



# The Lothians Family History Society

Winter 2023 (Dec-Feb)

## Quarterly Newsletter

### Chairman's Welcome:

Welcome to our existing members and our new members going into Winter 2023. It is great to see so many at the *Lasswade Centre* each Wed and at the *Loanhead Library* each 3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs of the month. Check out our updated website.

Your amazing committee have been working very hard as always and have superb speakers planned. *It is important as always that we continue to support our speaker evenings with good attendance.*

### Contact Us:

EMAIL: [lothiansfhs@hotmail.com](mailto:lothiansfhs@hotmail.com)

### Your Committee:

<b>Chairman:</b>	Lorna Kinnaird
<b>Deputy Chairman:</b>	Gordon Stevens
<b>Secretary:</b>	Christine Hannan
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Anne Wood
<b>Membership Secretary:</b>	Sheila Petrie
<b>Enquiry Coordinator:</b>	George McLeod
<b>Speaker Coordinator:</b>	George Nairn
<b>Committee:</b>	May Wilkins Roy Murray

### Speaker Evenings:

Dates to be confirmed. Watch this space!

### Loanhead Library:

DEC – 21<sup>st</sup> Dec from 10.30am-2.30pm  
Other dates to be confirmed

### Members Help:

If you have a problem in your research that you think other members might be able to help you with – let us know and we can pop it into the Newsletter. Send to [lothiansfhs@hotmail.com](mailto:lothiansfhs@hotmail.com).

### Dalkeith Palace Exhibition: Sat 4<sup>th</sup> – Wed 8<sup>th</sup> Nov



**THE EXHIBITION** The Royal Scots Museum held a temporary exhibition at Dalkeith Palace during **Remembrance Week 4 – 8 November**. It was great to have been a part of this at Dalkeith Palace and thanks should go to *Lorna Kinnaird (Chairman)*, *Gordon Stevens (Deputy)*, *Christine Hannan (Secretary)*, *Sheila Petrie (Membership Secretary)*, *May Wilkins* and *George Nairn (Committee)* for their assistance during the event. There were at least 800 people who attended, and six local schools – and the Lothians FHS had plenty of enquiries. It is likely that our membership will grow because of this event. Of course, it helped that our table had Murray Mints and Celebrations which brought a lot of people towards our table 😊 – including school children who enjoyed having a chocolate and took the free NRS pencils on

offer. It was great to help those enquiring about family history and we worked well with the *Royal Scots Museum*, the *National Records of Scotland* and *ScotlandsPeople Centre* in uncovering many service records and finding servicemen from other regiments. The exhibition was amazing and we felt humbled to be a part of it. The event was also attended by *Debbi McCall, Midlothian Council Provost*. The level of information provided by the regiment going back to the Boer War was outstanding. Lots of planning went into it, from front of house staff to Royal Scots Guides, to the Café to the Volunteering Groups and it was a real 'community event' which pulled in people from all over Scotland and England. It was humbling and emotional to listen to stories from the 'Old Royals'. The event will be run again in 2024 and 2025 (may be in different locations), but wherever it is decided to run the event next, the LFHS will be involved again. This event was successful because the groups involved all came together for one main aim – *to make sure the reason behind the poppy is never forgotten*.



### Midlothian Open Doors: 9<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023

The *Lothians Family History Society* had the opportunity again to offer their expertise and services to the people of Midlothian by setting up a stall within the premises of the Lodge 580, Loanhead on the 9<sup>th</sup> September.

### ScotlandsPeople Centre

Seat Bookings at the SPC now cost £20.

## Edinburgh Local Heritage Network (ELHN):

### Update:

Meetings will be quarterly either over Teams or in person. At the moment, ELHN is facilitated by Council staff but it is hoped that eventually the Network members will take over responsibility for the Network's overall direction. *Thanks to Sheila Petrie and Roy Murray (Committee Members)*.

### Our Member Chats:

**Name:** *Sheila Petrie*

**Role:** *Membership Secretary*

### My Family History Journey

It was my father who was instrumental in encouraging me to find out about The Petrie's. Then, my mother thought it would be interesting to follow her family, The Craik's. I have been 'investigating' for so long now, I can't remember when I started. It may be as much as 45+ years!

The first time I went to Register House where the National Records of Scotland are stored, there were no computers. I did have the important basic information (dates) about my parents' births, marriages, and their parents' vital statistics. I had to look at indices and virtually guess which ledger I wanted to look at. I still remember the thrill of finding my mother's great grandfather's death. There were quite a few William MacDonalds who died in late 1890's in Edinburgh! I went through a good many before finding the correct one. The Servitors who brought the ledgers were amazing. Computers certainly make research very much easier but maybe not as challenging. The thrill of finding an ancestor, no matter how distant, is still there!

Most of the early research was done by going to Register House. I still love going there for a whole day's research. The problem now is the time. I am retired and there seems to be less available time now as I am not working! That is one of the benefits of the *Lothians Family History Society*. It means at least I can check on some information I come across. Other members are very helpful and encouraging, often giving advice about another avenue to follow.

I think I first joined the Society about 2010. I first got involved in transcribing Death Records from Midlothian *Old Parish Records*. I would try and read old Scots handwriting and George McLeod would write down what I said. He trusted my translation, mostly! I really enjoyed these sessions. Our efforts are now on CD's. A great achievement. My Tuesdays are really a bit boring now!

Back to Family History. Members are supportive and are always interested in what has been found. Mind you, no matter how encouraging members are, sometimes the records are not there. Some members of my family, on both the Petrie (Dad) and Craik (Mum) side, emigrated to Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA, Patagonia, Argentina and South Africa. I still am in touch with a second cousin of Mum's in Australia.

There were two pieces of information I was pleased to find out before my parents died. The family had a house in the East Lothian village of Oldhamstocks. The family story was that John Oliver, a builder in Edinburgh and my grandmother's father, bought the manse and the free church in this village and converted them into houses. Two were sold, one kept so that when the family went on holiday to Oldhamstocks, John's wife was too far away from Edinburgh to come back to check what her husband was up to! I found a much more interesting explanation of John's interest in this village. His parents, William Oliver, and Elizabeth Turnbull, were married in Oldhamstocks Church in 1822.

My mother knew that her father's brother, James, Alexander, had moved to Canada. The brothers lost touch. When my niece and her husband went to Vancouver on their honeymoon, I asked them to check the telephone directory for Craik. She came back with a directory page – with Craik. I wrote off to a few 'A' Craik entries. Wonderful to relate, one of them replied and it was Mum's cousin.

#### Dad's Side

I found out that the Petrie's came from Fife. William Petrie, a handloom linen weaver, married a Janet Buck. This is the line from which our Petrie's stem. Janet died in 1809. William remarried to a Margaret Wilkie. Though there is no record of their marriage or deaths, their children confirm the relationship. I now have 8 ring binders with Petrie family ancestors. Unfortunately, I am unable to find William's parents.

#### Mum's Side

I was able to follow the Craik's to the Borders where Andrew Craik married a Mary Mather in 1779.

The Craik's were agricultural labourers and again I have not managed to go back any further than the 1770's. However, I have 13 ring binders with Craik Family ancestors!

Researching your family history can be frustrating as it can be rewarding. It is always fascinating. There are sad moments when you reflect on infant mortality, early deaths of husbands and wives as well as finding those who died in war. There is a sense of satisfaction when you eventually crack a problem. Genealogy should carry a health warning. It is a compulsive hobby. When you run out of 'straight family line', going sideways keeps your interest going! However, sometimes accepting that records of our family may not be there is hard to accept but accept it we must. Whatever happens, don't lose heart. Have fun!

**Sheila Petrie (Membership Secretary)**

#### **Our Public Records:**

<https://ourpublicrecords.org/europe-family-records/>

Joe Laurel, Marketing Specialist of *Our Public Records*, has created an excellent guide to help people who are getting started in tracing their European roots, with resources for each country to help with the search. The *Lothians Family History Society* are going to add their website to this list for Scotland.

<https://ourpublicrecords.org>

#### **The Lord Lyon Society:**

<https://lordlyonsociety.org.uk/>

The Lord Lyon Society was set up by the present Lord Lyon, Dr Joe Morrow CBE QC FRSE, to support the Court of the Lord Lyon and to further enliven the promotion of Scottish Heraldry.

- *To promote Scottish heraldry, genealogy and related arts, heritage, and culture.*
- *To advance heraldic, genealogical, and Scottish heritage through education and engagement with young people.*
- *To aid and support the protection and preservation of the records, archives and collections of the Court and Office of the Lord Lyon.*

- To aid and support the digitisation of those records and to make them accessible to the public at no cost.
- To support and promote the contribution by the Scottish diaspora, especially within the Commonwealth, to heraldic, genealogical, and cultural education.

A great opportunity to learn all about Scottish Heraldry from the experts. Please consider supporting the Society.

### Members Interests:

Members are encouraged to submit to the society *any Lothians surnames* that they would like help with. Log into the Members Area and look at who is researching what surname and in what area. It is a great opportunity to share information too between members.

### Membership of the Lothians Family History Society:

Members can join through the LFHS website or leaflets found at the Lasswade Centre or the Loanhead Library. The Society has publications for sale on Burial Indexes, Monumental Inscriptions, Books etc.

Link: <https://genfair.co.uk/supplier/lothians-family-history-society-1129/> for a full list of available items.

For access to the Members Area on the LFHS website - members need a username and password for entry. If a reminder is required for these formalities, members should contact the Society via email on [lothiansfhs@hotmail.com](mailto:lothiansfhs@hotmail.com) and these will be forwarded.

### UK/Overseas Exchange

The LFHS exchanges our Newsletter with a number of other UK and overseas Family History Societies. These are made available in the Members Area for you to look at if they are e-journals or e-newsletters. Below is a list of those that are currently on the exchange platform:

Waltham Forest FHS

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Lothians-Fhs/100009903970976>

### Research Enquiries

Send your request direct to:  
[lothiansfhs@hotmail.com](mailto:lothiansfhs@hotmail.com)

Once your request has been received and logged, one of our volunteers will be in touch with you about how best to proceed.

Limitations to research requests:

- *Volunteers are restricted to answering requests within 1-hour free research*
- *Enquiries deemed to be in excess of 1 hour may require assistance from a genealogist who will be a member of the society (additional costs or expenses may apply)*
- *As a non-profit society, all donations from research enquiries will be gratefully appreciated.*
- *Donations can be arranged through the Secretary via [lothiansfhs@hotmail.com](mailto:lothiansfhs@hotmail.com).*

Lothians Family History Society Committee would like to wish its members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



See you back at the Centre on **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7pm**



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