mind that any fine details in the original may be lost, given the smallish, A5 format of the Journal. Currently the printed Journal is black-and-white except for the first six and the last six pages, but the electronic Journal is in full colour and contains clickable hyperlinks in the PDF version (which is downloadable for members' private use only).

Please ensure that you have permissions for using any photographs or other copyright material, and please state the source (publication, website, author, photographer etc.).

It's OK to quote sentences from someone else's book or article, but please remember to give credit for any quotations or ideas that you are repeating.

Just email your piece in unjustified (plain) text – the final Journal layout is decided once all the contributions have been checked and edited. We may have to trim your item slightly and may suggest ways to compress the material in order to fit the space available, house style and constraints of printing.

### **Collaboration!**

If you have a story you'd like to share but don't have time to write it all up, please just get in touch with the main bits of information, and we can help you to mould it into something publishable. Similarly, if typing is not your strength, we can arrange for a volunteer to interview you about your story and take the write-up process forward from there.

And there are other ways to help the Journal team. We are delighted to hear from any member who has prepared a review of a book they think would be relevant and interesting to other members. Could you be one of our story interviewers ... or could you interview one of your older relatives and write up their reminiscences?

As we always say, the Journal is a great way to make sure your research and family stories live on. Happy writing!

## ANESFHS Research Centre, King Street, Aberdeen: A User's Guide

As the summer months approach, you may be considering paying a visit to Aberdeen and to the Society's Family History Research Centre in King Street. Using the Centre is free to Society members, so don't forget your membership number. Non-members can use our Centre for a small fee, so feel free to bring a friend.



Our volunteers will be delighted to see you. In order to help you get orientated, here are a floor plan and guide designed to lead you through the Centre and identify where its key resources are located. It's based on the "Virtual Tour" given to our Southern Ontario Group (November 2022) which featured a live walk-through of our Research Centre, led by Liz Foubister, Bert Lawrie and Ivor Normand.

The Centre's entrance is at 158 King Street, which is joined internally to 160 and to our back office at 164. On the left as you come in, you'll encounter the welcome desk and the sign-in book – and a helpful duty volunteer.

Immediately on your right, you will find a meeting table and a great selection of books for sale – mostly publications relating to family-history research or the North-East, or written by local authors. We also have a comprehensive range of research manuals.

Moving anti-clockwise, you find the full range of available Monumental Inscription (MI) booklets. These are the copies for sale. Just in the next bay, there's a bank of well-thumbed browsing copies for consultation. There are also transcriptions, by area, of the 1696 Tax of Pollable Persons ("Poll Book").

Still moving anti-clockwise, you will face a bank of yellow A4 folders with printed transcriptions of the 1911 census for all parishes for Aberdeen city and Aberdeenshire, prepared by Society members. A digital version is also available within the Centre.



### The floor plan (not to scale!)

Moving into the main area past the rack of browsing copies of the Society's MI booklets, you find PC workstations and video access facilities. The workstations are separated by a screen as an anti-Covid measure. We have 10 computers for use in the Centre, and have subscriptions to Ancestry Worldwide and FamilySearch. Our Intranet has other datasets.

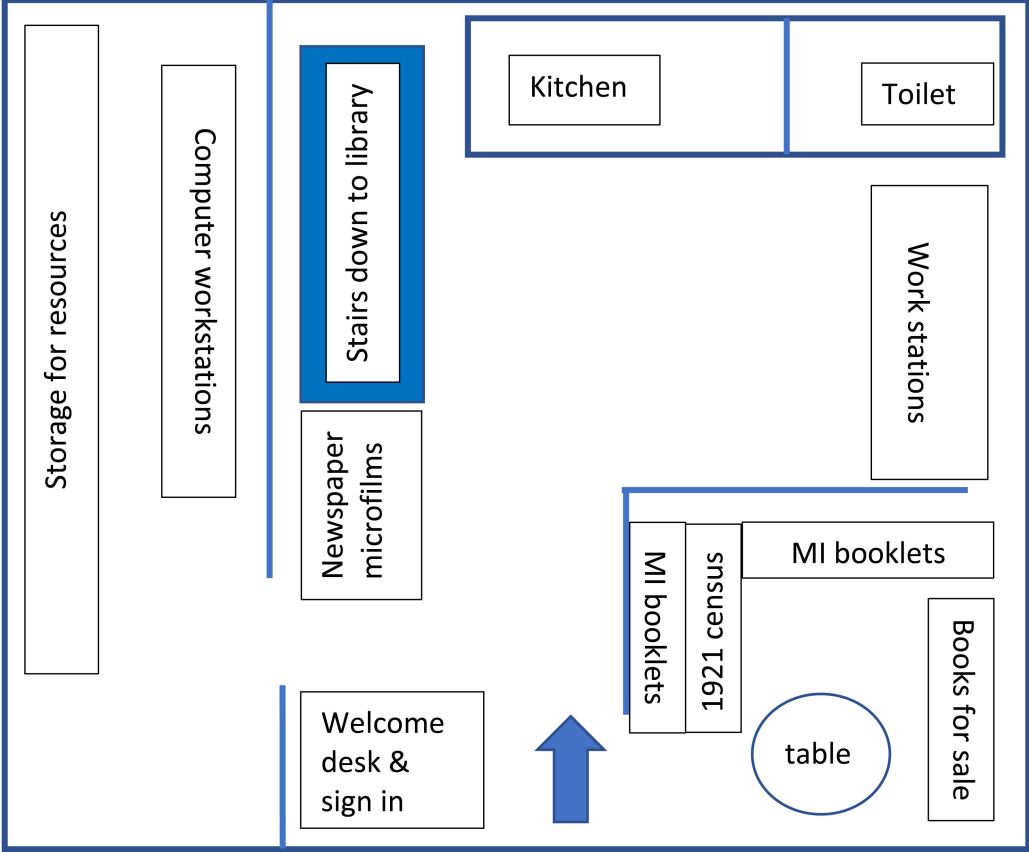
In this area, you will also find filing cabinets with microfilms of a wide range of local newspapers and of the 1841 to 1901 censuses for different areas of Scotland, as well as a complete set of pre-1855 Birth, Death and Marriage records covering the North-East.

Our self-service kitchen and toilet (accessible by wheelchair) are at the far end of this area.

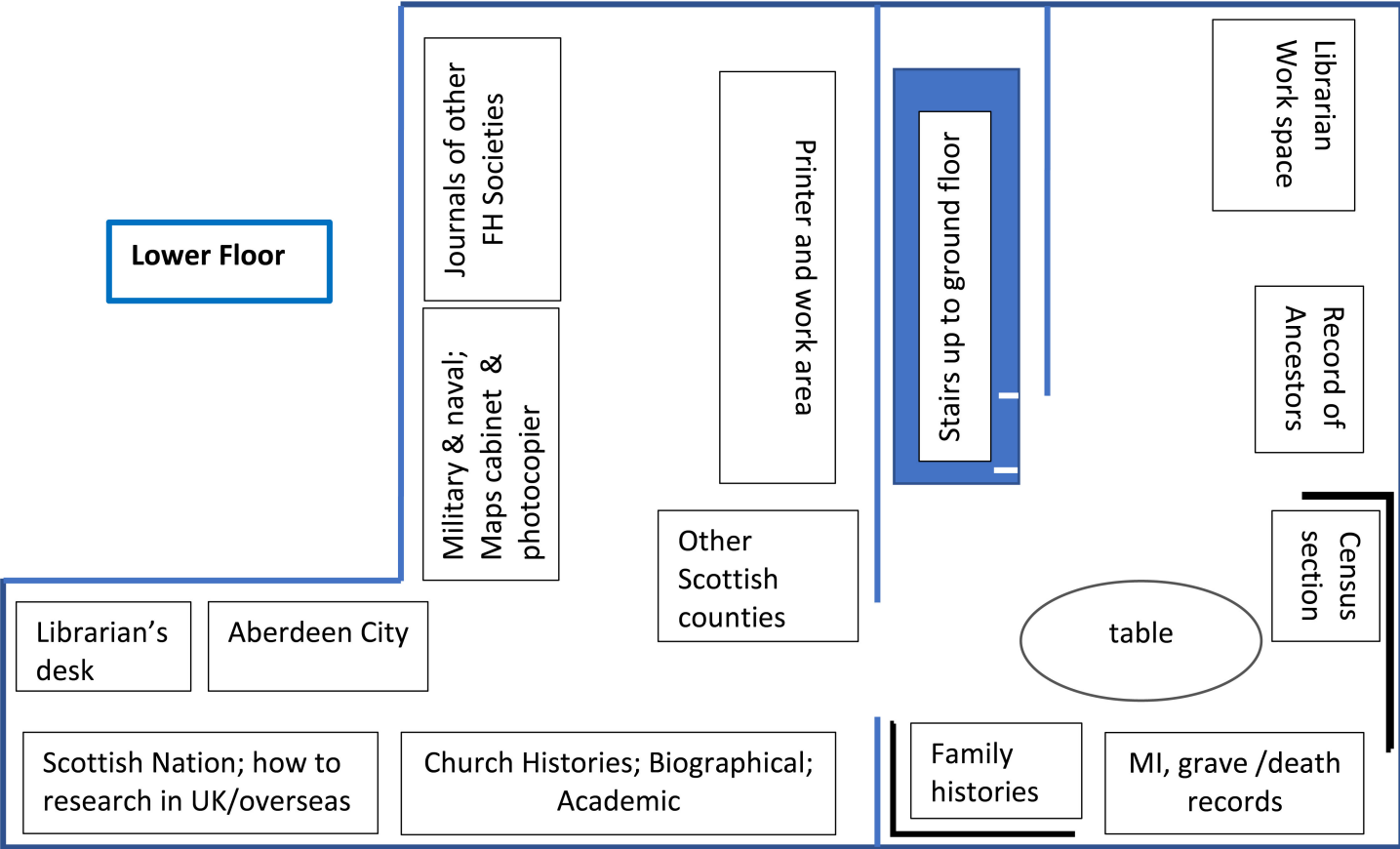
### Lower ground floor

Now walk back towards the welcome desk, and descend the two steps (or the ramp) into the lower ground-floor area. You're now in 160 King Street, where you'll find more of our computers and microfilm readers.

**Ground Floor**



**Lower Floor**



## Downstairs: the Library

Back in the main room, you will find the stairs down to our Library. We're not boasting(!), but one of the Aberdeen City archivists told us the ANESFHS library is the best genealogical library he had ever seen. It is treasure house of thousands of books, with maps, completed family histories, reference works and journals from other societies. It provides a comprehensive range of resources which can help you to fill in the background to your family story.

The librarians have recently been improving the layout, so this description is "hot off the presses" and may differ from what you've been used to seeing!

As you enter the Library, the first section you see contains a striking bank of red A4 folders holding copies of thousands of Record of Ancestors Charts submitted by Society members. These are filed by member number. There is a B/M/D placename index organised by ancestral surname that will help you identify which charts may perhaps have connections to your family tree.



Moving round clockwise, you'll find individual family-history research done by our members and donated to the library. Don't forget to give us a copy of yours in due course. We have an extensive section on local directories, census returns and unpublished MIs from North-East Scotland. Then you come to the area with the MIs or gravestone inscriptions. The graveyards in the North-East have been recorded systematically and most of them published by the Society, and our volunteers have also been recording the Lair Records. The lair or burial plot tells you who is buried there – this can be very helpful when no gravestone has survived or was ever erected. Copies of MIs published by other Scottish Family History Societies are also held here.



The Library continues into two further areas. In the first section, you will find Church records, including different editions of *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae* (the listing for Church of Scotland ministers); college, school and university records; and biographies, including standard reference works such as the *Statistical Accounts* and the *Dictionary of National Biography*. This is where you may also find a volunteer duty librarian at work.

The section on maps and valuation rolls is useful in identifying where your local ancestors may have lived. This area also contains an extensive range of military records from campaigns fought across the world. Our naval section contains books on fishing and boat-building – both important in life in North-East Scotland. We also hold journals from other family-history societies in Scotland, UK and overseas.

The third area of the library contains a historical and geographical section with books on how to go about family-history research covering Scotland and beyond. There are also good sections on Canada and Australia. There is a particularly fine selection of books on Aberdeen and its history, many of which are long out of print and hard to find elsewhere. There are sections on other Scottish counties and on tracing English and Irish ancestry.

This whistlestop tour of our King Street Family History Centre is just an introduction, but it will help you to get the most out of your visit. Take your time when you get there, and explore the various sections. You may be surprised by the discoveries you can make.

*This transcription of Liz, Bert and Ivor's semi-scripted "Virtual Tour" is by Elaine Petrie, who also created the diagrams. We wish there was space to show more detail!*

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## **Volunteering, and Indexing Record of Ancestor Charts: An Update**

Cast your mind back to August last year. No, not the lazy, hazy days of summer, but my article in Journal 167 (pp. 25–26) seeking help and support to index the numerous Record of Ancestors charts submitted by members. I was absolutely delighted with the response. Five members of the Society, hailing from Scotland, England, Australia and the USA, have volunteered to help. By the time you read this article, our new team will have met online and will be undertaking an initial training session before tackling the main task.

I am now a Trustee of the Society, and, as the Board agrees the next steps in ensuring our ongoing compliance with UKGDPR, I will report regularly on progress to members.

### **Other volunteering opportunities**

Of course, there is always room for other willing volunteers. If indexing does not really appeal to you, then perhaps one of the other vacant roles will. The Key Contacts section of this Journal shows several current vacancies, and the Board of Trustees will review this list in the coming months. The Society aims to take a team-based approach to its functions and projects. So, if you decide to volunteer, you could find yourself contributing to a team, whether online or in person, sharing tasks and responsibilities with other like-minded folks. You can work independently if you prefer, but will have others to compare notes with. Or maybe *you* could be a team leader? To find out more, please send an email outlining your areas of interest to [journal@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:journal@anesfhs.org.uk), and we'll forward your message to the most appropriate Society contact.

We are always glad to talk with anyone who is keen to be involved.

[helen.strachan@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:helen.strachan@anesfhs.org.uk)

Helen Strachan No. 22873

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## **Day Conference: "Banffshire Places", Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

Encouraged by the success of the conference held in 2023, Banffshire Field Club is forging ahead with plans for a similar event later this year. The Seafiel Arms Hotel in Cullen provided a warm welcome on the occasion of our first conference, and we are delighted to be returning there on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October.

Keeping the focus firmly on Banffshire, we have chosen "Banffshire Places" as the theme for the day. At the time of writing, we are still putting final touches to the programme. We are pleased to confirm that Iain Taylor, Gaelic scholar and author of *The Placenames of Scotland*, will be a keynote speaker, as will our own Professor Peter Reid, who will be revealing the secrets of "Banffshire's Lost Places".

For more details as they become available, please visit the conference web page at <http://www.banffshirefieldclub.com/conference-2024.html>, which includes a link for booking.

[bfc.1880@gmail.com](mailto:bfc.1880@gmail.com)

Alison Smith No. 7779

## Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives on the Move

As you may be aware from social-media posts and our web pages, Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives will soon be moving out of one of its homes: Old Aberdeen House on Dunbar Street, Old Aberdeen.



*Old Aberdeen School plan, west elevation*

The Archive has been based at the site (originally constructed between 1898 and 1901 as the Old Aberdeen School) since 1986. Initially the home of Grampian Regional Archives, this service evolved into Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives during the local government reorganisation of 1996.

We currently share the building with St Peter's RC Primary School. Aberdeen City Council recently made a decision to refurbish the building in order to provide the school with new and expanded accommodation – hence we must move!

In a parallel project, a feasibility study for new archive accommodation is currently under way. Made possible with money from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, this study is considering various options for consolidating a number of different archival collections under one roof in a new facility.

In the meantime, our Old Aberdeen House collections will be moving into additional space in the Town House, as well as utilising external storage, to enable us to vacate the building. As you can imagine, this is a massive project.

This brings us to a necessary evil of the move: to carry out the work required to carefully pack and move our one-of-a-kind collections, we are reducing our opening hours at both sites. The Town House search room is scheduled to reopen in Spring 2025 (with access to collections formerly at Old Aberdeen House at this site by prior arrangement).

Providing access to the collections is a big part of why we enjoy our jobs, so we're sad that there's going to be a pause in this part of our service, but we look forward to seeing you again in the future. The opening hours will be as follows:

### ***1<sup>st</sup> April to 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024:***

Old Aberdeen House open on Mondays (by appointment only), 09:30 to 16:30

Town House open on Fridays (by appointment only), 09:30 to 16:30.

### ***10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 onwards:***

Both Old Aberdeen House and the Town House will be closed.

*archives@aberdeencity.gov.uk*

Phil Astley

*Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives aims to collect, preserve and provide access to historical records relating to the North-East of Scotland, and to secure significant modern records for future generations. In addition to records of the current councils, it keeps*

*records relating to their predecessor bodies: Grampian Regional Council, 17 burghs around Aberdeenshire, three County Councils, school boards and poor law authorities. Its earliest Aberdeenshire records are from Banff Burgh and date from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, while the earliest record for Aberdeen City is a charter from 1179. It has also taken in material from organisations and companies in the North-East, including NORCO, Kincardine Marts and Grampian Police.*

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## **SIGS Genetic Genealogy Conference, 7<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

The Strathclyde Institute for Genealogical Studies (SIGS) will hold an international academic genetic genealogy conference at the University of Strathclyde, 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> June 2024. It will be interdisciplinary in nature, with a particular focus on the themes of autosomal DNA and Y-DNA, as well as on bioarchaeology, genetics and investigative genetic genealogy, emphasising their importance and value to this broader field.

The fees are: In-person Standard: £130.00; Online only: £80.00. At first glance it may seem expensive, but it compares well with other training days and conferences. Talks will be available to participants for one month after the event.

It is international, it is academic, and the abstracts from the full conference program are fascinating already. For more information, type Advancing Genetic Genealogy into your browser, or go to this link:

<https://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/genealogy/advancinggeneticgenealogy/>

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## **Mystery Object Quiz**

Do you know what this object is? It would have been in frequent use by many of our North-East ancestors ... but what is it? ... and what was it for?

The answer will appear on p. 24 of this Journal. We thank Graham Robertson (no. 11685) for giving a peek into his amazing trove of everyday and less common objects from bygone days.



# Record of Ancestors

Membership No: **1283**  
 Name **Marina ALEXANDER**  
 Date 4 Apr 2023  
 e-mail doricma1@sky.com

His Father

3 **John Duguid MAIN**

*Born* 9 Nov 1878  
*Place* Monquhitter, ABD  
*Married* 15 Jul 1904  
*Place* Aberdeen  
*Died* 31 Jul 1916 (37)  
*Place* Auchterless, ABD  
*Occup.* Butcher

Your Father

1 **John Adam MAIN**

*Born* 19 Jun 1905  
*Place* Rayne, Aberdeenshire  
*Married* 27 Jun 1934  
*Place* Aberdeen  
*Died* 19 Jul 1989 (84)  
*Place* Largs, Ayrshire  
*Occup.* Police constable

His Mother

4 **Alexandrina ADAM**

*Born* 27 Apr 1881  
*Place* Meikle Wartle, Rayne, ABD  
*Died* 25 Feb 1954 (72)  
*Place* Aberdeen

You

**Marina Anne MAIN**

*Born* 22 Nov 1938  
*Place* Police station, Oldmeldrum, Aberdeenshire  
*Married* 15 Aug 1961  
*Place* King's College, Aberdeen  
*Occup.* Library assistant

Her Father

5 **George Gauld DUNCAN**

*Born* 22 Jan 1873  
*Place* Loanhead, Glass, ABD  
*Married* 6 Jun 1896  
*Place* Huntly, Aberdeenshire  
*Died* 1 Sep 1955 (82)  
*Place* Inch, Aberdeenshire  
*Occup.* Farm worker

Your Mother

2 **Ann DUNCAN**

*Born* 25 Feb 1905  
*Place* Brownhills, Glass, ABD  
*Died* 10 Apr 1984 (79)  
*Place* Greenock (Inverclyde Hospital)  
*Occup.*

Her Mother

6 **Mary GORDON**

*Born* 12 Feb 1872  
*Place* Mallack, Glass, ABD  
*Died* 29 Sep 1942 (70)  
*Place* Huntly, Aberdeenshire (Cottage Hospital)

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Form designed by:  
**Aberdeen & NE Scotland FHS,**  
 158-164 King Street,  
 Aberdeen AB24 5BD.



		15	<b>John MAIN</b>	<b>James M. / Jean MURRAY</b>
			<i>Born</i> 16 Jun 1829	<i>Place</i> Rathen, Aberdeenshire
			<i>Married</i> 4 Jan 1851	<i>Place</i> Boyndie, Banffshire
			<i>Died</i> 22 Jul 1908 (79)	<i>Place</i> Fintray, Aberdeenshire
				<i>Occup.</i>
7	<b>Alexander Croll MAIN</b>	16	<b>Margaret CROLL</b>	<b>Alexr C. / Helen SIEVEWRIG</b>
	<i>Born</i> 7 Jul 1855		<i>Born</i> 11 Aug 1833	<i>Place</i> Boyndie, Banffshire
	<i>Place</i> Ordens, Boyndie, Banffshire		<i>Died</i> 24 Jun 1925 (91)	<i>Place</i> Newmachar, Aberdeenshire
	<i>Married</i> 3 Feb 1877			<i>Occup.</i>
	<i>Place</i> Monquhitter, Aberdeenshire	17	<b>John DUGUID</b>	<b>John D. / Helen SIMPSON</b>
	<i>Died</i> 18 Apr 1926 (70)		<i>Born</i> 20 Mar 1835	<i>Place</i> Glencoe, Forgue, ABD
	<i>Place</i> Aberdeen (Royal Infirmary)		<i>Married</i> 2 Apr 1856	<i>Place</i> Millbrex, Fyvie, ABD
	<i>Occup.</i> Farmer		<i>Died</i> 10 Jan 1921 (85)	<i>Place</i> Turriff, Aberdeenshire
8	<b>Ann DUGUID</b>			<i>Occup.</i>
	<i>Born</i> 5 Apr 1856	18	<b>Isabella GERRARD</b>	<b>John GERRARD / Ann GILL</b>
	<i>Place</i> Fadonhill, Fyvie, ABD		<i>Bapt.</i> 18 Apr 1837	<i>Place</i> Monquhitter, Aberdeenshire
	<i>Died</i> 31 Jan 1937 (80)		<i>Died</i> 27 Feb 1919 (81)	<i>Place</i> Turriff, Aberdeenshire
	<i>Place</i> Rothienorman, Fyvie, ABD			<i>Occup.</i>
		19	<b>William ADAM</b>	<b>James A. / Eliz. McCULLOC</b>
			<i>Born</i> 31 Jan 1821	<i>Place</i> Drumdollo, Forgue, ABD
			<i>Married</i> 3 Jul 1841	<i>Place</i> Forgue, Aberdeenshire
			<i>Died</i> 25 Oct 1889 (68)	<i>Place</i> Templeland, Forgue, ABD
				<i>Occup.</i>
9	<b>John ADAM</b>	20	<b>Janet PEDDIE</b>	<b>Wm PEDDIE / Mary THOM</b>
	<i>Born</i> 12 Aug 1853		<i>Born</i> 22 Sep 1822	<i>Place</i> Drumdollo, Forgue, ABD
	<i>Place</i> Drumdollo, Forgue, ABD		<i>Died</i> 15 Dec 1914 (92)	<i>Place</i> Inverurie, Aberdeenshire
	<i>Married</i> 28 Dec 1878			<i>Occup.</i>
	<i>Place</i> Meikle Wartle, Rayne, ABD	21	<b>William EMSLIE</b>	<b>Wm E. / Ann CHAPMAN</b>
	<i>Died</i> 4 May 1946 (92)		<i>Born</i> 29 Sep 1824	<i>Place</i> Rayne, Aberdeenshire
	<i>Place</i> Meikle Wartle, Rayne, ABD		<i>Married</i>	<i>Place</i>
	<i>Occup.</i> Railway wayman		<i>Died</i> 1 Jun 1910 (85)	<i>Place</i> Meikle Wartle, Rayne, ABD
10	<b>Margaret EMSLIE</b>			<i>Occup.</i>
	<i>Born</i> 20 Jun 1858	22	<b>Margaret STEELE</b>	<b>Peter S. / Margaret SOUTER</b>
	<i>Place</i> Meikle Wartle, Rayne, ABD		<i>Born</i> 1817	<i>Place</i> Meikle Wartle, Rayne, ABD
	<i>Died</i> 8 May 1944 (85)		<i>Died</i> 26 Jul 1902 (85)	<i>Place</i> Meikle Wartle, Rayne, ABD
	<i>Place</i> Meikle Wartle, Rayne, ABD			<i>Occup.</i>
	<i>Occup.</i>	23	<b>George DUNCAN</b>	<b>George D. / Jane SMITH</b>
			<i>Born</i> 1822	<i>Place</i> Grange, Banffshire
			<i>Married</i> 23 Nov 1850	<i>Place</i> Forgue, Aberdeenshire
			<i>Died</i> 10 Jun 1895	<i>Place</i> Nether Comisty, Forgue, ABC
				<i>Occup.</i>
11	<b>William Neish DUNCAN</b>	24	<b>Margaret NEISH</b>	<b>Wm NEISH / Jane LOW</b>
	<i>Born</i> 22 Jan 1851		<i>Born</i> 1834	<i>Place</i> Forgue, Aberdeenshire
	<i>Place</i> Comisty, Forgue, ABD		<i>Died</i> 3 Apr 1916 (82)	<i>Place</i> Kirktown, Skene, ABD
	<i>Married</i> [not m.]			<i>Occup.</i>
	<i>Place</i>	25	<b>George GAULD</b>	<b>James G. / Jane GAULD</b>
	<i>Died</i> 2 May 1930 (79)		<i>Born</i> 19 Jul 1810	<i>Place</i> Loanhead, Glass, ABD
	<i>Place</i> South Australia		<i>Married</i> 19 Dec 1850	<i>Place</i> Gartly, Aberdeenshire
	<i>Occup.</i> Clerk		<i>Died</i> 4 May 1892 (81)	<i>Place</i> Greystonefolds, Glass, ABD
				<i>Occup.</i>
12	<b>Jane GAULD</b>	26	<b>Helen MILNE</b>	<b>John M. / H. CRUICKSHANK</b>
	<i>Born</i> 27 Sep 1857		<i>Born</i> 13 Dec 1830	<i>Place</i> Huntly, Aberdeenshire
	<i>Place</i> Loanhead, Glass, ABD		<i>Died</i> 15 May 1867 (36)	<i>Place</i> Loanhead, Glass, ABD
	<i>Died</i> 19 Jun 1922 (64)			<i>Occup.</i>
	<i>Place</i> Greystonefolds, Glass, ABD	27	<b>Alexander GORDON</b>	<b>Wm GORDON / Helen WATI</b>
	<i>Occup.</i>		<i>Born</i> 1784	<i>Place</i> Mallack, Glass, ABD
			<i>Married</i>	<i>Place</i>
			<i>Died</i> by 1855	<i>Place</i>
				<i>Occup.</i>
13	<b>James GORDON</b>	28	<b>Helen McGREGOR</b>	<b>James McG. / Helen NORIE</b>
	<i>Born</i> 21 Sep 1826		<i>Born</i> 1805	<i>Place</i> Westfolds, Glass, ABD
	<i>Place</i> Mallack, Glass, ABD		<i>Died</i> 8 Jun 1867 (61)	<i>Place</i> Mallack, Glass, ABD
	<i>Married</i> 14 Dec 1867			<i>Occup.</i>
	<i>Place</i> Glass, Aberdeenshire	29	<b>John ROBERTSON</b>	<b>John R. / Margaret NORIE</b>
	<i>Died</i> 13 Jan 1902 (75)		<i>Born</i> 1807	<i>Place</i> Cairnie, ABD
	<i>Place</i> Mallack, Glass, ABD		<i>Married</i>	<i>Place</i>
	<i>Occup.</i> Farmer		<i>Died</i> 5 Jun 1870 (62)	<i>Place</i> Dillybrae, Cairnie, ABD
				<i>Occup.</i>
14	<b>Jessie ROBERTSON</b>	30	<b>Janet MILLER</b>	
	<i>Born</i> 10 Aug 1841		<i>Born</i> 1806	<i>Place</i> Knockando, Moray
	<i>Place</i> Dillybrae, Cairnie, ABD		<i>Died</i> 4 Dec 1860 (54)	<i>Place</i> Dillybrae, Cairnie, ABD
	<i>Died</i> 13 Jan 1931 (89)			<i>Occup.</i>
	<i>Place</i> Greystonefolds, Glass, ABD			
	<i>Occup.</i>			

## Mystery Object Quiz: The Answer



If your ancestor was a farm worker in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, he might have used a *threepie thrawcruik* (triple thrawcruik) like this. A strand of binder twine was attached to each of the hooks, and the handle was turned to twist them into a thicker rope to use as reins, or for tying down corn stacks, or for any other handy purpose.

[journal@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:journal@anesfhs.org.uk)

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## 100 Club News

The 100 Club gives our members the opportunity to win a cash prize while also supporting the Society's work. All you need is a UK bank account, wherever you live. The fee for each number held is £12 per annum and is payable annually, by Standing Order. If you would like to join, please e-mail the address below.

The payout is always 50 per cent of the income, and there are four prizes in the monthly draw (1<sup>st</sup>: 20 per cent, 2<sup>nd</sup>: 15 per cent, 3<sup>rd</sup>: 10 per cent and 4<sup>th</sup>: 5 per cent of the income).

If you decide **not** to renew your ANESFHS membership, please **also remember to cancel your Standing Order for the 100 Club**. Only **you** can cancel your own Standing Order. If cancellation is not requested, the transaction will continue.

The draw takes place monthly, and **we now pay winners via online banking. We need to be kept up to date with any changes to 100 Club members' bank-account details**. Winners are informed personally and are announced in the Journal. For further details, please see the current Information Booklet on our website.

February and March winners appeared in the previous Journal. April winners will appear in the August Journal along with the next three months' winners.

[100club@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:100club@anesfhs.org.uk)

Sheila Symons No. 13157

—oOo—

## Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor,

### Donations to ANESFHS Library, and Record of Ancestors Chart

George Gordon (a distant relative of mine) was a most interesting gentleman who was very proud of his humble beginnings. He wrote books about the Shore Porters' Society, and was the one who got me interested in family history. This led me to researching the parish of Glass and contributing to the Glass Community webpage. We spent many an hour in the archives at King's College, ploughing through the Duff House Papers in the days when you could actually handle the books.

To the ANESFHS library, I have donated photocopies of some Glass parish records and transcriptions along with three books of transcriptions of Huntly Parish Church records.

I am glad that my Record of Ancestors chart is printed in this issue of the Journal. I hadn't realised you had to request your chart to be featured in the Journal, otherwise I would have done it when I was much younger and not waited until this late date! I do understand that GDPR requires the individual's permission to be given.

I am afraid computers are still a mystery to me, even though my husband worked for IBM all his life and two of my children have degrees in computing! My grandchildren probably could have sent you the file in half the time it took me to find it! Although my family think computers are the greatest thing, I am still a dinosaur when it comes to technology: I still prefer my A4 paper files, which contain far more information than I have ever entered into my computer! Sadly they will probably all end up in a skip, as none of the family are very interested in their roots.

*doricma1@sky.com*

Marina Alexander

No. 1283

## Roles for Volunteers

Reading Journal 169, I noted the Chairman's request to fill vacant roles at the Society. Although I've been a member of the Society for many years, I only began volunteering at King Street a couple of months ago.

I may wish to get involved with one of the other vacant roles, but do not know what this would entail. May I suggest that, in a future Journal, there is a brief description of what at least some of these roles involve. This may spark interest from newer members or others, like me previously, who do not normally visit the premises at King Street, therefore do not have an understanding of the roles to be done.

*gillian\_marriner@yahoo.co.uk*

Gillian Marriner

No. 15554

*This coincided neatly with receiving Helen Strachan's update (p. 19) – Journal Team*

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## GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

Research undertaken in North-East records, also at the  
National Archives of Scotland and New Register House  
All enquiries welcome

Mrs. Margaret Davidson, CSFHS, Grampian Ancestry Research  
6 Bayview Road, Inverbervie, Montrose DD10 0SH  
E-mail: [grampian.ancestry@btinternet.com](mailto:grampian.ancestry@btinternet.com)  
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## Articles

### **Aberdeen Special Nursery: Mitchell Triplets and Sister Mary Hogg**

I was interested in Journal 169's profile of Centre volunteer Sheena Smith, who had been a nurse at the Sick Kids/Aberdeen Maternity Hospital & Neonatal Unit. I am trying to find information about Sister Mary Hogg, who was in charge of the Special Nursery in 1949, and am wondering when she may have retired. She was still there in 1968 when I was a trainee nurse at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, Foresterhill, doing my six-week placement on the Unit. I had been one of her "babies", a triplet, and she was naturally very proud.



We triplets were born in 1949 at home in Keith, undiagnosed and premature. Our parents were Margaret Mary Mitchell (Gordon) and Thomas Burns Mitchell. Unfortunately, the first triplet, Vicki Mitchell, died at five days and is buried in Trinity Cemetery, Aberdeen. My mother sadly never saw Vicki again and never knew where she was buried. It took me until I was 42 to find where Vicki was buried. Second triplet Sally, and I (Susan/Sue), spent our first three months in the Unit being looked after by Sister Hogg.

Miraculously, our records turned up while I was working on the Unit. Records were not normally retained before 1950, but perhaps ours survived because we were the first triplets. I also know we were rare identical triplets who shared one placenta. Sadly, no photographs were allowed, so we do not have a picture of the three of us.

I have the book *Bringing Life to Aberdeen: A History of Maternity and Neonatal Services*, but it contains only a very brief mention of Sister Hogg. I also have some record entries from Fiona Musk at Northern Health Services Archive (Grampian Archives).

I am doing my family history and making a book of our triplet story, and was keen to know if Sheena knows anything about Sister Hogg.

*suerason@aol.com*

Sue Rason No. 22832

*We've put Sheena and Sue in touch with each other. Does anyone else have information about Sister Mary Hogg? Sue would be delighted to hear from you. – Journal Team*

—oOo—

### **Settlers and Convicts: Ogilvies and Thomsons in Van Diemen's Land**

James Ogilvie was born in 1796 in Banff to Thomas Ogilvie, merchant and ship owner, and his wife Anna Grant. Her parents were John Grant and Margaret Duff, who had inherited the Eden estate in King Edward, Aberdeenshire from an uncle. Anna's brother James, a soldier and historian, adopted both parents' surnames and became known as Captain James C. Grant Duff. His son, Sir Mountstuart E. Grant Duff, was MP for Elgin, Under Secretary of State for India and Governor of Madras. A relative was William Duff of Braco, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl Fife, who ordered the building of Duff House in Banff in 1735.

Anna died when James was a teenager. A few years later, James moved to Edinburgh, where he became a wine merchant, working for his mother's sister and her husband. After

learning the trade from his uncle, James started his own wine business and married Eliza Fordyce in Edinburgh in 1819. James closed his business in 1821 and set off with Eliza and their young son Thomas to start a new life in Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania), Australia. Van Diemen's Land was then a colony of New South Wales whose government was encouraging those with capital to settle and apply for a land grant, in exchange for providing work to convicts who had been transported from Britain. James had a letter from Lord Bathurst, Secretary of State for Colonies, Downing Street, London, giving permission to be granted land as a free settler. He took merchandise with him, including various wines and brandies and other goods, with the intention of carrying on his business in his new home.

As luck would have it, I came across an archived diary in the NSW records, written by the male servant of a family who had travelled on the same journey as my ancestors the Ogilvies. The ship, HMS *Britomart*, set off on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1821 from London. They hit bad weather from the start of the journey and had to shelter, first in the Downs and then in Portsmouth. The five-month journey was not going to be plain sailing. The diarist described the weather, the conditions on board and the fate of his master, Dr Helenus



H. M. Ships Alligator and Britomart off Plymouth Breakwater

Scott. Dr Scott and two of his sons, Helenus junior and Robert, were travelling to Sydney via Hobart. However, Dr Scott became ill soon after they left England. The ship's surgeon, Dr Leggett, could do little for him, and Dr Scott, fully aware he would not recover, requested that he be buried at the Cape of Good Hope on arrival there. By mid-October, Dr Scott had died and was put in a cask of rum, a standard nautical method of preservation at that time, until he could be buried. A terrible storm ensued, the likes of which had never been seen before, according to the older sailors. James Ogilvie's pregnant wife and young son must have been terrified. As the weather finally calmed, the passengers entertained themselves with dancing, singing and other antics. When they encountered a brig heading for Britain, Dr Scott's son was able to pass on a letter to be forwarded to his mother, informing her of the doctor's death.

During the journey, the sailors caught dolphins and a shark. They saw many whales and flying fish. Eventually they reached the Cape, and the rum cask was brought to the shore. Dr Scott's body was transferred to a coffin and buried as per his request. All the gentlemen passengers attended the funeral, so James Ogilvie was no doubt among them.

As the ship continued its journey, they encountered more bad weather. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1822, the captain gave the men a double allowance of grog to celebrate the New Year. The ship eventually arrived in Hobart at the end of January after an arduous journey. Most passengers, including the Ogilvie family, disembarked. The diarist wrote: "Van Diemen's Land seems to be a very fine country. Oranges and peaches seem plentiful."

Within a few weeks of arrival, James had opened a shop in Hobart Town to sell the goods he had brought with him. He went on to build the British Hotel and also owned a farm, no doubt employing convict labour in both places. James's ancestor was Alexander Ogilvie, 4<sup>th</sup> of Boyne, and so James named his farmland "the Lands of Boyne". Another property he owned was named Eden House after his mother's family estate.

James died, aged 31, in 1828, leaving his widow, Eliza Fordyce Ogilvie, with three young children to raise. In 1829, Eliza met, and later married, James Thomson, born in London to Scottish parents. He had arrived in Van Diemen's Land in 1825 by a somewhat different route. In 1824, he and his two brothers were tried at the Old Bailey, found guilty of housebreaking and theft and sentenced to death. Because of their young ages and previous good behaviour, their sentence was reduced and James was transported for life to Van Diemen's Land, considered a "dumping ground" for convicts. As he was said to be bright, he was assigned to the Colonial Architect instead of facing the more usual labouring jobs. He carved out a career as a surveyor/architect and took over as licensee of James Ogilvie's hotel. Thomson received a conditional pardon in 1835 and set up in business as an architect. In 1839 he received a full pardon.

The colony of Van Diemen's Land stopped taking convicts by 1853 and wished to attract more free settlers. In an attempt to shake off its reputation as a harsh penal colony, its name was changed to Tasmania in 1856.

Eliza Fordyce Ogilvie, or Thomson, died in 1852. Her three children with James Ogilvie were Thomas, Eliza and Mary. Thomas Ogilvie became a master mariner and owner of the schooner *Flying Fish*. He was later an auctioneer and sheep-station owner. Eliza Ann Ogilvie married William H. Windsor, the under-treasurer of Tasmania, and Mary Grant Ogilvie married James Goodall Francis, who became the 9<sup>th</sup> Premier of Victoria, Australia.

I was first alerted to the very interesting Ogilvie branch of my family tree by Margaret Shand (member no. 227). Margaret has been researching the Ogilvies for many years and has uncovered endless intriguing stories. Our shared ancestors are Jean Ogilvie and her husband James Watt, a Gamrie fisherman. Thomas Ogilvie, father of the emigrant James Ogilvie, was our 3x great-uncle.

Image from *Volume 1: Voyage of H.M.S. Britomart from 1837 to 1843*, drawn by Owen Stanley, courtesy of Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, SAFE/PXC 279, FL1120082.

[soniapacker@btinternet.com](mailto:soniapacker@btinternet.com)

Sonia Packer No. 23123

—oOo—

## Dating a Family Photograph: Forbes and Longmore



James Forbes (1850–1906) and Jessie Ann Longmore and their family:

Adam born 1880, Helen 1882, Catherine 1884, George 1887, Elizabeth 1888, Andrew 1889, Alexander 1894.

The couple had an additional six children who do not appear in this photograph: Ann, Mary, William, Jessie, James and Ella.

*Photograph submitted by Mary Mead (no. 23856), from the collection of Don Maudsley.*

*We asked Kate Clark to comment on the likely date of this photograph. She told us:*

I would say this was taken around 1902. The female dress style features the bishop's sleeve, and the skirt style is plain. The women's hair is starting to be dressed in a wider fashion, but the styles haven't reached the volume achieved around 1908, when it was needed to support huge hats. The three boys are wearing Norfolk suits, a fashion which spanned quite a number of years. The young man and the older man are dressed very differently. The younger man appears to be wearing a double-breasted jacket (perhaps even in a nautical style), with an extremely high collar and thin tie. The man we assume to be his father has a double-breasted waistcoat, single-breasted jacket, turn-down collar and wide four-in-hand tie, which fits well with fashions for an older man in the early 1900s.



James Forbes also appeared in Journal 169 (February 2024, p. 38), posing with a cartwheel and accompanied by two younger men who may be George and Andrew listed above. His census entries confirm he was a woodworker as well as crofter:

Census 1871, 12 Gallowhill Street, Banff – James is a joiner.

Census 1881, Blairshinnoch – James is a farmer of 15 acres.

Census 1891, Blairshinnoch – James is a carpenter and crofter.

Census 1901, 4 Harvey Place, Banff – James is a house carpenter.

This photograph was probably taken in the mid- to late 1890s.

*kate\_clark@ntlworld.com*

Kate Clark

No. 934

—oOo—

## Looking for Keiths from Keith: An Invitation to Share DNA Results

In my normal genealogical practice, I frequently encounter a scenario where an individual has taken a Y-DNA test in hopes of confirming a clan or family link but can't find a single connected genealogy back to the desired root. An example is the Keiths Project on the Family Tree DNA site: <https://www.familytreedna.com/public/Keith?iframe=ycolored>.

If we look at its 330-odd members, it is quite clear they are not all genetically related. Most are some variety of the haplotype R-M269, which is unsurprising as that's the result for 70% of all white European males. A few have taken deeper tests to a more refined sub-clade, such as R-BY80863 or R-FTD79725.

There are quite a few who are E-M2 or E-M35 (which diverged 42,000 years ago, both in Africa). Some are I-M253 (called I1, essentially Scandinavian) and some are I-M223 (I2, "Pict"), and others are I-M284 (ancient Briton) or even R1b Gael. There is even one Q-Z780, which is pre-Columbian American, and it's anyone's guess how their ancestor came to be surnamed Keith.

So, it's not as simple as "test some random Keiths in Scotland and they'll all be the same". No, they won't.

Nor do they all necessarily come originally from the same place. What's more, just because some present-day Keiths live in Aberdeen, for example, there is no guarantee that this family line was living there at the point when some relative migrated to America. They may have been in Keith, or Inverurie, or anywhere. Furthermore, Keith, as a

surname, originated in the Lothians. In the 1841 census, there were as many Keiths living in Angus or Caithness as there were in Aberdeenshire or Banffshire.

Another suggestion – usually offered in a spirit of usefulness – is to “test the senior Keith, the Earl of Kintore”. That would be fine if the Earl were willing to be tested – I haven’t asked, so I don’t know – but it would be pointless anyway, as his paternal ancestry is not actually Keith. Like many landed and titled families, if the line went to an heiress and she married, the husband might often take her surname to ensure that all the children were called Keith. Alternatively, someone else might inherit the lands and title but take the surname Keith. That’s exactly what happened when the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl died in 1761 and his successor was Lord Falconer of Halkerton, who changed his surname to Keith-Falconer, and then in 1905 when Ethel Sydney Keith-Falconer, 11<sup>th</sup> Countess, married John Baird, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Stonehaven. Any relationship to Keith Y-DNA has long since disappeared from the Earl of Kintore’s line.

So, what’s the answer? Well, we could start with a single place – let’s choose Keith District itself – and try to find out if any male Keith living there now is descended from a male Keith living there in, say, 1800. That would tell us what at least one Y-DNA line of “Keiths from Keith” looked like about the time that mass migrations were happening. But ... how to do it?

The genealogist’s first response is to “hit the records”. In this case, *ScotlandsPeople* lists three families in Keith with the surname Keith who had sons between 1553 and 1800, but in fact the records don’t start until 1738, and anyway these are Church of Scotland records, whereas it’s likely that quite a few in that area were Episcopal. And which line should we chase? It could spin out to hundreds of people before finding one genuine living male descendant.

Likewise, the 1851 census for Keith records only one Keith aged over 50 (the postmaster, as it happens), and he was born in Rothiemay, which is only eight miles east. He had at least two sons and a grandson I could chase. But how much time and effort is it worth expending on that, only to find that each son had two sons and each of them had two sons and so on, and that, nine or ten generations later, not one out of potentially 1,000 descendants now lives in Keith?

Is it better to do it the other way round? The 1921 census for Keith has only one Keith – female, as it happens – and she is actually from Banff. When I look for the birth details of this Jane Keith born in Banff around 1880 (she’s nearly 42 in 1921), I find only one, born in 1873 (did she lie about her age in 1921?) – but she was illegitimate, with a father called Smith. Back to the drawing board!

Nor is it fruitful to look at online family trees. Often, these are shot through with wild surmise, best guesses and outright myth, and lack any meaningful sources. Uncritical, cut-and-paste exercises from other trees are not to be trusted.

### **So, what’s the answer? Can you help?**

This is a general call for volunteers: is there anyone out there called Keith who knows where their Keith ancestors lived (preferably in North-East Scotland) around 1800, and is willing to take a Y-DNA test? When I say “knows”, I mean *knows* with reasonable genealogical proof – not hearsay that “my Granny always said we came from Huntly”, for instance. I will be happy to explore the line properly to tie it down.



As for confidentiality, it is possible to do this in such a way that no personal details are made public. The Y-DNA test – which will be free, by the way – can be taken with my email address and no individual information other than something like “Descendant of Methuselah Keith, born 1777 in Marnoch” or whatever is appropriate. You could solve some major logjams for Keiths overseas. They will be eternally grateful!

*gen@brucedurie.co.uk*

Bruce Durie No. 23951

*Dr Bruce Durie is a Consultant Genealogist and Heraldist.*

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## **Black Day in Longside: The Murder of Margaret Keith**

Family history is a subject that is near and dear to all of us. The stories we uncover can be simple, reflecting lives where there is little drama and where challenges that face the family are easily overcome. They can also be complex, reflecting tragedy and hardship on a scale that we find inconceivable today.

Margaret Keith’s story fits that bill. Born a twin, she was raised in the turbulent era that followed the collapse of the Jacobite cause at Culloden. Times had been hard, but the Highland Clearances made life even harder. At age 23, she married Charles Will, an older man whom she knew from church, and the couple had three children between 1792 and 1795. They lived on a small croft named Backhill of Auchtydonald. Auchtydonald lies west of the village of Longside, east of Old Deer, and north of the River Ugie.

When Charles died in 1795, Margaret remained in the croft and took on the work formerly done by Charles, in addition to raising their three young children. It was a hard life.

A few years into her widowhood, Margaret began to be courted by a neighbour. When in 1800 she became pregnant, the situation spiralled out of control and led to her brutal murder on 29<sup>th</sup> June of that year. From *The Black Kalendar of Aberdeen*, by James Bruce:

Margaret Keith, a widow, living there with her children, had been courted by a man called James Carle, a weaver, to whom, at the time, she was supposed to be with child. Her body was found in the river Ugie. She had been decoyed out of her house on that Sunday morning, and had walked with Carle to the banks of the river, when he seized her, and threw her into the water. The poor creature contrived to scramble to the other bank, when her inhuman murderer seeing her likely to escape, ran up the side of the water, and having crossed it by a bridge, came again on his victim, as she was struggling in the water, gave her several blows on the head till she sunk and perished.

The discovery of Margaret’s battered body in the Ugie, and the realisation that murder had been committed, shocked the community. Neighbours struggled to make temporary arrangements for the care of her children, and to hold a wake. Two justices from the surrounding region were summoned to conduct a preliminary investigation which quickly focused on James Carle, based on the testimony of neighbours in Auchtydonald. As a result, he fled to Aberdeen. A reward was offered for his capture, which eventually led to his arrest by George Fyfe, Messenger-at-Arms from the Aberdeen Tolbooth.

Newspapers such as the *Aberdeen Press & Journal* and the *Caledonian Mercury* printed stories about the murder, the reward, Carle’s arrest, and the subsequent trial.

An anonymous writer from Longside submitted a 123-line epic poem to *the Press & Journal* which was published on 28<sup>th</sup> July, entitled “On the melancholy death of Margaret Keith, a widow in Auchtydonald in the parish of Longside, who was barbarously murdered on Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> June, 1800”. The probable author of the poem (illustrated here) was the Reverend John Skinner of Longside, who was already closely involved with the case. The

Rev. Skinner's sermon on the fateful Sunday was used by Carle as an alibi, and Heaven's indignation at this profane act is an ongoing theme throughout the poem.

Carle's incarceration at the Tolbooth was reported in news accounts and court records. The trial lasted only one day, but there was no shortage of drama. Margaret's eight-year-old daughter testified that the last time she saw her mother alive was when she left the croft with Carle. There was also an eye-witness to the murder, and evidence of an attempt to tamper with the witness's testimony.

Victims of violent crime are often forgotten. Margaret's three children, described by the Rev. Skinner as "two little girls and a smiling boy", later found themselves cast adrift.

The boy was taken in by a relative in Peterhead, and made a life for himself, but the girls fared less well. Only one married, and both died as paupers in the Old Deer poorhouse.

The Braehead Bridge, which was the scene of the crime, became renowned for paranormal activity in the years following the murder – the most famous incident being the violent attacks of the Boodie Brae Poltergeist in 1822.

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Robert is the 3g-grandson of Margaret's son. As noted in this Journal's Library Report, he has written a novel, *Black Day in Longside*, telling the story of Margaret's brief life and her violent end.

The novel diverts briefly into the history of the Keith family in Aberdeenshire. It chronicles their rise to power, including their feud with Clan Gunn, precipitated by the murder circa 1478 of Crowner (coroner) Gunn by some Keiths. The Keith family continued to prosper, and their wealth became such that the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl Marischal, William Keith, boasted that he could "travel from the Tweed to the Pentland Firth, eating every meal and sleeping every night on his own lands". The family's fall from grace was equally dramatic due to their involvement in the Jacobite Rising of 1715. In one fell swoop, they went from owning almost everything in Aberdeenshire to owning nothing.

Unusually for a family history, the book incorporates elements from other genres such as true-crime mysteries and graphic novels. It makes extensive use of bold, black-and-white illustrations by the author, who uses a variety of image-generation and processing tools, including Midjourney and Photoshop.

*Black Day in Longside* is a great read for those who like their dram of history served with a drop of drama. The book is available to read in our Research Centre and at the public libraries in Mintlaw and Peterhead, and can be purchased directly from the author at the above e-mail address. The cost is £35 for one copy mailed to Scotland (including packaging and postage).



## Black Day in Longside

The Murder of Margaret Keith

## Imlah: Photographs that Don't Tell the Whole Story



*In our recent items about dating old photographs, we noted how valuable the photographer's signature and insignia can be in dating and placing old family snaps. However, they can't supplant your own family-tree information, since they may be copies that a family member overseas, or just in another town, has had made from photographs taken earlier. Graham Robertson shares some excellent examples with us.*

This is a photograph of Peter Imlah (1811–82), farmer at Whitebog of Culsh, New Deer, and later at Millbrae of Ironside in the same parish, and his wife Mary Wilson (1815–1900). It came from a descendant in the USA, and the photographer is Harlow of Montpelier, Vermont. There is another photograph of the couple taken in Aberdeenshire with one of their sons, which helps to confirm we have identified the couple correctly. However, Peter and Mary never left Scotland. A son

who went to work in the granite industry in Barre, Vermont, must have had a copy made there of an older photograph, taken in Scotland.

These photographs are of James Imlah (1791–1878), innkeeper in Cuminestown, and his



wife Catherine George (1815?–1891). These “original” prints came from a descendant in Australia. However, the information on the back of each photograph says they were taken by Charles Reid, Wishaw – not Cuminestown. This raised some questions, but Charles Reid began his career as a photographer in Turriff, before moving to Wishaw about 1876. The family was obviously able to have copies made in Wishaw from plates taken previously in Turriff.

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## Jean Beattie's Sampler, Glenbuchat 1843

The basic sampler shown on this Journal's front cover was stitched, in 1843, by my great-grandmother Jean/Jane Beattie (1829–1910), who was the last of my ancestors to live in the wee parish of Glenbuchat, Aberdeenshire. Forgive me if I affectionately refer to her as “Soor Ploom”, mainly to differentiate her from the 15 or so other Jean/Jane Beatties on my tree. A family photograph from around 1885 shows her seated on the left-hand side, with her husband, James Garden, and family. My paternal grandfather, Lewis G Garden (born 1872), stands on the far right side.



Since inheriting the sampler many years ago and examining the initials, I've collaborated extensively with a second cousin in Australia who had visited Glenbuchat in 1986, and with a fourth cousin in the USA. I also found information in the ANESFHS draft MIs for Glenbuchat Kirkyard and, most of all, from a marvellous Yahoo group of Glenbuchateers, whose findings are now on [www.glenbuchatheritage.com](http://www.glenbuchatheritage.com). This website includes details about gravestones, photographed and recorded in 2014–15. MIs are important, as the OPR records are scant for Glenbuchat. For example, deaths are only covered 1738–52. The Kirk Session Minutes online (free to view) at *ScotlandsPeople* currently cover 1777–1820; thus I am ploughing through the Accounts for the period 1815–55.

There are always more records to be found, and distant relatives to network with, to solve the puzzle of some of the initials. My sampler measures 12 × 16 inches, i.e. about A3 size, but is unfinished as it has neither motifs nor uplifting text in the bottom half; however, hearts and lines are used between the initials. This is because Jean probably had to leave school at the age of 14 to start work. After all, samplers were often a way of practising stitching for future employment. It is good to compare this sampler with Margaret Brown's finely-stitched one (see p. 39 in this Journal), made five years earlier just two miles up the track in the same parish.

Mine is on coarse linen, and Soor Ploom has made mistakes such as breaking borders (e.g. after "1843"), and the size of individual initials can be inconsistent. It is mainly worked in easy stitches such as cross-stitch and eyelet holes. But it is a good example of traditional Scottish natural red and green (handy colours to reproduce in Christmas cards nowadays), with a repeating border of interwoven strawberries or flowers (possibly roses or tulips).

Some initials are in black, a typical device in Scottish samplers to indicate that that person was deceased when the sampler was made. Jean used additional colours besides red and green, although these extras are quite muted. The stronger, often gaudy colours (especially mauve and its variants) came into use after the invention of synthetic aniline dyes in the mid-1850s. This sampler is comparatively unusual in mentioning the name of Soor Ploom's mentor Mary M Bean in the third band; research suggests it is likely she was a visitor rather than a schoolteacher.

After the two bands of alphabet and numbers (see cover image), Jean gives the initials of her main family members. Again, this is a good indicator of the Scottish origins of a sampler, although the practice is also found in Flanders.

I was unsure what Soor Ploom's plan was, nor whether it was common, but she seems not to have retained the maiden surname initial of her relatives. But there is a pattern to her grouping of initials: two initials seem to denote a single person, three signify a living married couple with husband's surname, and four is for a married couple where at least one spouse is dead by 1843.

All on my direct Beattie line were born or lived or died in the fermtoun of Netherton, Glenbuchat, where they had been since at least 1751, when there is a Beattie birth record. Beatties were already there in the 1696 Poll Tax booklet (ANESFHS publication AA342).

The first initials are "JB EF", squeezed into the line of numbers, probably as a filler; these are her father's side of the family. Where not shown in the sampler, the maiden surnames of married women are given below in brackets.

JB John Beattie, her paternal grandfather, who died in 1836.

EF Elspet Findlay, her paternal grandmother from Mortlach, Banffshire, who possibly died in 1846.

The first band of initials contains Soor Ploom's immediate family:

LBMB Lewis Beattie and Mary Beattie (Davidson), her parents. I already knew that Lewis Beattie had died before the 1841 census. The name features strongly in later collateral lines, but few know when, why or where it came from. Using other resources, such as last testaments and Kirk Session records, I have narrowed down his death to between June 1832 and September 1839.

JB BJB This is Jean Beattie herself, her younger brother John, and elder half-brother James.

The second band is Soor Ploom's mother's side of the family:

ADMD Alexander Davidson and Mary Davidson (Glennie), Jean's mother's parents: he died before 1841; she died between 1841 and 1843.

JHD James and Hellen Davidson: Soor Ploom's uncle James Davidson, who farmed at Newseat in the same parish, married Hellen Cordiner in 1841.

PD may be Jean's uncle Peter Davidson, born 1805.

EG may be her great-aunt Elspet Glennie (1773–1863) of Newseat.

AGMG probably other deceased Glennie family members.

The third and fourth bands of initials are more Beatties from Soor Ploom's father's family. It begins with her paternal grandparents (repeated from the end of the line of numbers). By now, Jean has worked out how to use black thread for deceased relatives. Then come their children (in order of birth), who are her aunts and uncles, along with their spouses:

- JBEB John and Elspet Beattie (Findlay), her paternal grandparents again (see above).
- AJR Jean Beattie married Alexander Reid in 1823.
- JEB James Beattie married another Elspeth Findlay and had seven children; a great-granddaughter was the last Beattie to be born in Netherton (1903).
- WBMB William Beattie (born 1788) is shown in black. He left an unknown widow whose first name began with M.
- JB John Beattie died in 1820, an unmarried millwright.
- RBEB Robert Beattie (born 1795, died before 1841). He may have married an Elspet Murray at Ordquhill, Banffshire, in 1823.
- JHM Hellen Beattie in 1822 married James Michie, a grocer in Sluggie in the glen. One of their six children, John, was the last known Beattie to die in Netherton (1906).
- CEB Charles Beattie married Elizabeth Brodie in 1838. He was the eighth child, but the seventh was Soor Ploom's father – already stitched, so not included here.

The remaining initials may refer to Jean's maternal relatives:

- JJN This may be a Niven, possibly her aunt Jean Davidson, if she married. Soor Ploom had a second cousin, also called Jean Beattie, who married a John Niven, but not until 1849, i.e. after the sampler was completed.
- JD Possibly her aunt Jean Davidson, born in 1803 and still alive in 1843.

I have family lore that “the Beatties and Michies intermarried”. In such a small parish at that time, there were many intermarriages. Cousins marrying cousins, on top of the traditional Scottish naming pattern, can make it puzzling to disentangle the identities. Thus I keep my mind open to what other surnames each initial may signify. For example:

D for Davidson, but may also be for Dow.

G for Glennie, but possibly Grassick, from the neighbouring parish of Strathdon.

B for Beattie, but could also include Booth or Bain.

I have an ample sufficiency of William Beatties and Jean/Jane Beatties, but fortunately I enjoy a challenge, and I thank my great-grandmother, Soor Ploom, for recording our relatives on her 1843 sampler. And if you are asking, why “Soor Ploom”?

A second cousin told me that Soor Ploom was a God-fearing woman who insisted that one of her children would accompany her every evening to her husband's shoemaker's premises, a hut with a hole in the floor for vats for tanning leather. She would cover the floor and haul out an organ, which she played while the chosen child sang hymns and they recited Bible readings. These premises, in King Street, Aberdeen, are now a bookie's.

I have also learned that, instead of commemorative mugs, she gave her children mustard pots at the coronation of the king (Edward VII in 1901, or George V in 1910?). Her spouse, James Garden, wanted to “wag his pow”, but unfortunately he had a speech impediment and was told “Naw, naw, Jamie, no' wi' bools in yer mou”. He didn't live to see a grandson become a minister.

### Resource list

Naomi E. A. Tarrant, *Remember Now Thy Creator: Scottish Girls' Samplers 1700–1872* (2014). Available as an open access e-book, free to download from the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland: <https://www.socantscot.org/publications/new-open-access-e-book-scottish-girls-samplers/>.

Helen Wyld, *Embroidered Stories: Scottish Samplers* (National Museums of Scotland, 2018), c. £10. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/exhibitions-events/past-exhibitions/embroidered-stories/> still has details and videos from their 2018–19 exhibition of Scottish samplers, mainly drawn from the collection of Leslie Durst.

Rebecca Quinton, *Patterns of Childhood: Samplers from Glasgow Museums Collections* (2005). Journal 103 (May 2007) has report of a talk by Rebecca to our Glasgow Group.

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## The Sampler of Mary Farquharson Laing, 1897

During our Glasgow Group’s February meeting, when Buzzy Garden presented a talk on samplers, Sheena Reid shared an unusual verse from a sampler stitched by her husband’s maternal grandmother, Mary Farquharson Laing, as a 16-year-old in 1897:

Somewhere Between  
 Sunset And Sunset  
 Two Golden Hours  
 Each Set With Sixty  
 Diamond Minutes  
 No Reward Is Offered  
 For They are  
 Lost For Ever



*Detail from Mary Laing’s sampler, showing a wide range of colours and letter styles*

The verse was composed by American educationist Horace Mann (1796–1859), and its full version reads a bit like a “lost and found” advert: “Lost, yesterday, ...” (*Common School Journal*, November 1844). It’s interesting and unusual to find lines like these included in a sampler from this period, as it is much more common to see Biblical quotations or simple devotional phrases like “God is Love”. This is hardly surprising, given the prominent role that reading and repeating sections from the Bible played in the curriculum in a rural Aberdeenshire parish school in the late 1800s.

Mary Laing was born in 1881 at Boghead in Tarland, and passed the sampler on to her daughter Margaret Laing Dickson (b. 1909 Lumphanan, d. 1997 Fraserburgh). Margaret Dickson married William Alexander Reid in 1941 in Aberdeen, and the sampler will pass in due course to their granddaughter.

Mary Laing’s maternal grandparents were John Farquharson and Isabella Lyon of Logie Coldstone. Farquharson is of course a very common name in Aberdeenshire, but the combination of names was especially intriguing, as Buzzy’s talk also featured a sampler produced by Jessie Joan Farquharson in 1879 in Logie Coldstone, a parish that borders on Tarland. What are the chances these Farquharsons might be connected? Lo and behold, these talented girls shared ancestors in the form of Peter Farquharson and his wife Rachel Copland. The couple married in 1776 at Galton, a farm



in Logie Coldstone, close by Logie Mar kirkyard. Mary Laing descends from Peter and Rachel's daughter Anne, who married Charles Farquharson, thus retaining her maiden name. Jessie Joan was born at Galton and descends from Anne's younger brother John, who eventually took over the lease of Galton from his father.

### Genealogical appendix

Mary Farquharson Laing (b. 1881 Tarland, d. 1946 Woodside, Fyvie) married Peter Dickson (1876–1954) in Coull in 1904. Mary's father was Alexander Wyness Laing (b. 1854), and his parents were David Laing (b.c. 1833 Cupar, Fife, d. 1885 Cairnie, Skene) and Agnes McKenzie Wyness (b.c. 1837, d. 1874 Cairnie, Skene).

Her mother was Margaret Farquharson (b. 1850 Drumoak), and her maternal grandparents were John Farquharson from Logie Coldstone (b.c. 1816) and his wife Isabella Lyon (b. 1819 Drumoak, d. 1892 Peterculter). They married at Drumoak in April 1843.

I thank the Journal Team for collaboration in researching the people in this article.

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Sheena Reid No. 16949

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### The Sampler of Margaret Brown (1821–1900), Beltimb, Glenbuchat

My great-grandmother, Margaret Brown, made this sampler in 1838 when she was 17, probably at Beltimb in Glenbuchat. It came to us in the early 1970s, having been in the Glen until 1968 and at Kintore with my parents afterwards.

The sampler is about 28 × 19 inches (71 × 48 cm) measured across the frame, and is fashioned in wool (possibly) on an open-weave canvas. The motifs appear to be typical of the period: animals, birds, flowers and a two-storey-and-attic house – much grander than the wee cruck-framed thackit hoosie where I presume it was made. There is also a Bible quotation, an alphabet and 20 pairs of initials, as well as her name and age, and the year.

I have been able to find possible matches for some of the initials, but have been stumped by others. The colours seem to be random except for the use of the same pale blue for her parents, and black for individuals who are probably deceased. Of the 12 larger initials, some clearly refer to close family or neighbours.

JS × CF × MS × GM × MM × SM × JD × MD ♥

AB ♥ JG × JH × ID ×

AJ × WJ × HJ × WM

EM × MM × AM × JM ×

He hath Shewed thee O man what is good and what doth the Lord require  
of the but to do Justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy  
God

1838

MARGARET × BROWN × AG<sup>d</sup> 17

AB♥JG are her parents Alexander Brown (1779–1869) and Jean Gauld (1798?–1859). They were married in 1820, and Margaret was their only child, although Alexander had had a son, George Brown (1812–77), out of wedlock with Isobel Michie. ID is in black and is probably Margaret's late grandmother Isobel Daun. I have no idea who JH was.



*Detail shows the evenweave fabric and stitch styles used*





Alexander Brown's sister Isobel (1781–1867) married Robert Johnston (1782–1813) and had three children, William (**WJ**, 1807–85), Hugh (**HJ**, 1809–75) and Ann (**AJ**, 1812?–1880). William and Margaret married in 1847 and had eight children together. Hugh married Isabella McDonald and had seven children, of whom four married (three had family), one died young and one disappeared! Ann married Andrew Ramsay in 1848 in Lumphanan but had no children.

The remaining large initials end in **M**. This could be Morice/Morison from Isobel Daun's marriage, or Michie from the neighbouring clachan at Netherton. I have no idea about the first three sets of smaller initials in the top row: **JS**, **CF**, **MS**. The next three have second initial **M**, which may again be Morison or Michie. The last two end in **D**, which could be Daun or may refer to James Dawson (1793–1856), Margaret Brown's half-uncle, along with one of his daughters Margaret (b. 1835) or Maria (1837–70).

### **What happened to Margaret Brown and her family?**

Margaret Brown was born on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1821 at Beltimb, just seven months after her parents married on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1820. It was possibly a shotgun wedding, as Alexander had form in that respect, having already fathered an illegitimate son. In the 1841 census, Margaret is at home at Beltimb, Glenbuchat with her parents, her cousin (and future husband) William Johnston, Alexander Brown's cousin William Ogg, and two employees (aged 12 and 13!). All the family members were born in Glenbuchat with the exception of Jean Gauld (see below).

Margaret married William Johnston on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1847, and by 1851 they were listed as a separate household at Beltimb, with three small children, the eldest having been on the way at the time of their marriage. It may have been another shotgun wedding! They had a family of eight in all, and, when William died on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1885, Margaret carried on as farmer until her death on 13<sup>th</sup> December 1900.

### **Margaret's children**

Alexander (Sandy, born on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1848) worked on the farm and never married. He was deaf, possibly from birth but certainly by 1911. He was farmer of Beltimb in 1911, but at some point he retired when his nephew John Johnston, Hellen's son, took over as farmer. He lived with John and Janet Johnston at Beltimb after they were married, and died on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1931.

Jean (b. 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1850) worked on the farm and never married. She died on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1931. Like Sandy, she lived with John and Janet.

Robert (b. 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1853) worked on the farm and never married. He took an active part in Glen affairs, presumably because Sandy was deaf. He died on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1917, which may be when Margaret's grandson, John Johnston, came back to work at Beltimb.

Margaret (Maggie, b. 9<sup>th</sup> April 1855) worked on the farm and never married. She died on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1934, and also lived with John and Janet.

Mary Ann (b. 31<sup>st</sup> May 1858) was the mother of Alexander Johnston Fraser at age 30. In the 1801 census, she is listed as "feeble-minded". She died on 5<sup>th</sup> October 1909.

Hellen (b. 9<sup>th</sup> June 1862) was the mother of William Alexander Johnston at age 19, George Robert Johnston at 35 and John Johnston at 37. She married widower William McGee in 1910 at Milngavie near Glasgow, and died on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1920. She worked as a domestic servant in various places.

Ann (b. 27th May 1864) worked in domestic service. She was a cook in Hastings in 1891, London in 1901 and Ealing in 1911. She died on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1934 in London.

William (b. 15<sup>th</sup> January 1867) married and had family before moving to Dundee.

### Who was Jean Gauld and her people?

The 1841 census only shows the county or country of birth. Jean (Gauld) Brown's birth is given as Cromar in the 1851 census, and she was married from Craigenower in Strathdon parish. To complicate the issue, Craigenower is in Glenkindie (now in Towie parish), which at that time was a detached part of Strathdon parish. Cromar may have been a parish then, but is now an area which includes the parishes of Tarland and Logie Coldstone.

A further complication is that both Tarland and Logie Coldstone had detached areas within what is now Strathdon and Towie parishes. The present parish boundaries were made in 1891 when various anomalies were removed. These anomalies apparently arose because of landowners having detached estates within parish areas, or even as whole parishes, when their main landholding was in another parish or even county.

The result of all this is that no fewer than ten parishes or parts thereof are within a radius of seven miles of Glenbuchat Castle (the Glen is about seven miles long). Increasing the radius brings in the Banffshire parishes on the other side of the Ladder Hills. As a result, Glenbuchat people frequently have spouses from other parishes which seem to us today to be remote from the Glen, because of the road distance, but are quite close by the hill paths. For example, Craigenower, where Jean Gauld was married from, is only three miles as the crow flies from Glenbuchat church, but over six miles direct from its then parish church in Strathdon. The road distance is about ten miles. All of this, alas, brings me no closer to Jean's birthplace.



*A "wee cruck-framed thackit hoosie" of the type Margaret Brown may have lived in when she stitched her sampler (photograph courtesy of Alan Johnston)*

Most of the family-history information has been gleaned from the usual sources. More recently, I have been finding DNA matches to the Dawson and Morison families as well as one to the Hugh Johnston family. DNA has also got me closer to finding my paternal grandfather, and I have a lot of matches to both sides of his family.

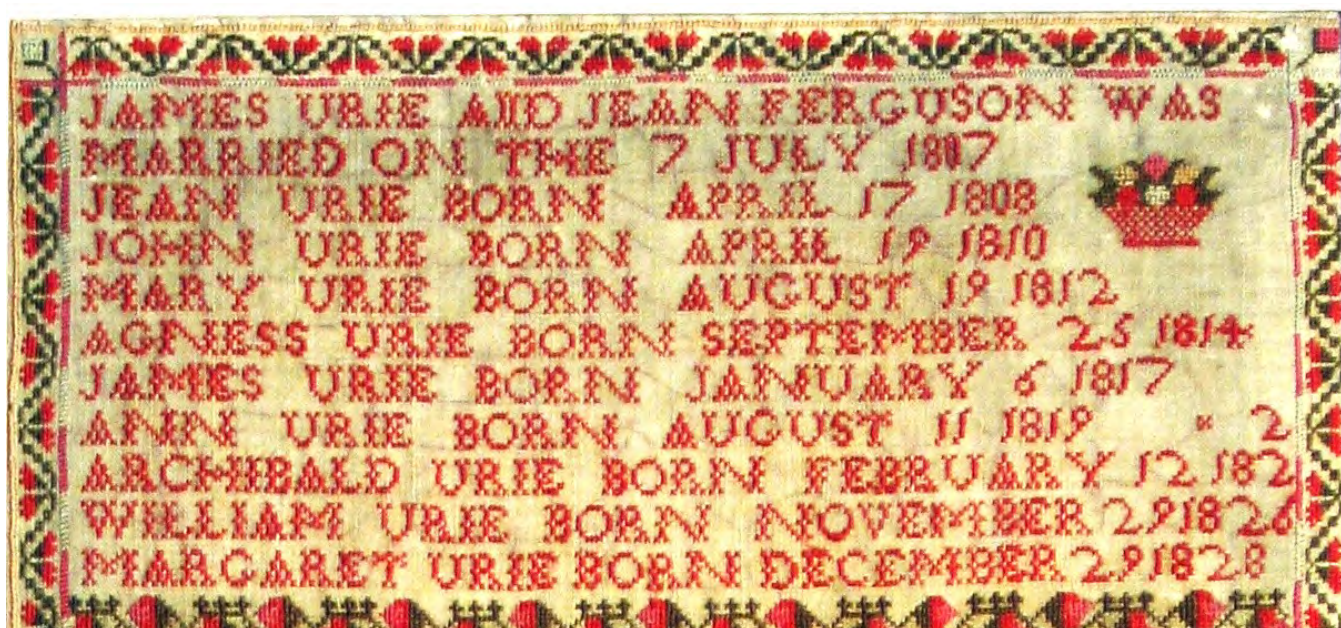
The sampler is my reason for joining the Society. A family friend who was a member admired the sampler and later sent me a photocopy of the Brown/Johnston monumental inscription (MI) in the Glen kirkyard. This rekindled a dormant interest in family history. I had not been aware of the MI, even though it was less than a mile from Milton Farm, where I was born and brought up. [*Editors' note: Alan is now a valued Centre volunteer and contributor to the Society's Facebook page.*]

There are more details of this sampler on the Glenbuchat Heritage website, which also has details and photographs of the Glenbuchat MIs.

## A Urie Sampler Reunited with its Family

About 20 years ago, I was just getting used to the Internet. I was heavily into genealogy, and I started a couple of Urie forums with RootsWeb. One day a message appeared, and it said there was a Urie family-tree sewing sampler for sale on an auction website. Well, that set me going. After a lot of head-scratching and searching, I found a site named eBay which was indeed selling a Urie family sampler and even had a photograph of it.

It was fortunate that I was sitting down. There on the screen, at the top of the sampler, I could see my 3g-grandparents' names and the date of their marriage: "James Urie and Jean Ferguson was married on the 7 July 1807". There followed a list of all their nine children with dates of birth, as you can see in this photograph.



Not all these children appear in the OPR birth/baptismal records, although I had found them in censuses. Below the names were two panels. One had a text from the King James version of the Bible: "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. Pro[verbs] III 7". The other small panel mentioned that "Mary Urie sewed this with M<sup>rs</sup> Hendry in Rutherglen, 14 August 1832".

Who was Mrs Hendry, you ask? That was a question I asked for many years – and by chance I found a Mrs Hendry mentioned as running Rutherglen Post Office in Lanarkshire, near Glasgow, which is in exactly the area where this Urie family stayed.

The seller of the sampler was in the USA and was a collector now selling her items, as her children did not want them. She had no family link with the sampler. The auction finished at 3am – and yes, I stayed up half the night, continually refreshing the page to ensure I was the highest bidder. I was determined not to be outbid – although it would have taken someone with a lot of money to do so.

Eventually, the sampler arrived in the post. It was well wrapped – which was good, as it was still in its frame with the glass front in place. The postman rang our doorbell, and when my wife answered, he asked for about £200 for tax etc. before handing the parcel over. She phoned me at work, and I said "Just pay the man". The Customs declaration had not said the item was an antique, but a quick call to Customs with the website details resulted in them returning most of my money.



The sampler is a bit faded, although the Turkey red thread is still bright. I thought, since it had survived for 200 years, that I would like it to survive a bit longer. As it looked a bit grubby and fragile, I took it to Hopetoun House to be conserved. The treated sampler now hangs in my office at home, where I see it every day.

*This article was first published in issue 129 of the Journal of Glasgow & West of Scotland FHS in March 2024 and has been reproduced with their permission.*

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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## Journal Submissions

Submissions to the Journal are always welcome. Please send text and images **separately** (not embedding images in a document), e-mailed to [journal@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:journal@anesfhs.org.uk) or [queries@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:queries@anesfhs.org.uk)

Prospective articles and other items should have genealogical **and** preferably North-East Scotland content. Articles, extracts or images may also be published on the Society's website or may be re-used in subsequent ANESFHS Journal editions. All submissions will be acknowledged by e-mail.

The next Journal will be published in **August 2024**. The last date for submissions is **16<sup>th</sup> July 2024**.

**Format** – Please type your article on a computer and send it as an e-mail attachment. Sorry, we no longer accept handwritten submissions. Source/reference lists are fine, but we prefer **no** footnotes/endnotes.

**Illustrations** – For best reprographic results in the Journal, please send images at the **highest** possible resolution. We have limited space, and the A5 size format means that the quality may be somewhat less than you expect. If you wish to send any originals, then please contact the Editor (**not** the Centre at King Street). If you require originals to be returned, then please state this clearly and include return postage.

**Permissions and credits** – We can only publish copyright material if due permission has been obtained and is included. For copyright material, and for all photographs and other images, please always state the source (publication, website, photographer and so on).

**Length** – Keep it reasonably short, please. We have limited space, so long articles may be edited. If you have a really long tale to tell, then why not write it as two (or more) parts?

**Computer details** – Please use a format that can be read by a PC running Microsoft Word. Any font or size of text is acceptable. If in doubt, send plain text. If sending **illustrations**, any standard format is acceptable – as long as these are in files **separate** from the text.

**Advertisements** – Electronic copy is preferred. Note that the original size of the Journal is A4 before photo-reduction to A5, and so a quarter-page advert should be prepared as 175mm (w) x 60mm (h).

The rates for advertisements, per Journal issue, are:

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- £45.00 b/w or £60.00 colour for one third of a page (175 x 90mm)
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Please send all correspondence to The Family-History Research Centre (address on back cover). To help us be more efficient, please detail your requirements on separate sheets (with your name and membership number) according to which service you wish to call upon or which office-bearer you wish to write to – or use the appropriate e-mail address (see opposite page) to minimise delays.

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**Centre opening hours**

Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm

Saturday morning by appointment: please telephone

*Closed on local and public holidays*

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Closed on local holidays: 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 6<sup>th</sup> May, 8<sup>th</sup> July and 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024

Closing at 4pm on Fri. 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024; reopening at 10am on Mon. 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025

**See website for further details**

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Registered charity no. SC012478 SCIO

ISSN 0143-4500

VAT registration no. 875 3262 06

*Printed by McKenzie Quality Print Ltd, Unit 12, Wellheads Trading Estate, Wellheads Crescent,  
Dyce, Aberdeen AB21 7GA*