



Stow Parish Archive

Newsletter

December 2008

It has been another busy year for the archive group having added more material and photographs to the collection and of course holding two very successful community events. We had the Shops and Businesses afternoon in March, where Chris Wemyss gave a marvellous presentation (4 times over!) on the information that we had to date. We then had some excellent help from people attending in filling in some of the gaps. We are particularly grateful to Hamish Hunter for supplying us with a village map that allowed us to find the location of some of the old businesses. On Saturday, 1st November, we held the Strange but True event that was based on true stories associated with the Parish. We have yet another demonstration on the fantastic talent that we have in our community. The historian, Mary Craig gave us a jaw-dropping account of the history of witchcraft in the area. Local stories were beautifully presented by Thomas Kelly, Dianne Wilson, Alistair Jack, and Bill Cowe. Music was brought our way by the talented Rory of Caithpar and Stuart of Fountainhall. The whole shindig being masterly compered by the incomparable and general good sport, John Wilkinson. But none of this would be possible without your most valuable support. Please look out for further interesting plans that you can support in the New Year.

The archive material in our regular monthly newsletter is brought to you by Neil MacLennan. Here are some snippets that he has uncovered about Decembers in times past.

December 10th 1895

The second Coachman's supper took place in the Hotel on Friday evening. The supper was followed with songs on the violin played by Mr. Dobson of Burnhouse. With Mr. Connachie presiding the evening's proceedings were of a most enjoyable character.

December 15th 1900

Newly elected minister of Stow, the Rev. T. Wilson B.D. intimated to his congregation in Rosemount Parish, Aberdeen that he accepted the call from the Parish of Stow because of the place itself. He knew of no other country parish, which had such a combination of desirable things as Stow had. It had a magnificent church and organ, a beautiful manse and glebe lands, a fine bracing hill and it was within a short distance of Edinburgh, his old university town. Further he must frankly confess that he felt the strain of Rosemount was too great. To work with a congregation which had grown under him to over 1700 members was too much for any man.



Neil and Chris at discussing the price of fish at the Shops and Businesses event in March.

December 19th 1912

The parish church juvenile choir trained by Mr. Thorburn gave a most successful recital of the musically illustrated service of song prepared by James Tipton entitled "won by a child". Mr. Thorburn conducted, the Rev. Thomas Wilson gave the readings and the children, who in the chorus had some assistance from the church choir, acquitted themselves admirably.

December 14th 1916

The body of an Irishman named Frank Duffy was found on an inlet near the spot where he had disappeared on November 30th. Duffy and another fellow laborer had been employed at Burnhouse Mains and had been returning to Stow from the farm. The pair had somehow got off the road beyond Watherston footbridge and eventually reached the banks of the Gala, which was in flood. Tired after a days work they apparently fell asleep only for Duffy's mate to wake up and see him in the Gala. He shouted for him but there was no answer. In the following days the river was searched from Watherston to Galashiels but no trace was found. Duffy was 46 years of age and from Donegal.

December 8th 1921

In his lecture 'The Auld Kirk of Stow – the Church in the Graveyard' the Rev. T. Wilson advanced the opinion that the most ancient portion of the building was about 700 years old.

December 7th 1922

Mr. James Brown, shoemaker who recently passed away was held in very high respect. He spent the greater part of his life in Stow where he learned the boot making trade and latterly carried on a business in that line. Sadly he lost his two sons in the Gallipoli campaign.

Please come along on Wednesday 14th January from 7.30 onwards and help us add to the Archive anything of interest and discuss how to make our catalogue



Neil, Debbie, Wendy, Mary, Chris and Rob – join us!

more accessible to the community. We can also copy any photos or documents or we can simply make notes on any memories that you have that would be of interest.