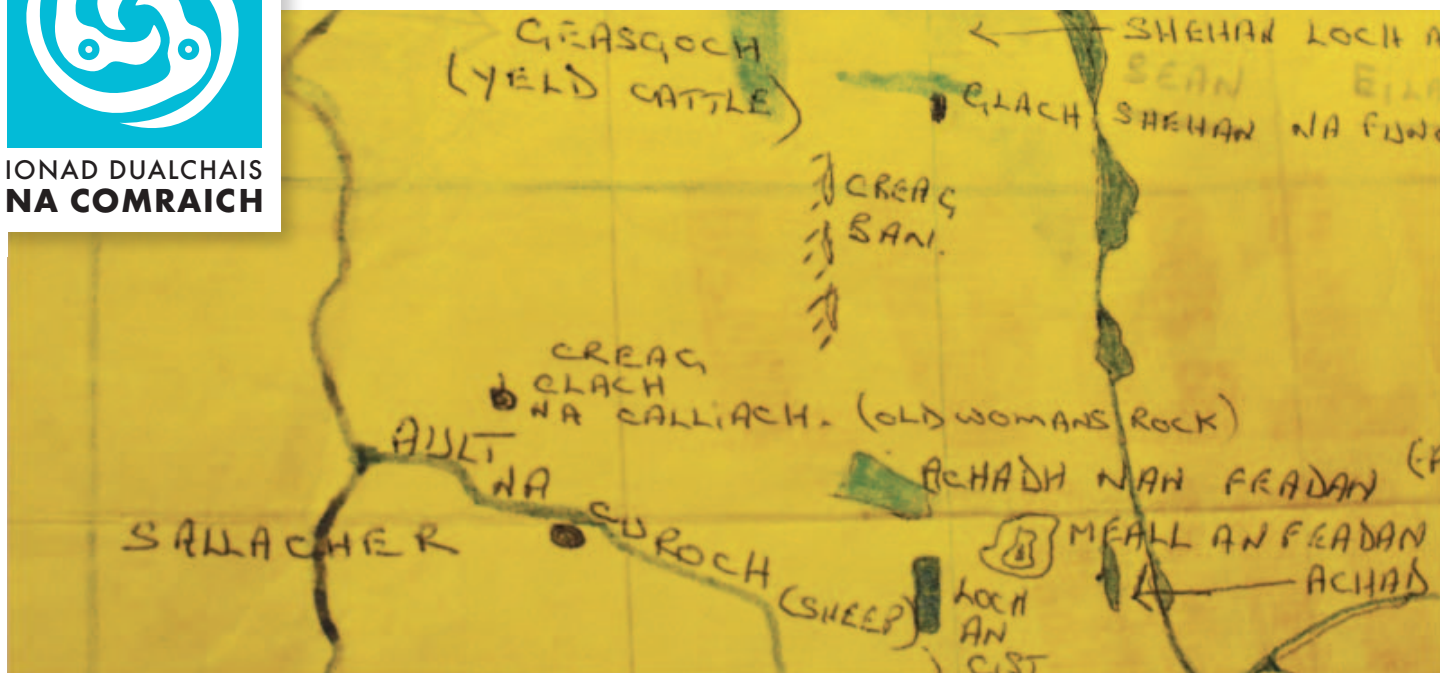




Place names

The Stalkers' Map

Richard Wills has always supported the Historical Society and the Heritage Centre, and, during his visit in the autumn, brought us a surely unique treasure.

Once spread out, however, the real value became apparent. Sketched out to scale and in fantastic detail was a map of the entire Applecross peninsula, from north to south, with over 100 place names recorded from the late Donnie Cameron, formerly the head stalker on the Applecross estate, and a man who knew the interior of Applecross like almost no other. Other names came from the late John Beaton who was known as the Lordan. The map was drawn by Ken Griffin, himself no stranger to the hills and hollows in his time on the estate - Ken has recently published his autobiography.

That this item survived, given how easily it could have been dismissed as a worthless scrap of paper, is almost miraculous; as a result we have a host of names that have long since ceased to be in common currency and would surely have been lost within a generation if Mr Wills hadn't brought it to our attention. Among the names which were new to the Curator was *Glac an t-Seasgaich*, which means something like the *Hollow of the Yeld Cow*. The name draws us back to a time when cattle were put to the hill in the summertime, the culture of the shieling, and indicates a barren cow, or young cattle kept on the hill all summer.

Illustrated is a detail of the map from the area around Salachar.

Reverend Donald Macfarlane



In July 2011, the Heritage Centre Curator was invited to visit the Reverend Donald Macfarlane, an Isle of Skye native who was one of the few remaining people who had experienced pre-World War II Applecross as an adult. Sadly, it was our only meeting as Reverend Macfarlane died on 30 October 2011 at the Ballifeary Nursing Home in Inverness, aged 96.

Continued on page 8...

A longer version of this article with more detail from the meeting with Reverend Macfarlane can be found on the [Heritage Centre BLOG](#)

<http://applecrosshistory.blogspot.com/>

Words from the Chairman:

It is a great pleasure now to see lights on in the heritage centre during the winter and when it is not normally open to visitors while Gordon, our curator, continues his work on a number of fronts. As ever, time passes and it won't be long before we open our doors again to the public and we look forward to offering a better and more professional service to our visitors. In addition, a number of specific projects are nearing completion and the results of these will be available soon. It is good to see us moving forward.

Alasdair McCowan

Twitter

Follow us on Twitter
@ApplecrossHist
to find out about
upcoming events.



@ApplecrossHist



The Heritage Centre is closed during the winter months but that didn't stop this visitor looking in the window.

Thanks

Many thanks to **Judy Fish** of the Applecross Inn for her kind donation of a spiral-binding machine and accessories. It's a much appreciated gift from one of our most successful local businesses and will allow us to produce neater and more 'professional' presentation items in the future.

Alan Gillies tracked down the film *Stealing away to Stornoway* from the Scottish Screen Archive. Filmed in the summer of 1937, it features some wonderful scenes of life on the west coast of Scotland, including a fascinating glimpse of the mail steamer calling at Applecross Bay, and of passengers being ferried ashore in an open boat.

Margaret Beaton handed over a very nice Admiralty chart of the Inner Sound.

Verity Walker, who has been involved in the development of an interpretation plan for Applecross with her company Interpretation, spotted an edition of Bartholemew's map of Wester Ross and mailed it to us after a day out at the antique shops in Cromarty.

On the recommendation of **Roddy Maclean**, **The Islands Book Trust** very kindly sent the printed version of Roddy's thought-provoking lecture to the Trust, *Gaelic on signs and maps in Scotland – why it matters*, to the Heritage Centre in August.

Artist and Gaelic supporter **Ian Rogers** is a regular visitor to Applecross and he very kindly donated a set of his line drawings to the Heritage Centre in August. Stunning images of the Hebridean Barns, the Spout Well and Clachan church gates were among the prints which we hope to have on display in the forthcoming season. Thank you once again to Ian, and we wish him well with his efforts in support of Gaelic in Dumfries and Galloway.

Robert MacRae and **Marion Gilroy** have kindly loaned us a collection of documents that belonged to Robert's grandfather Murdo MacRae, boatbuilder and carpenter in Milltown, in the first half of the 20th century. They offer a fascinating glimpse of trade and commerce in Applecross in the period around the First World War.

Thank you to **Sandra Gray** from Glasgow who donated money for our funds in memory of her grandparents Alexander and Isabel MacDonald (Ali Glas and his wife), and her parents Alastair and Margaret MacDonald. Sandra was born at the Home Farm, but left Applecross as a baby, so it was nice to be able to show her where her family had lived at various points when she visited in October. Sandra's donation has allowed us to purchase a watercolour painting of the Applecross Hills from Kishorn, by E. Grieg Hall, from 1967.

Out of Doors

The Curator, along with Sam Bridgewater, ALPS co-ordinator, recorded for the BBC Radio Scotland programme **Out of Doors** in November. Topics for discussion

included ALPS projects, place names and heritage. The net result was that the Society's work appeared on national radio and the iPlayer over two separate episodes.

Events

Maelrubha Day, 27 August 2011

Would you believe it? The sun shone for Applecross community's events held to mark Maelrubha Day!

30 people walked in from Sand, over the old hill track, to the head of Applecross Bay for a barbecue, expertly provided by Jon and Elaine from the **Potting Shed Café**. Next on the agenda was the official opening of the Beechwood Trail, with the ceremonial ribbon snipped by Ross and Cromarty's Lord Lieutenant **Janet Bowen**. The party then departed along the trail and back towards the Heritage Centre with the Curator providing historical information and scurrilous traditions en-route! The day was rounded off with an ecumenical songs of praise at Clachan Church. Stay tuned for information on a repeat in 2012.

The whole day was a great success, and it was particularly nice to see so many familiar faces including the Reverend Kay Gauld from St Rufus's Church of Scotland in Keith (possibly the only church in the north named for our Applecross saint), and the Right Reverend Mark Strange, Bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness.

Successful autumn talks

The Historical Society held a series of autumn talks which proved very popular.

Willie MacRobbie discussed the MacKenzies of Gruinard and Letterewe, and some particularly unsavoury Victorian landlords. Gaelic broadcaster **Ruairidh MacIlleathain** rattled through a fascinating array of proverbs connected to cattle and dogs – sayings which some of our 21st-century politicians would do well to understand. The series was rounded off in fine style by **Roddy 'Butcher' MacLennan** with his hilarious tales from the butcher's van.



Roddy 'Butcher' MacLennan giving his talk in the Applecross Hall.

Departed friends:

Donnie Mackenzie

Sadly, Donnie Mackenzie died just before Christmas. Donnie was a younger brother of our much-respected director (and archivist) Ian Mackenzie. He died in Inverness, where he had lived for many years. He had a career in the RAF followed by supervisory posts in the Telephone Service in Ullapool and Inverness. Older members will remember him as Donnie Cruary.

Eve Marie Lutz-MacKenzie

We were saddened to learn in August that Eve Lutz-MacKenzie, who we remember as a delightful lady who visited us in 2005 and was a member of the Society, had lost her battle with cancer. An internationally-renowned research scientist in the field of molecular biology, she passed away in Glasgow at the young age of 49. She was an American who had Murchison

ancestors from this part of the world, and we had great correspondence with her on this subject. Eve is buried in Clachan cemetery, in the Applecross she loved. She leaves two daughters and her husband, Chris, who is a native of the Outer Hebrides.

Call for items

Applecross Heritage Centre is interested in receiving donations, or loans, of any items related to the history, heritage, commerce and people of the Applecross peninsula.

Please, before you spring clean any lofts, barns, sheds or cupboards, think of the Heritage Centre. All items will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

It may be that an item looks insignificant but even a small note or scrap of paper can be useful in piecing together the rich tapestry of information that makes up Applecross' Heritage.

Here is a short list (!) of the sort of things we're interested in:

photographs;

postcards;

telegrams;

letters;

crofting documents and memorabilia;

old receipts;

anything related to fishing and maritime activities;

agricultural implements;

church history.

Also stories, songs, poems, place names and memories!

Place name focus

Sgeir a' Mhaoil: The monk's reef

Lying just off the shore a little north-west of Coilleghillie, Sgeir a' Mhaoil is a place name that we could (possibly!) link to a real historical event.

In the year 737AD, the Annals of Ulster tell us: Failbhe, mac Guaire, Maeleirebai eiris Apuorcrosain, in profundo pelagi dimersus est cum suis nautius numero xxii, meaning 'Failbhe, Guaire's son, the successor of Maelruba of Applecross, was drowned in the deep sea with his sailors, twenty-two in number.' (Other sources give the year as 732AD or 736AD.)

Sgeir a' Mhaoil is often taken to mean the monk's (or priest's) reef, to commemorate this event. But it could also be Sgeir Mhaoil, the bare/uncovered reef in reference to its physical appearance.

There is another intriguing clue inadvertently given in an Admiralty chart, from a survey by the Hydrographic Office in the 1850s – even with it's questionable spelling! Bo-akin (pronounced: bow ay-kin) lurks exactly where Sgeir a' Mhaoil is. Maybe a more realistic Gaelic spelling and interpretation would be Bogh' Èiginn, the reef of trouble or distress, indicating some terrible event. Certainly, the drowning of such a figure as Failbhe MacGuaire could be the sort of thing that could live on long after he drowned. Maybe we have two equally valid names for the same reef? If anybody has any ideas or further information about this name, or any other, please don't hesitate to get in touch as we continue to record and chart the place names of Applecross.

You can see a representation of the original Admiralty chart on the National Library of Scotland's website: <http://maps.nls.uk/coasts/admiralty.cfm?id=1281>



Heritage Walks



Summer 2011 saw the Historical Society's Treasurer, Ruairidh Cameron, led a series of guided 'Heritage Walks' around Clachan and the surrounding area. Here he gives us an insight into how the events worked. All being well, the Heritage Walks will happen again in 2012.

"Under the auspices of the Heritage Lottery-funded Applecross Landscape Partnership Scheme, each Tuesday during the summer I led a guided walk from the Heritage Centre, to give visitors and Applecross residents alike a taste of our local history and culture. The route normally taken began at Clachan, the site of St Maelrubha's monastery (founded in 673 AD), and looked at the part-carved stone on which the body of Abbot MacAogan, slain by the Norsemen, was floated back from Ireland.

We also looked at the 1817-built church itself, now undergoing repair and restoration, the old stone ruin in the graveyard (possibly an ancient chapel) and the resting place of the Saint close by.

We then took the newly-constructed path to the ancient raised beach plateau, reputedly the site of a Norse settlement during the so-called Dark Ages of Applecross, before proceeding past Clachan towards the paved road which leads into the glen, Srath Maol Chaluim.

Next, Hartfield Lodge (now home to the Venture Trust) came into view before we crossed Applecross River by the Home Bridge, into the policies of Applecross House. This was known as the Baile Mòr by some locals, and appears as 'Bigton' in some census returns. The Mansion House

of the estate has a lintel dated 1695 and was improved c1720-1730, when Applecross lands which had been forfeited in the aftermath of the 1715 Jacobite Uprising were repurchased by Roderick MacKenzie. Applecross House is now the residence of the Wills family. In the parks nearby graze the much-admired and much-photographed fold of Highland cattle, a herd of extended pedigree.

We rejoin the main road at the White Gate, close to the Spout Well whose waters were once believed to have curative power – waters that are now piped under the road with a drinking cup available to those in need of refreshment. Time constraints precluded the short walk to Shore Street and the Applecross Inn. The return was round the head of Applecross Bay with its ruined 'caraidh' (fish trap) and back across the river landward of the Hammers – Amaran in Gaelic, meaning pools – of which the Pool of the Coracles suggests the landfall of the Monastery monks returning home from introducing Christianity to the surrounding districts. Finally, back past the Clachan Manse, now for rent as a holiday home, and to the Heritage Centre.

Over one hundred people participated in these walks, young and not so young, from the UK and Europe, North America, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Brazil."

Graveyard mapping project

The graveyard mapping project continues and all the stones visible above ground have now been recorded, measured and photographed. And just as well!

With the number of gales we've been battered with this winter, we have seen three stones go over: two towards the south wall of the cemetery dedicated to the Gillies of Callakille, including the bard Captain Donald Gillies (Dòmhnall Cam) who lost an eye in an explosion; and one in the north of the graveyard for the Livingstones of Arrina.

Our projected mapping days for volunteers in September were not successful, due to the fact that on at least one of the days it was almost impossible to stand up outside! However, the Curator, and Donald Cameron, completed the outdoor work before Christmas and all details have now been entered into our database.

This call, though, goes out to anyone who may have information about people buried in Clachan who are not commemorated on a gravestone. We know of over 120 such people who are listed in the Highland Council's register of interments, but there surely are many others. The MacRae bards of Gead an Tàilleir, Ardneaskan, for instance – Dòmhnall Mòr and Dòmhnall Òg (who wrote the famous Coille Mhùiridh) were drowned off Skye in 1842 and laid to rest in Clachan, but where? Their resting places are worthy of commemoration, just like the other forgotten graves.

New information to the Curator was that William Maxwell's grave can

now be pointed out. A document which came from Kenneth MacRae via Donnie Sutherland, Duncan Murchison and Donald Cameron states that the infamous Fire Weaver rests just west of John Beaton, Uags. Buried with or near him was a tramp known as Clochan who drowned at the Caman.

If all goes to plan, our searchable online database should be live by the time of the next newsletter, but if anyone wishes to contribute any information please contact gordon.cameron@applecrossheritage.org.uk



Donald Cameron notes the detailed record information required for the database.

Photographs

below: Robert Hendry

right: Anne Jane Hendry

far right: Hendry house in New Zealand



Hendrys of Applecross and New Zealand

In August, we had the curious coincidence of three enquiries in the same week about Applecross ancestors who would surely have known each other. They referred to 1850s contemporaries - the legendary William Maxwell (in Camusteel, and reputedly William Hare, body snatcher!), the schoolmaster John McDermid (Milltown) and farm manager Robert Hendry (Shore Street).

In Clachan, one lonely stone faces the river: This stone is erected here by / Robert Henry / In memory of his beloved son / George Henry / who died 18th May 1843, Aged / 2 Years & 8 Months. George is the only one of what became a large family that we know lies in Clachan.

Robert Hendry, from Morayshire, married Catherine Young (or Gibbs) in Applecross in December 1839. George was their first-born son, followed by Margaret; Charles; James Alexander and Catherine Elizabeth; Anne Jane; Georgina Joanna; Helenette; Mary Ann and John; and Robert - all born in Applecross. The family sailed to New Zealand on the *Gala* in November 1859 and Robina was born in Timaru, Canterbury, in 1861.

One of the Hendrys' Applecross-born children is remembered in *Southern People, a Dictionary of Otago-Southland Biography* and seems to have been a remarkable woman.



PIONEERING SPIRIT SHOWN BY SCOTSWOMAN AT MAKARORA.

After arriving in Otago with her family from Ross-shire, Scotland, Ann Jane Hendry, aged 18, married Caleb Pipson at Cromwell in 1865. She became the only woman at Makarora, the other residents being seven bushmen who felled timber and rafted it down Lake Wanaka.

In Ann's earliest days, when the men were away, she sat on the roof of their hut, listening for the sound of oars as the men returned. She was terrified as wild dogs fought and howled in the bush behind her.

Ann's first trip out seems to have been in 1868 when she was rowed down the lake to have her first confinement at the Normans' hotel, Albert Town. On her return a replacement for the first simple hut awaited her, and she was delighted to have a proper home. Her other 11 children, including twins, were born at Makarora, and she delivered them herself, helped by her husband. She raised all her children successfully, except one asthmatic boy who died in childhood.

Supplies arrived quarterly, but bad weather often meant delays. Ann learned to manage. An excellent shot, she could always provide native birds. Legend says she dug up flax roots for food. In time, there were berries, fruit trees, fowls and a few sheep. Nothing was wasted. Feathers became stuffing for pillows and mattresses. Soap and candles were

made from saved fat. Furniture was made from wooden boxes that had carried in supplies.

The only book she had was a Bible, which she used to teach her children to read. Catherine, the eldest, had some formal education at Hawea Flat, where she lived at the boarding house, making beds and milking cows before school and preparing vegetables afterwards. Later, she helped younger brothers and sisters with lessons. When a school was opened at Makarora in 1895, several of the younger ones were enrolled.

About 1904 the house burned down and a larger one was in the process of being built when Caleb died. The luxury of having five bedrooms, a kitchen, a dining room and a sitting room possibly suggested opening a guest-house.

Maud Moreland, who rode through Haast Pass about 1905, wrote: "We arrived at the widow Pipson's. She took me to a sweet little room, supplying all my wants." By this time tourists, fishermen and hunters often visited. Nine families were resident at Makarora and there was even a store.

Ann's daughter, Norah Lange, married to a local musterer, had five premature children at Makarora. Their grandmother helped cherish them until the Lange family moved to Hawea about 1909. Ann then married Robert Studholme and lived at his farm near Wanaka until she died on April 12, 1912.



Thanks to Wendy King for the information, the extract from *Southern People* and the photographs. It is always great to establish new connections, and to discover what happened to some of our 19th-century Applecross forebears.

In a spin



Debbie Allan (right) from Birmingham, photographed with Margaret Beaton. Monday 1st August 2011.

One of our most popular regulars over the summer months is Margaret Beaton who can be found at the Heritage Centre on Monday afternoons working at her spinning wheel. Here's how she developed her passion for spinning:

"Your mind's aye chasin' mice":

this is a Scottish saying about someone who talks all the time. For a change, and very quietly, I'm going to let my fingers do the talking.

It has been a great privilege to be able to spin at the Applecross Heritage Centre. I was taught how to spin and then encouraged, by Tom and Lesley Kilbride, Reaulay. In the early 1990s, I was in the Community Halls as part of the Village Hall Summer Scheme where I presented local / Scottish history,

general information and some indoor and outdoor games. This gave me the confidence to bring along the spinning wheel and let interested visitors try. After that, it was just a step to travel to other centres, such as Gairloch and Dingwall.

I meet people from other places and different walks of life. Everyone is always interested in the local connections and make the experience more interesting for me. I have met retired ladies and gentlemen who have taken up a new hobby or two in their leisure time; visitors have come back to the Highlands after many years; during the summer holidays I meet families. I meet talented spinners and craftspeople who are always kind and helpful and happy to share ideas.

Reverend Donald Macfarlane

... Continued from the front page

He had been a Church of Scotland minister from 1940, spending 25 years at Inverness East Church. Having begun as a divinity student in 1936, he had been too late to put his name down for an autumn term so it wouldn't be counted towards his studies. It was then the done thing to put your name in to be sent wherever the Church chose – Macfarlane recalled returning home to Portree one evening to find a telegram directing him to be in Camusterrach, Applecross, the next day. He had to pack to leave immediately. "The man in charge was Rory MacLeod, Dr Roderick MacLeod, and he dealt in telegrams. You got short notice, you know ... you might be out visiting and when you came home there might be a telegram saying: 'Proceed immediately!' to wherever it happened to be. I remember one of the times, I didn't even know where the place was. I remember going down to the [Portree] pier, and asking 'How do I get to Applecross'? ... Students were kept in their place!"

He spent four months here, between June and September 1938. His Applecross patch then covered almost the entire length of the peninsula from Toscaig as far north as Arrina. "What was very common in these days was that the congregations that had missionaries ... had a pushbike which belonged to them. Well, it really belonged to the Board in Edinburgh. I cycled all around Applecross. You went round Fearnamore, Reaulay, Fearnabeag, Arrinacrinnachd (Arrina) and they were very nice people on the coast."

As part of his placement, he spent time on the north coast, staying with the missionary Angus MacBeath and his wife in Fearnamore, who were very kind to him.

Reverend Macfarlane stayed the rest of the time with Mr & Mrs Hardie at the Temperance Hotel (now the Applecross Inn). At a time of few motor cars in Applecross: "The car he [Mr Hardy] had was a V8! Just think of it.

You didn't want to be roaming around changing gear too much in that car!"

"I think I enjoyed being in Applecross more than any other place, although they were all very nice to me when I was in Ardnamurchan. I enjoyed my days in Applecross very much."

The minister at the time was the Reverend Donald MacLeod. "He was a very nice man, but he believed in getting his money's worth out of the Gaelic student! ... See the minister got the idea that, in the summer, there were a lot of English-speaking people and he much preferred to have the student take the service. The student may have been more fluent in English, but I don't know if he was more fluent in the reality of the Gaelic!"

Sadly, Reverend Macfarlane's wife of 66 years, Anne, passed away in November. Our sympathies to the family.

Photograph from: An Enduring Testimony for Christ - by Angus MacDonald.