



## APPLECROSS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Comunn Eachdraidh na Comraich

Web : [www.applecrossheritage.org.uk](http://www.applecrossheritage.org.uk)

Scottish Charity No. SC030267

NEWSLETTER - JANUARY, 2010 Issue No. 21

### GENERAL :

The year 2009 was a good one; we reported increased activity in our June newsletter and this continued throughout the summer. Compared with 2008, the number of visitors increased by 36% and our income by 35%. Publicity given by Homecoming Scotland 2009 no doubt contributed as did the strength of the Euro which encouraged more people to holiday at home this year. Weather in the early summer was superb but as autumn approached, it deteriorated and we saw a great deal of rain. We are still trying to work out whether it is good or bad weather which brings in the greater number of visitors.

### VISITORS :

Among our visitors were :

Dr. Alexander and Margaret Gillies and (separately) their sons Kenneth and Donald, the latter from America

Helen and Bruce James from Applecross, Western Australia – with whom we had an interesting and friendly chat

Julian Hart-Smith from Paris but originally from New Zealand with Applecross ancestors

Descendants of Madge Young (Madge Ross)

Garnett and Eleanor Ashby from Florida (we look forward to the Ashbys' annual visit)

Angela Mbuli, M'bane, Swaziland (Angela is our own Isabel Cross's sister)

John and Jeannette MacDonald and John and Pauline Porter from Queensland, Australia

A Murchison representative from Tasmania

Our good friend Isobel MacKenzie from Gairloch

Jean MacBeath, Cromarty (remembered by some of us as Jean Macleod when she attended Applecross School)

Stuart Davies, President of the Museums' Association, London, who wrote in the visitors' book, "Congratulations. A model of what a heritage centre should be." This gives us considerable encouragement!

There were, of course, others, all of whom we were pleased to see.

### IAIN MacLENNAN'S BOOK :

Iain MacLennan's book *Applecross & its Hinterland – a Historical Miscellany* has been a best seller and has substantially contributed to our increased income. We remain seriously indebted to Iain.

## APPLECROSS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME (ALPS) :

The development phase of this project was completed, and the appropriate documentation submitted on schedule in November. Our projects included are :

1. A package to employ a curator/researcher for an initial period of three years.
2. Equipment to enable us to digitise our records and make these available in a user-friendly manner.
3. A project to produce a map of the burial ground and records of tombstone inscriptions.
4. A project to complete the research and recording of local place names for the Applecross Peninsula and to produce a map showing these, together with a CD and computer programme.
5. A project to tidy up the Holy Well (Stroupan a bhile) to make it accessible and provide interpretation details.
6. A small project to identify the site of the Four Trees of Applecross.

We are assured that the funding for these projects of which the Heritage Lottery Fund will provide 50% will receive their final approval in March, 2010. 45% of the cost has been promised by Leader+ and we have set aside our required contribution of 5%.

We are pleased to report that we have made a substantial monetary contribution to the costs of the development phase and we have worked with the development officers in connection with the above projects and we now look forward to them commencing in 2010.

## VOLUNTEERS :

Those who 'manned' the Heritage Centre and to whom the Historical Society is as always grateful include Isabel Cross, Jacqui Liuba, Eileen MacRae and Liz Wright with directors Janet Mackay, Ruairidh Cameron and Alistair McCowan. In 2009 we had Margaret Beaton with us, complete with spinning wheel and related equipment, and her lessons and her enthusiasm and engagement with visitors are immensely popular.

John McKeown provides expert computer input which has recently included vital advice for the proposed digitising and the other projects mentioned above which have considerable computer input. It has to be recognised that, without John's input, items like our website would not have attracted the acclaim it has, and various other computer elements would have cost substantial sums for professional advice. We remain seriously indebted to John.

Margaret McCowan types up and produces our bi-annual newsletters, and provides general typing for the Society.

## DUCHESS OF LEEDS CROSS :

A small inscribed wooden cross found when Hartfield Lodge was being refurbished for Venture Trust has been given to us by Mrs. Elizabeth Wills and her son Richard. This had some significance in early Nineteenth Century Applecross when Applecross Estate was sold by the MacKenzie laird to the Duke of Leeds, and the Duchess of Leeds was a devout Roman Catholic who had her own chaplain. The inscriptions on the cross mention the chaplain, and Captain Chisholm who was factor residing at Hartfield. The date on the cross is 1858 and it is now on display in the Heritage Centre.

## CORRESPONDENCE :

We have been in correspondence with two American descendants of the Applecross Murchisons; Eve Lutz MacKenzie, who currently lives in Scotland and Anne Clarke Barrett, who lives in the 'Highlands' in California. Both have provided interesting material which we shall exhibit in the Heritage Centre.

Bobbie Amyes has been in touch from New Zealand to suggest that we might like to publish her papers on the MacLeays of Sand and the Kennedys for the benefit of the Society. For this we are grateful.

Sandra Norris from the Isle of Wight, who is a niece of Jessie MacKenzie Ross, provided interesting photographs and records. Jessie was primary school teacher in Applecross for some ten years and married Alistair Ross, from Applecross, who was a Merchant Navy officer, early in 1943; sadly he was lost at sea only a few months later. Jessie is fondly remembered here.

## THE LATE FINLAY MacLEAN :

We were saddened to learn of the death in Tasmania of Finlay MacLean whose mother came from Ard Dhubh, Applecross. Some of our older members will recall that, although he was born and brought up in Glasgow, he spent some time during the early years of World War II in Applecross and attended Applecross School. He is remembered for his passion to learn Gaelic and respected for the way in which, by his own efforts, he achieved his ambition to become a dentist. His love of Gaelic no doubt influenced his son Roddy and ensured that, although brought up in Tasmania, he is now a foremost Gaelic writer and broadcaster on a wide range of subjects.

Our thoughts and condolences go out to his sister Lena, who lives in Applecross and Roddy who is well-known to us, as well as to other members of his family.

## ANN BISHOP :

Ann Bishop continues her good work of copying out details from census records and we are grateful for material which fills gaps in our records. We apologise for reporting incorrectly in the January 2009 newsletter that she was working on the 1851 census which should have been the 1871 census. We record that material received in manuscript from Ann in September, 2009 is :

Census	1841	Kenmore to Rutheren (Rhuarain)
Census	1861	Kinloch to Kenmore
Census	1871	Toscaig to Cruary; Arinacrinachd to Kenmore.
Census	1881	Kinloch to Camusanillan (Camus an Eilean)

## DWELLY AIR LOIDHNE WEBSITE :

We draw attention to the above website which was set up to enable users to access Edward Dwelly's superb Gaelic dictionary first published in 1901 and now, many years later, still regarded as definitive. The site gives details of Gaelic-English and English-Gaelic translations and enthusiasts will find words thought to be of Applecross origin.

## PUFFER :

Susan MacRae (wife of Duncan MacRae and sister-in-law of Helen Summers) has offered us on loan a model of a puffer. We have seen photographs of the model and accepted the offer with some enthusiasm, as puffers were very much part of the local scene in Applecross prior to World War II when all coal was brought in by these iconic vessels.

## SIGNIFICANT BIRTHDAY :

We were very pleased to note that Christine, one of the Manse girls from Camusterrach who are remembered by our older members, has reached the significant age of 90. Christine has been a good friend of ours and we wish her sincere congratulations.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY :

The autumn dig at the broch site has been very successful and has increased understanding of the broch. The archaeological society will also benefit from ALPS and the Heritage Lottery Fund grant. We were sorry to learn that Owen KilBride who has recently become active with the archaeological society is indisposed with back problems and we wish him a speedy recovery.

AMcC

January, 2010

***If you are already a member of the Historical Society who receives the Newsletter by post but would prefer to receive it by email, please let us know via our website. Also, would members please remember to notify the society of any change of postal address and email address.***

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