

Dear Member,

After a successful season we are preparing to plan our winter maintenance. Amongst our visitors was Miranda Moody, who is on the governing committee of the Highland Society of London. That Society has monies to provide grants to support arts and culture in the highlands. She encouraged us to apply for funding from their Society, which we intend to do. As usual we had a nice mix of overseas and UK visitors. Many, many thanks to all our volunteers who keep the Heritage Centre open!

Celtic Stone Cross update



We are delighted to be able to say that the stone cross pieces recovered by James and Nicholas Goldthorpe when they were removing ivy and stabilizing the walls of the little chapel in Clachan graveyard have been verified by National Museum of Scotland experts as being part of the same Celtic Cross, recovered from the Monastery area at Clachan. The two large pieces which we have on display in the Heritage Centre are featured on our tea-towel and mug design. These smaller pieces will be returned to us to include in our display.

Derek MacLennan has crafted two beautiful wooden trestles for the larger pieces to rest on. Previously their cases were at ground level and not as prominent as they should be. We now need to install some lighting in the cases so that the designs on the stones can be better seen.

The Captain Scott

In 1949 an Independent Grant-making Trust was set up by Lord Dulverton. He endowed the Trust with over 2 million pounds to support national and regional charities. Before his elevation to the House of Lords, Lord Dulverton was Sir Gilbert Alan Hamilton Wills, a cousin of Arnold Wills who had bought Applecross Estate in 1929. He was the first Lord Dulverton.



The workforce for the "Captain Scott"



The Captain Scott in full sail

In the late 1960's the Dulverton Trust were supporting a charity based in Plockton, where it was planned to offer Adventure Training Cruises teaching sailing skills. It was decided to build a sailing schooner for this purpose, and so a three masted, 320 ton schooner was commissioned by the Trust using the Buckie boatyard of Herd & MacKenzie to build her.

Applecross' role in this venture was in the supply of timber. The major requirement was for straight-grown larch and large dimension oak.

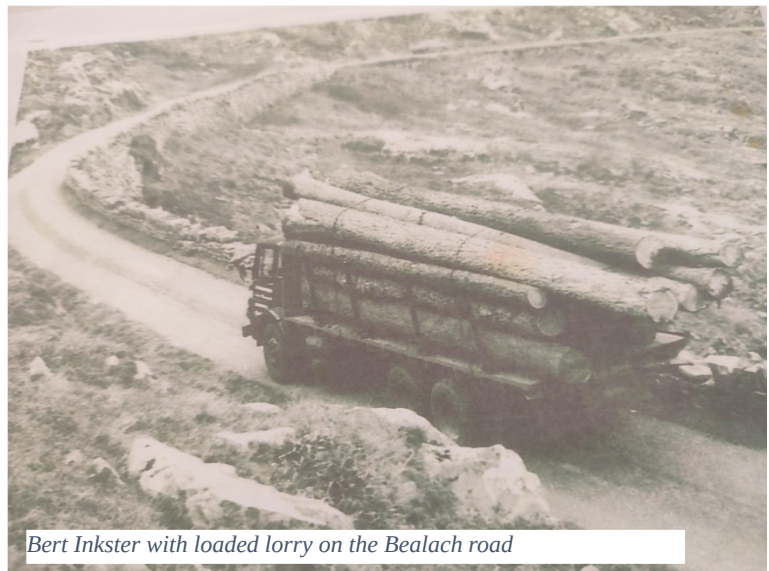
These necessities were in scarce supply, as be-

tween 1895 and the Second World War little deciduous

larch was planted on private estates in the north because of uncertainty over foreign imports. Applecross was one of the few estates able to provide such timber. As Mr. Munro expressed it "I have found in my search for oak and larch, that getting the right size and quality of larch was the most difficult to procure. After all, the logs had to be 40ft. and over in length, and straight with one sweep allowed. After a lot of searching, I found enough in some outlandish places including Applecross."!

However, as the north coast road was not yet constructed the only possibilities for removing the timber was to float it round the coast by sea (*a very costly undertaking*), or over the Bealach na Ba. As the logs were to be over 40ft long, their removal by road was not going to be an easy task! Mr. Duncan Munro, sawmiller, of Dingwall took on the challenge, having faith in the driving skills and ingenuity of his driver, Mr. Robert (Bert) Inkster of Evanton.

This is how Mr. Munro described Bert's method of tackling the difficult hairpin bends. "When Bert came to the Bealach hairpin bends, he had to reverse several times at each turn and the last was impossible because the logs were up against the rocks. Bert however, was not beat, he braked, put on the hand brake and got out and loosened the chains of the lorry, which were holding the logs, and then reversed the lorry (*pushing the logs forward over the cab*) until he had room to turn. He then tightened the chains and set off for Dingwall"! Mr. Munro



Bert Inkster with loaded lorry on the Bealach road

paid Bert this tribute "I do not know another driver who would undertake to do this". Mr. Inkster had to make over thirty of these trips to remove all the timber, which had to be completed before winter set in, as the Bealach road is often closed for lengthy periods during winter.

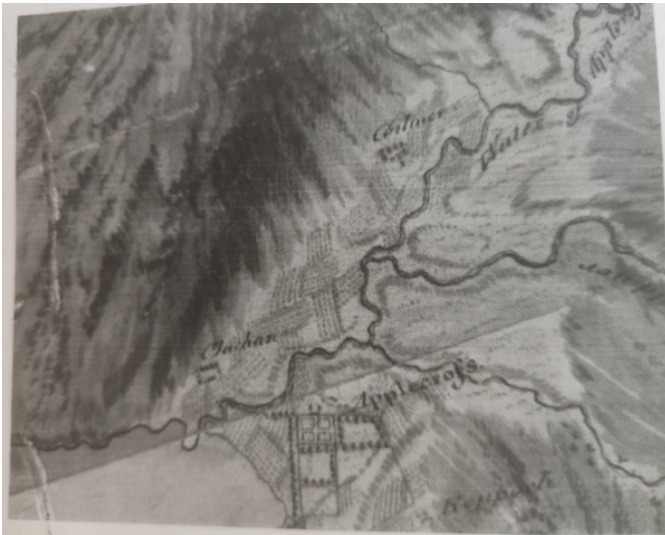
Mr. Munro also paid tribute to the Wills family as the woodland owners for their wholehearted support for the project in releasing their best timber. The Applecross forestry at that time was managed for the Wills family, by Mr. Jack Evans of Messrs. Bingham, Hughes and MacPherson

The schooner "Captain Scott" was built at a cost of around £200.000 and from 1971 – 1977 she sailed along the north-west coast of Scotland. In 1977 she was bought and taken to Oman.

(The information in this article was taken from a Scotsman newspaper article by Anthony Pledger, provided by Ruairaidh Cameron and compiled by Catriona McCowan. Photographs are from the newspaper, Google and Facebook)

Hartfield House

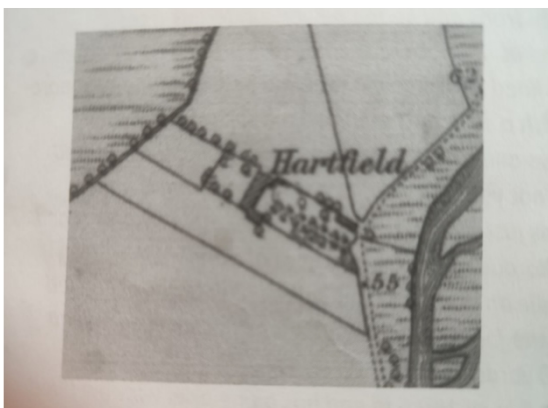
Some of our readers may be familiar with Hartfield House, which lies about half a mile to the north-west of Applecross House. This article is based on meticulous research by Alan Gillies, who has provided so much information to our Society. The name Hartfield is a relatively modern one, the area being previously known as Coille Mhuiridh. The Gaidhlig name is still used for the cottage behind Hartfield House. The meaning of Coille Mhuiridh is not certain. Coille means a wood, but Mhuiridh could be “a bulwark” which would relate to the banking of the Applecross river running below the house. Another possible meaning is that it commemorates St. Maelrubha who established the monastery in Applecross in the 7th Century. Maelrubha was sometimes referred to as Mourie. Indeed the spelling of Coille Mhuiridh has many forms in the various historical records which Alan has found. These included “ Kilivore, Kilivorie, Coilmor, Keilmuire etc.”.



William Roy drew up a map of Applecross around 1750 at which time Hartfield House had not been built, instead there was a small township with fields around it. Roy called the township “Coilmor”.

The first written record Alan found is in 1678 of John Matheson, tacksman in Coille Mhuiridh (written Keilmuire in Applecross). The Matheson family were said to have acted as foster parents to the MacKenzie laird of Applecross’ children. It was a recognised practice for tacksmen to act as foster parents to the chief’s children to strengthen clan bonds. In 1684 it is John’s son, Kenneth, who is noted as living in “Kilvorie”.

In 1715 the Stuart uprising by the “Old Pretender” was initiated. The MacKenzie’s of Applecross backed the Jacobites and as a result their land was seized. It was later bought back by Roderick MacKenzie. It is probably because of this seizure of Applecross Estate that a rental list was drawn up in 1718. At that time Kenneth MacKenzie is listed as the Tacksman for “Kylivorie”



Captain Donald MacKenzie, brother of the Applecross laird had served in the 100th regiment of foot in India until it was disbanded in 1785. He then returned to Applecross and married Ann MacLeod, daughter of the laird of Raasay in 1793. It is probable that he gave the name "Hartfield" to the newly built central part of the current Hartfield House although it is not until 1798 that the modern name "Hartfield" is first recorded in the baptismal record for Flora Loudon MacKenzie, Donald and Ann's daughter. This indicates a growing influence of the English language amongst the gentry. The couple had six daughters, of whom Maria was the youngest. She had an amazing life, of which we will hear more in the next newsletter!

In 1820 the wedding of Ann and Donald's daughter, Jane took place at Hartfield. Sadly, Donald had died the previous year, however his widow provided a wedding to remember as this extract from the Inverness Courier shows!

" Married ... at Hartfield House, on Tuesday, 22nd August, James MacDonald, Esq. of Balranald and younger of Lyndale, to Miss Jane MacKenzie, the third daughter of the deceased Captain MacKenzie of Hartfield. The event was celebrated in the true old style of Highland hospitality, there being upward of 30 ladies and gentlemen present, who did not separate till the end of the week, but tripping it on the light fantastic toe to the enlivening sounds of Mr. Morrison's excellent band, and sharing in the liberal hospitalities of Hartfield and Applecross House, the residence of the worthy member for Ross-shire."

Twenty one years later in 1841 the first detailed census of the United Kingdom was drawn up. At this time the residents of Hartfield were:

Ann MacKenzie, Captain Donald's widow, her unmarried daughter Elizabeth, another daughter Isabella with her seven children, nine servants plus two other households (presumably living in the wings) of a shepherd and servant and a joiner with three children (no mention of a wife). In all, 25 persons!

In 1843 Ann, Donald's widow died at Hartfield. In the 1851 census, Ann & Donald's unmarried daughter, Elizabeth was still living in Hartfield. Living with her was her niece, also a female visitor with a servant, plus Elizabeth's own servants – a groom, a herd boy, a house servant and a dairy maid. Elizabeth was recorded as being 40 in that census, but sadly her death is recorded only a year later in 1852.

Five years later the whole Applecross estate, including Hartfield was sold by Thomas, the seventh MacKenzie Laird to the Duke of Leeds, ending the MacKenzie's tenure of the estate. – **More to come in the next newsletter!**

(article compiled by Catriona McCowan)

Wishing all our members good health over the winter months, a joyful Christmas and a good New Year!