

# Kyleakin Local History Society



Website: [www.kyleakinlocalhistorysociety.co.uk](http://www.kyleakinlocalhistorysociety.co.uk)

Email: [kyleakinlocalhistorysociety@gmail.com](mailto:kyleakinlocalhistorysociety@gmail.com)

## Autumn 2015

### Issue 12

#### Diary Dates:

#### Winter Talks

7th December 2015

11th January 2016

1st February 2016

18th or 19th March 2016

Dates of other events taking place in the village can also be included in this section – please send the details to Sue.

#### Committee:

Caroline Clouston

Hugh Davies

Hector Grant

Calum Macaskill

Angus MacLennan

Margaret Macrae

Roddy Morrison

Anna Belle Robertson

John Robertson

Stuart Taylor

#### Non-Committee

#### Member –

#### Website & Newsletter

Sue Lyons

#### Membership

*application forms are available at the Bright Water Centre, where a selection of our archives is on display.*

## Welcome to the Autumn 2015 newsletter

**THE JOAN WILCOCK PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION TRAVELLING  
THE ARCHIVE | UNCOVERING MEMORIES  
Coming soon | February – September 2016**

**Would you like to volunteer? Do you know someone who might be interested in being involved in this project?**



An outdoor exhibition, programme of walks, talks & gatherings focused on the collection, held in various locations in Kyleakin. The opening evening event will be an outdoor exhibition of projected images from the collection. A souvenir booklet will be designed to accompany the exhibition. Workshops, talks and guided walks will be part of the programme. ATLAS Arts is looking for volunteers to support the project in a wide variety of ways. There are also opportunities for training, in projection work and professional guiding skills.

To register your interest contact Rosie Somerville: ATLAS Project Co-ordinator [rosie@atlasarts.org.uk](mailto:rosie@atlasarts.org.uk) or Kyleakin Local History Society - [kyleakinlocalhistorysociety@gmail.com](mailto:kyleakinlocalhistorysociety@gmail.com)

Image: Joan Wilcock Collection curtesy of the Highland Council Archive Centre  
Funded by: Creative Scotland & The Heritage Lottery fund

Further information, when available will be able to be viewed on the website and in future newsletters.

The society would also like to record its appreciation for a recent donation from Donald MacKinnon, Elgol Historical Society of a Kyleakin Highland Games medal dated 1925 and a cutting from the Oban Times dated 1953 reporting on the games and the prize winners that year. These items are an important addition to our archive collection.

On behalf of KLHS I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a restful and peaceful Christmas and New Year break.

Caroline

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We are still trying to identify how the village developed in relation to:

- ❖ Churches
- ❖ Hotels
- ❖ Fishing
- ❖ Schools
- ❖ Shops & Cafes
- ❖ Tourism
- ❖ Organisations i.e. SWRI
- ❖ Kyleakin Highland Games
- ❖ Gala Days
- ❖ Sport
- ❖ Military
- ❖ Families
- ❖ Ferries

If you have a particular interest in any of these sections, or you think that there is something missing, please get in touch.

## Now and Then:

Do you have old pictures of your house and do you know roughly when they were taken? Can you take a picture of your house now – i.e. in 2015/2016?

If so, can you let us have copies so that we can form a display of what the village used to be like and what it is like now?

The majority of the houses in the village have undergone some form of extensions/ alterations, have you found anything unexpected that you think would be of interest to the Society?

## Updates from previous newsletters and new contacts:



In the Spring 2013 Newsletter we included the picture above with details of who some of the people were.

The photograph was taken in 1937 to celebrate the coronation of King George VI

The boy on the left is Ian Robertson; **the boy in the kilt is Dougal Munro** and is standing next to the little girl who is Ella Munro. The "Minister" (who was their father) was the Church of Scotland Missionary Dugald Munro. Before his posting to Kyleakin he had previously served on St Kilda for which he was given special dispensation to carry out Sacraments usually preserved for Ministers such as Weddings, Baptisms and Communions. His wife was Welsh; Margaret nee Pugh, and their son Donald Pugh Munro is listed on the War Memorial. During World War II Mr & Mrs Munro ran a canteen in the old Village Hall for the Forces personnel and their families based in Kyleakin, under the auspices of the "Church of Scotland Huts and Canteens". They lived in the house called "Clarion" which the Church of Scotland rented for Missionaries before building the Mission House behind the church in the early 1960s.

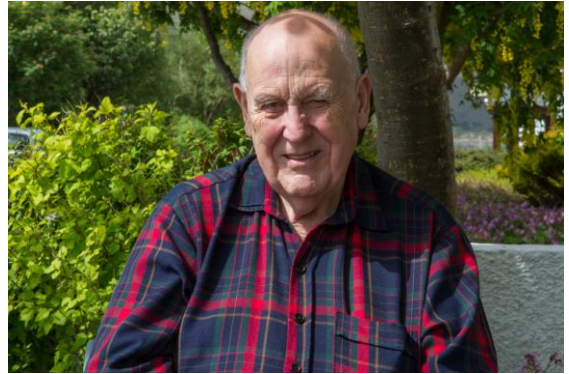
Annabelle has sent in three recent pictures of Dougal (the boy in the kilt) – one outside Harrys Cafe, one taken in Ullapool 2014 and all three of the Munro siblings by their parent's grave in Kilmonivaig Churchyard.

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oOo



Ann Wilson sent in this old picture of people standing outside Fankhill.

It is thought that the lady in the overall (second from the left) is possibly "Bella Buller" Mrs John Macrae nee Annabella Macpherson (1879-1959) who lived there in the forties/fifties and the others look like visitors who may be relatives.

Margaret Macrae recalls a sister "Jeannie Joseph" Mrs Neil Grant nee Jane Macpherson (1881-1969) who lived in Glasgow so it might be them.

Over to you for your thoughts.....

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## Grant Casualties

Murdo F. MacLeod sent in information and working with Hector Grant, the following information has been clarified:

**Seaman Neil Grant** was born in Kyleakin, the son of James and Catherine Grant and was married to Ethel Graham. He was serving on the SS Cottingham on July 2nd 1915 when she struck a submerged submarine, which was reported to the Royal Navy, who came and sank the submarine. In a second encounter with submarines on 26th December 2015 the crew were ordered to abandon ship. The Cottingham was then sunk by gunfire and seven men were killed, including Seaman Grant. This attack took place about 16 miles west off Lundy. As he has no known grave he is commemorated on the Towerhill Memorial in London and also on the Kyleakin War Memorial.

**Pte Alexander Grant**, 18th Australian Infantry. Service Number 1693, the son of Neil and Marion Grant, Kyleakin, Isle of Skye. Alexander (known as Sandy) emigrated to Australia and it was there he had enlisted to the A.I. He was sent to Gallipoli in the summer of 1915 and it was at Lone Pine that he was killed in action against Turkish defenses on 22nd August, 1915.

His brother also called Alexander, but known as Alastair, died on the SS Polymnia (sunk by a German submarine UC75) on 15th May 1917.

Alexander (Sandy) is commemorated at Lone Pine Memorial and their names Neil, Alexander (Sandy) and Alexander (Alastair) appear on the Kyleakin War Memorial.

Does anyone have any more information?

oOo

## History of Houses in Kyleakin



In a previous newsletter we asked whether anyone could add to the history of the house currently known as Edradour (first registered/built in 1891). A number of people have provided information.....

Margaret remarked on the coincidence of her mother appearing in the photo in the Autumn 2014 Newsletter regarding information about Edradour. Margaret is confident the photo was taken in 1962 due to the fishing boats and the rubble in Moyle's garden following the extension built in 1961.

So in order to plot a time line:

**1891 –**

**? - ?**

Anna Belle's Uncle Lachie and Robin Graham's grandfather (Lachlan Robertson,) lived at Edradour whilst he built Mo Dhachaidh next door – does anyone know when that was and what 'Edradour' was called then?

**1930's – 1940's**

A lady called what sounded like Curstie-can-Sara living "up the steps" who an old grandaunt of Margaret's used to visit on a certain evening every week - probably around the thirties/forties (Gaelic scholars will correct the spelling but it probably means Curstie daughter of Sara).

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## Can you help

We have a large number of old photographs of various views in the village; do you have the time to take photographs of the same views now?

We would also like photographs of the harbour, fisheries pier and the boats. Whilst not considered historical now, in years to come, your grandchildren may be asking what it was like when Kyleakin had a working harbour!

*Membership application forms are available at Camerons old shop/Post Office, or from Anna Belle.*

*If you have any photos and documents of interest to the Society, they can be scanned and returned quickly.*

*Please send ideas for items/articles in the newsletter to any of the committee members.*

## Mid 1950's - Late 1950's

The Branson family also lived there for a spell before they moved to Crowlin Road in the late fifties – Colin thinks the house was called Pier Cottage but Margaret disagrees as that was definitely the name of the cottage now replaced by the White Heather Hotel. Caroline can remember Colin calling for her for school in the mid 50's. Can anyone else shed any light on what the house was called then?

## Late 1950's – Early 1960's

Some old Kyleakin Feus papers has a Valuation Roll for 1962/1963 which lists the house as being occupied by Miss Ellen Rand (who was the secretary at Portree Senior Secondary School) and it was called 'The Haven', and Caroline thinks that she probably renamed it that, so that would have been in the late 50's and early 60's that she lived there. Possibly originating from the North of England, Miss Rand, as she was known in the village, worked for Caroline's mother in 'Camerons' shop.

## Early 1960's - 1986

The house was then bought and renovated by Ian Nicolson and his first wife Agnes who lived primarily in Glasgow. They changed the name to Edradour (as that was where Jean Nicolson came from). He was a cousin of Flo and Kay Reid of Coille Bhurich (whose mother was a Nicolson). When he remarried (Jane) in the early seventies the solar panels were added. It is thought that Ian was a teacher and a Quaker.

## 1986 – 2005

Christine McLeod and her family bought the house from Jane Nicolson (Ian's second wife). They added the conservatory/sun room at the front of the house.

## 2005 – October 2006

Mr & Mrs Wright changed the name from Edradour to Tigh na Cala (apparently because they were tea total and didn't want their house linked to the name of a whisky distillery). They moved from Drumbuie in 2005 before moving to Somerset in 2006.

## October 2006 – present day

Phil and Sue Lyons changed the name back to Edradour, as no one in the village seemed to have heard of Tigh na Cala. Phil and Sue added electric central heating to the house!

oOo

An enquiry has been received regarding a golf club in Kyleakin in the 1920's. It is understood that guests from the Kings Arms Hotel went golfing in the Obbe area but whether that would have been on the saltings (salt marches) when the tide was out or above, no one knows. It was thought that there were about 6 holes. It was also thought that the Heathmount and Marine Hotels had a 'pitch and putt'.

Has anyone any more information on this?

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## Diary Dates:

Monday 7th December 2015 - Mike Westman will talk about his grandfather who was a surgeon to the Kaiser.

Do you know which the oldest house in the village is? At least one house was built in 1891 (according to the deeds) – but was your house built earlier than this? Despite the possibility of numerous renovations, you may be living in what was the first house built in Kyleakin – or do you have any old maps - if so get in touch, we'd love to hear from you.

## KLHS Website

You can print off your own copy of "**Memories of Kyleakin**" by Mary Macpherson by clicking the image and depending on the settings on your computer; the newsletter will automatically open or will be in your download box.

The **News & Events** page has been updated to include a dropdown page "**Newsletters**" which will give you access to all the newsletters issued by KLHS - just click on the newsletter image and depending on the settings on your computer, the newsletter will automatically open or will be in your download box.

The "Important Dates" page has changed to "**Historical Time Line**" and new information has recently been added.

The website also provides information on the society's current programme of talks and activities as well as other events in the district.

## Kyleakin War Memorial

Just to update you on the War Memorial, as you already know earlier in 2015 the war memorial was cleaned and the lettering repainted/renovated. A commemorative bench for those who served in WW1 was also installed. Kyleakin and Kylerhea Community Council hope to complete the renovations at the War Memorial in 2016 by removing the existing wooden bench and replacing it with a new WW2 commemorative bench.

