

Broughton Tolbooth 1582-1829

BROUGHTON HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 30

SUMMER 2012

The Botanic Cottage Project

Dr. David Rae, Director of Horticulture and Learning at the Royal Botanic Garden, traces how a building that was part of the Broughton landscape for two-and-a-half centuries found its way down to Inverleith and is now promised a renewed place in the study of botany.

David Rae's article first appeared online in early June, at local community paper *Spurtle's* website.



Although it was founded in 1670 adjacent to Holyrood Palace, the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) has moved location four times. The third site was established in 1763 next to Leith Walk and it moved from there to its current location in the Inverleith district of Edinburgh in 1821–23.

While very little remains of the garden at the Leith Walk site, the gardener's cottage, which formed the entrance to the garden, remained in an ever-deteriorating state, at one time being rented accommodation and later used as an architect's office. The importance of the Botanic Cottage, as it

came to be known, was rediscovered by members of the Friends of Hopetoun Crescent Garden (site of part of the old Leith Walk Garden) in 2007, when consent had already been given for its demolition. They arranged for it to be recorded in archaeological detail and for its stones and timbers to be carefully numbered and stored.

The importance of the Cottage lies in its provenance and history. The Regius Keeper at the time of its construction was Professor John Hope (pictured left with stick)* who was a botanist of international renown and a leading scientist at the

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Renewed thanks to Eileen Dickie for doing the Desktop Publishing, to Alan McIntosh for proof-reading – and to both of them for their advice.

Ideas or contributions for our next edition?

Phone editor John Dickie on 0131 556 0903

or e-mail [john.dickie@blueyonder.co.uk].



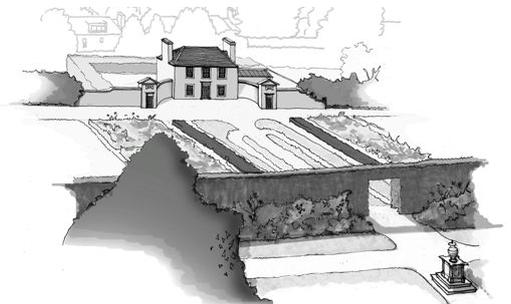
Editor: This 18th century view of the house and garden is by Scottish artist Jacob More. Born in Edinburgh in 1740, as an apprentice with the Norrie family of house-painters he developed skills including painting landscapes. He also designed and painted sets for the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh. He made his name first with his Scottish landscapes, but later his focus shifted to the landscapes of Italy, and by 1773 he had settled there; he died in Rome in 1793.

time of the Scottish Enlightenment, along with men like the geologist James Hutton and the chemist Joseph Black. The structure was designed by John Adam, eldest of the Adam brothers, and extended in the 1780s by James Craig, author of the 1767 plan for the New Town of Edinburgh. An extensive archive survives detailing all the craftsmen who built it. The Cottage provided accommodation for the Head Gardener, with John Hope's Lecture Room on the upper floor. Many of Hope's lecture notes and illustrations survive and, in this room, many notable future botanists and doctors were taught.

After demolition, the Botanic Cottage Trust, chaired by Lord Hope, was formed to secure a new future for the building and, after reviewing various sites, the obvious choice became the north boundary of the Royal Botanic Garden. The plan now is to reconstruct the Cottage with as many of the original building materials as possible and to use it as the centre for a new interactive Teaching Garden. So, after many years of neglect and decline, the Cottage will once more be put to use as a centre of learning.

Architects Simpson and Brown, who specialise in heritage projects, are leading the design process. The upstairs room is to be left unaltered, as in Hope's day, while downstairs the space has been divided into a classroom or workroom, storage space and toilets. Outside, hidden by a single-

storey wall at each end, there is space for a glasshouse, potting shed/tool store and picnic benches. A Masterplan for the use and design of the Teaching Garden (the area behind the large beech hedge formerly known as the Demonstration Garden) is being led by landscape architects ERZ. Funding is being sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund and a Stage 1 application has been submitted. Match funding will be provided by the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and other potential sources are being investigated, such as landfill tax and other grant-giving bodies and individuals.



Thanks to Simpson & Brown for the drawing

Editor: the following editions of the Newsletter include coverage of the Botanic Cottage story – Numbers 22 (Winter 2007 p3), 23 (Summer 2008, p3), 24 (Winter 2008,p3) and 25 (Summer 2009,p8).

* Editor: The well-known Scottish caricaturist John Kay created the image of Hope in 1785. Who is the gardener he is talking to? His first head (principal) gardener was John Williamson, but he had died in 1780; there was an acting head gardener for about a year; and in 1782 Malcolm McCoig took up the post – and lasted for the rest of Hope's tenure. 'It is probably McCoig who appears in Kay's caricature' writes Henry Noltie in his book *John Hope (1725-1786)*, Alan Morton's *Memoir of a Scottish Botanist – a new and revised edition*, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh 2011, pp. 35-38.

Apology

Newsletter 29, Winter edition 2012, page 2: *Memories of East Claremont Street during the Second World War*. We made two mistakes when transcribing the text of Joyce Wallace's article:

(1) in the first paragraph we missed out the name of the man who ran the shop at 2 Melgund Terrace at that time – Mr C. W. Cameron;

(2) in the third paragraph we read the name of the Air Raid Wardens' Captain wrongly – it should have been Black, not Blake.

Sorry again, Joyce! But we were able to correct the mistakes before the Newsletter went online, so that was a bit of a consolation.

They lived in Broughton

This is the fourth in a series republishing articles first printed in our local community paper *Spurtle* in recent years. Following two writers Robert Garioch and Compton Mackenzie, and entertainer Harold Lloyd, here we have Patrick Crichton (c.1755–1825), soldier and coachmaker, by Alan McIntosh (*Spurtle* No 164, November 2008)



In a “Nooks and Crannies” article (*Spurtle* No 162, September 2008) John Ross Maclean wrote:

This venerable gentleman should feature in a tome devoted solely to the faces which gaze from the city’s many effigies in stone and bronze.

Unlike that of Lord Melville

on his draughty pillar in St Andrew’s Square, this stern but benign image is easily accessible. It adorns a keystone above the doorway at 1, Gayfield Place. It is said to be contemporary with the building, which dates from 1791, and may represent Neptune ... Neptune certainly befits this location on the highroad to the port of Leith and the city’s gateway to his boundless realms.

Any further information on this fascinating but obscure piece would be gratefully received.

In Issue 162 we highlighted the ‘Neptune’ at 1 Gayfield Place. Details of an interesting early resident have now come to light.

Patrick Crichton (caricatured by John Kay, right) was born in Edinburgh c.1755, the son of a Canongate ‘coach maker to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales’. In 1776 he was appointed Ensign in the 43rd Regiment of Foot, and served in the American War of Independence with such distinction that he made Captain in the 57th Regiment and received public thanks from the Commander in Chief. After surrender and

imprisonment at Yorktown, Crichton entered partnership with his father. He was chosen 2nd Major and Captain of the East New Town Company of Edinburgh Volunteers, and in 1796 raised a second battalion (1,200+ men) in 4 hours. That year he moved to Gayfield Place, his firm – now Crichton & Field – also transferring to Leith Walk. Around this time he was badly wounded in a duel with a surgeon-snob who’d declined to fight his American business partner. In 1805 he became Lieut-Colonel Commandant of the 2nd Edinburgh Regiment (local militia). He entered the Council in 1794 and later served as Treasurer.

Remembered by Paton in 1838 as a ‘fine manly-looking person, rather florid in his complexion, exceedingly polite in his manners, and of gentlemanly attainments’, he married the ‘beloved and amiable’ Margaret Lambie in 1786 and had 8 children, one of whom became a much decorated military surgeon and personal physician to Tsar Nicholas I.



Crichton died at 1 Gayfield Place on 14 May 1825, and his funeral was attended by the Provost and other notables. His own account of ancestors and career, with additions by later generations, appears at: [\[http://bit.ly/NgR8il\]](http://bit.ly/NgR8il)

Broughton First World War Memorials Project

Society member Jessie Denholm outlines the amazing progress that has been made on this project already, since it was agreed to embark on it a year ago.

Introduction

One thing that all of us know about the First World War is that the death rate was horrific – the Scottish National War Memorial in Edinburgh Castle commemorates nearly 150,000 Scottish fatalities of that war. Such figures are, however, cold impersonal statistics. It would be much more meaningful if we knew who they were, where they lived, worked, what church (if any) they attended and sometimes other personal information. In the summer of 2011 we in Broughton History Society decided to try to identify the fatalities from our area with the aim of assembling something for publication in time for the centenary of the First World War.

Starting off

In many communities the starting point for such a project would be the local community war memorial. We don’t have such a memorial. We defined our area of interest as starting at the Edinburgh/Leith boundary at Pilrig Street and going as far west as Dundas Street. The northern boundary was the Water of Leith and the southern the line of Leith Walk to York Place. We decided that we would look for fatalities with addresses within that area and research the names on war memorials which are or originally were within that area.



In the NW corner of Rosebank Cemetery stands a Celtic Cross, at its base this dedication:

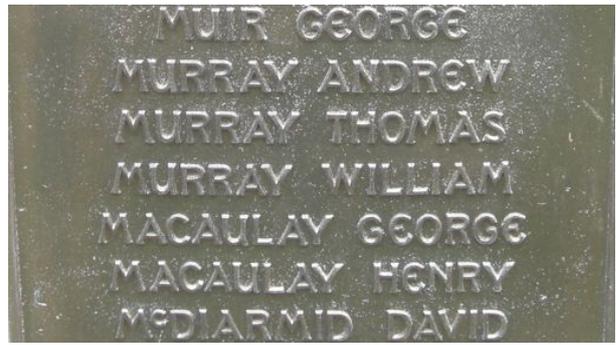
OFFICERS, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS
AND MEN
77 BATTALION, THE ROYAL SCOTS,
LEITH TERRITORIAL BATTALION, WHO MET THEIR
DEATH AT GRETNA ON 22ND MAY 1915,
IN A TERRIBLE RAILWAY DISASTER
ON THEIR WAY TO FIGHT FOR THEIR COUNTRY.
THIS MEMORIAL AND A BED IN LEITH HOSPITAL
ARE DEDICATED
BY MOURNING COMRADES AND FRIENDS.

War Memorials

The war memorials for our area are mainly those of churches – the exceptions are those of Broughton High School and Gayfield Square Police Station. Some of the churches no longer exist but we have tracked down many of their war memorials either through visits to their successor churches or by reference to the website of the Scottish War Memorials Project Index. One war memorial in our area is understood to have been lost – that for Dublin Street Baptist Church – and we have not yet located memorials for the former Davidson Church in Eyre Place or Albany Street Congregationalist Church. Does anyone know anything about them?

Other Sources

Not everyone went to church. Some of those who are named on war memorials in our area lived well outside our area and the converse may well have applied. We have, therefore, looked to other sources, mainly newspapers, for information about people known to have lived in our area. Edinburgh then had two evening newspapers –the *Evening*



On the wall behind the Cross, one to the left of it and one to the right, are two series of plaques listing the names of the soldiers who died that day. At least six had Broughton connections – more may eventually be identified. Two of them were Privates Andrew Murray – whose name is on St Paul's Episcopal Church's war memorial (this was before St George's joined them); and Henry McAulay – who lived at Paterson' Court at the east end of Barony Street (demolished in the 1930s).

Dispatch and the *Evening News*. By the end of 1914 both were geared up to supplying their readers with information about local fatalities. This can take the form of news items under the heading of 'Roll of Honour', photographs with accompanying text, and in the case of the *Evening News* death announcements inserted by the families under the heading of 'For Their Country' – this separates them from civilian deaths.

The *Evening Dispatch* tends to have better quality photographs but less by way of news items. The *Evening News*, however, represents a rich seam of information about Edinburgh's war dead which is waiting to be mined by local historians. Using this source has given us information that would not have been readily available elsewhere. Sometimes this information may consist only of the address of the man concerned (or of his parents). In other instances we may get information about his education, his career before the war, his sporting activities and even his hobbies. This sort of information enables us to build up a more rounded picture of the individuals concerned.

There are other printed sources such as the Rolls of Honour published by various schools. These contain biographical information about their former pupils together with photographs of them. For instance we have identified 37 former pupils of George Heriot's School with connections to our area.

Researching the Names

All names, whether from war memorials, newspapers or other sources, are checked off against the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Register. This contains, for each man (or woman) who died between 5th August 1914 and 31 August 1921 while serving in the armed forces, certain basic information such as the date of death, the unit in which he was serving and the

place of burial or, if he has no known grave, the Memorial on which he is commemorated. On some records there is additional information supplied by the next-of-kin. If the man concerned served in the Australian, Canadian or New Zealand Forces there are other websites that will give free access to further military information.

After that stage we go on to use a series of records that are more usually used by family historians – namely those on the website [www.ancestry.co.uk]. While this is a subscription site, it can be accessed without charge at any of the public libraries in Edinburgh. This website gives us access to the 1901 Census (and earlier censuses) and to a variety of military records.

The End Product

By pulling together information from various sources we can construct short biographical notes about most of the men (there is only one woman so far) whose names we have collected. These will generally consist of three parts – information about their lives before the war, information about their war service and where they are buried (or commemorated if they have no known grave), and the war memorials on which they are known to be commemorated in Edinburgh and elsewhere in the United Kingdom. There will inevitably be some names on war memorials that we cannot identify

and others about whom very little information is found.

At present this project is very much 'work in progress'. About 560 names have so far been identified and for some of them biographical notes have been prepared. It is hoped that this material will eventually be published. Probably a website would be the most practical way of handling such large quantities of information and we would particularly like to hear from anyone who could help with setting up a website. Another possibility is that we could publish booklets on particular war memorials or on the war dead of particular streets. It is hoped that no matter what form the 'end product' takes it will form a suitable memorial to the many local men who died in the First World War.

Editor: If you think you might be able to help us with this project in any way, however small, please contact us (see details on front page).

Jessie has suggested some possibilities:

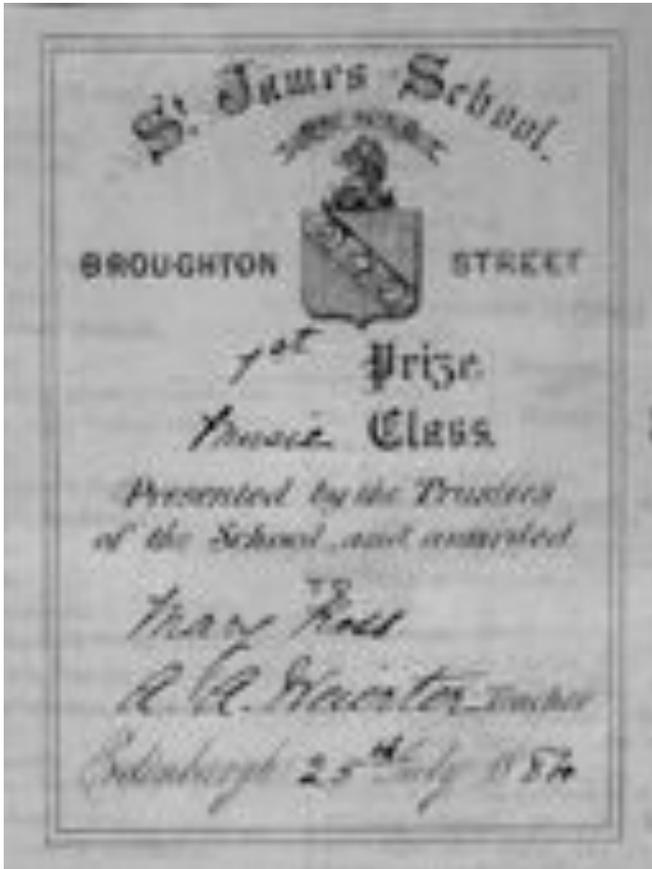
- the memorial from Dublin Street Baptist Church is understood to have been lost – is there anyone out there who can throw some light on this?
- the project group has not yet located memorials for the former Davidson's Church in Eyre Place or the Congregationalist Church in Albany Street – does anyone know anything about them?
- can anyone help set up a website?



St Oran's Gaelic Church was at Nos.22-24 Broughton Street from 1877 (replacing the Catholic Apostolic Church when it moved down to Mansfield) until 1948. Their First World War memorial is now in Greyfriars Kirk. The minister at St Oran's at the start of the War was Rev John Campbell MacGregor (listed top left on the plaque). He held a meeting there which triggered the movement for recruiting any Highlanders in the city and also the formation of the 1914 Association of Highland Societies. He then signed up himself, as chaplain to Highland Division. Struck by a bullet, he died of his wounds at Dieppe two days after his 47th birthday on 4th November 1916. Until quite recently his Celtic-style army chaplain's cross was displayed in the Museum of Scotland, but it's no longer where it was – we've written asking where it has gone.

The story of Mary Ross and her teacher Annie Weierter – Broughton 1884

In its 2002 summer edition, our Newsletter reproduced a label found on the fly leaf of a book recently bought from Broughton Books. The book was *Memoirs of Sir Walter Scott*. The label showed that it was presented to pupil Mary Ross of St James School, Broughton Street in 1884 – she had won ‘1st Prize, Music Class’; and it was signed by her teacher, A.A.Weierter.



St James' Episcopal Chapel was built in the early 1820s, in a block of flats at the north-west corner of Broughton Place, assimilated with the houses

in Broughton Street. The ground floor level was used for a school.

But in 1869 the pupils moved into a more spacious school built adjacent to the Chapel, facing onto Broughton Street – this was the school Mary Ross attended. It continued as a school until 1933, with various changes of use thereafter, and is currently the Stafford Centre.

Newsletter editor Alice Lauder invited readers who knew anything about Mary Ross to contact her. There was no response – for nearly 10 years! Then this February she had a phone-call from a Mr John Weierter of Kelso:

‘This had been brought to his attention by a friend who noticed the name of the teacher having the same unusual surname as himself. Mr Weierter says the name is of Germanic origin; his great-grandfather having come from mid-Europe about 1850. Miss Annie Ameila Weierter was indeed a relative.

‘The teacher went on to marry a Wm. Fraser, Sculptor.

‘The Weierter family moved to Corstorphine at the time of Annie's father's retirement and they opened a grocer's shop there which after lasting for a long time is now no longer in existence.’

Any more information about Mary Ross or the Weierter family would be very welcome! See front page for contact details.

Ella Brodie

Ella Brodie (née Smith) died peacefully on 3rd July, at Eildon House Nursing Home.

In 2001 I did an Open University oral history course which involved interviewing six Broughton residents, Ella being one of them. What follows is based on what she told me.

She was born in 1918, in Broxburn; the family moved to Broughton Court when she was still an infant. Her father was a shale miner, but he left the family; her mother had worked in a printing works. Ella left school at 14 for a series of jobs, two local – in Duncan's chocolate factory; and (briefly!) ‘blinding potatoes’ in a tub of cold water. She married Joe Brodie, and brought up two children in Broughton Court. She took a part-time cleaner's job at a local school while her children grew up, and then full-time cleaning jobs in family

homes until her husband became ill. Later in life – a choir twice a week, bowling and church activities.

Aspects of her life she often came back to were the characters and neighbourliness in Broughton Court – and the joys of hot running water and other comforts when she left it! My course project was about community identity, did World War II affect the sense of belonging in Broughton? Here are some of Ella's wartime memories.

- ‘I was the first lady railway porter in Edinburgh’ – a job won when, as a waitress, she gave a customer sugar beyond the ration; it turned out he was a manager on the Railway.

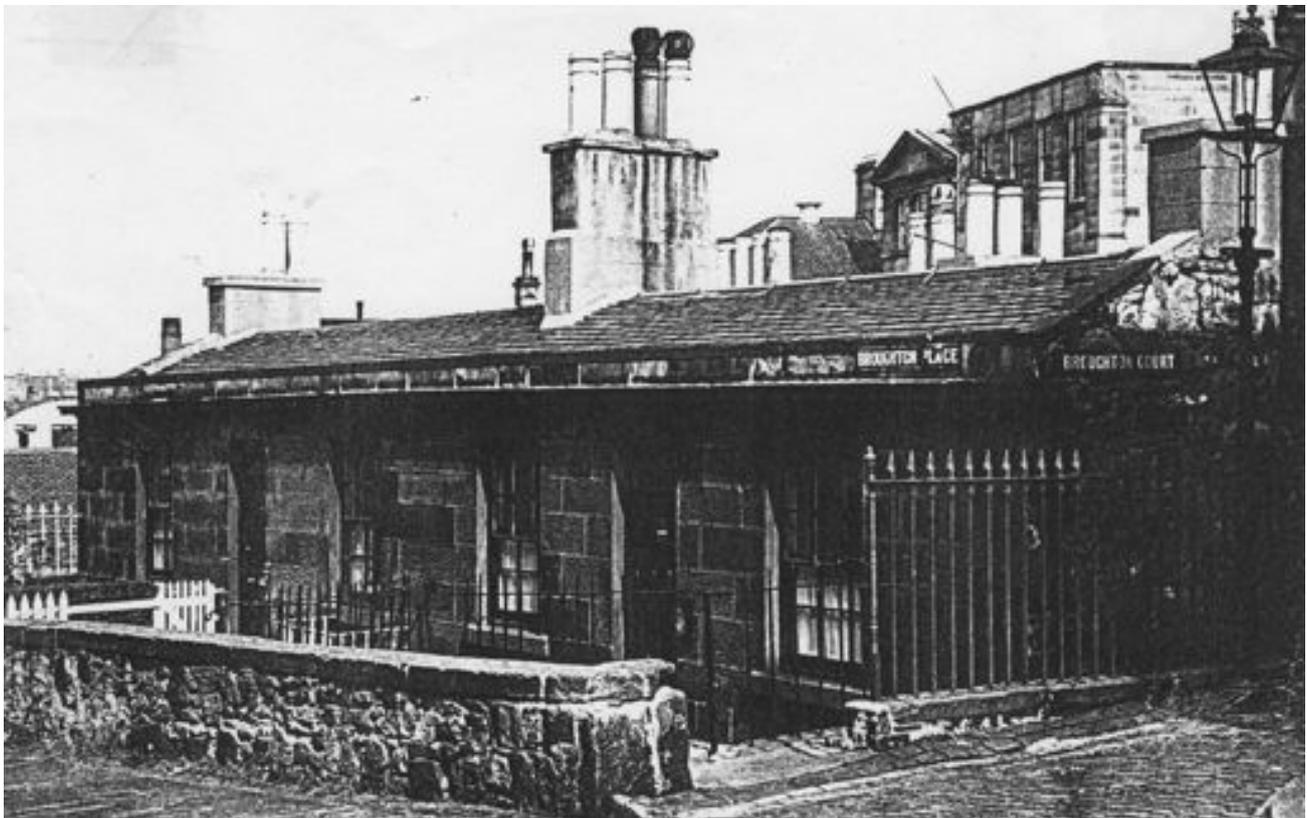
- When her firstborn was on the way: 'They called me up to see that I was doing a war job, something that was worthwhile doing. And he just took one look at me, he says I think you're doing enough for the country!'

- And at the end of hostilities, hearing that her young sister had suffered a heart attack and might die, she struggled through the celebrating crowds to get to the other side of Edinburgh: 'Maybe what was going on in my life wasnae as interesting as what was going on in the War, I suppose, but we had to get there you know – she was dead when we got there.'

Overall, while wartime conditions certainly meant day-to-day life was different, the people I interviewed did not feel the nature of their community changed fundamentally during the war years.



Ella on the right, with her hand on the shoulder of her husband's aunt. Her own daughter Eleanor and Peggy Desmond's Mary – Peggy was an actress and one of the 'characters' Ella enjoyed having as neighbours. In the backgreen at Broughton Court, 1954 (with London Street School in the background).



Broughton Court from Broughton Place, 1959. The people on the upper floor of this side of the building had their front doors out into the Place – and were sometimes a bit 'snooty', according to Ella. The street lamp in the photo lit the steps down to the front of the Court.

However, five out of six of them shared a clear perception there had been a fundamental change in the Broughton community between 'then' – when they were young – and now. Ella's is the strongest statement on community solidarity that came out of the interviews; and it came spontaneously, as the question I'd actually asked was if she had relations living nearby when she was growing up.

' Well everybody was your relation – you know, everybody knew everybody else. If you didn't have it, somebody else would have it. There was a lot of unemployment too. They would share. Nobody ever went hungry, or anything like that; it was just – what would you say? – neighbourly.'

The people I interviewed, each in their own words, identified distancing of neighbours as the major change in their community: 'it's just that we're all separating, and it's wrong', said Ella. As to why this had happened, suggestions included more women going out to work; and a less stable population – one thought this was a longer-term consequence of the War, through the increased mobility it seemed to have triggered.

I've tried to give an idea of the kind of contribution Ella made to recording the history of Broughton; but it goes far beyond this. In an earlier project

she gave detailed information about Broughton Court which we couldn't have got from any other source (see our tribute to David Aitken in the Winter edition); and visitors to Society exhibitions have been able to listen to her on a cassette player – as recorded by Jean Bell long before I ever interviewed her.

I'm sure many will join me in being grateful to Ella for the fund of information and insight she has shared with us. And that future researchers will value it too.



Ella on the right, as an extra when 'Chariots of Fire' was being filmed at Broughton Place Church in 1980. The late Katie McGurdy beside her – they'd remained friends ever since being neighbours in Broughton Court.

The Museum of Scotland

Back in January 2006 Society member Ronnie Cramond gave us a talk on the Museum of Scotland. Last year he was awarded an Edinburgh University Masters degree for his dissertation *The motivation for creating the Museum of Scotland, and the educational effectiveness of its history content for the visiting public* – 'a look behind the scenes at the Museum' he described it to Alice Lauder. In addition to copious documentary sources, Ronnie's research included 121 structured interviews of visitors.

A quote from the Abstract at the beginning of the dissertation: 'The overall conclusion is that visitors did indeed learn from good, object-based displays, but many visitors, even native Scots, had disappointingly little understanding of Scottish history before their visit.'

The full dissertation is available on line at [www.era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/5537].

SYLLABUS 2012

- Sep 10 David Gavine
Sundials in Edinburgh
- Oct 8 Mitchell Manson
*RL Stevenson and
the gardens of Edinburgh*
- Nov 19 Simon Fairnie
Fisherwomen
- Dec 10 Xmas soirée

All at Drummond Community High School.
Tea/coffee and biscuits from 7pm,
Speaker at 7.30pm

Newsletter Circulation

We print 120 copies of each edition. Around half go to Society members. Eight non-members who have shown a special interest get it regularly; and for each edition one or two on a once-off basis. I'm currently posting it to ten other history groups. And copies go to libraries, schools and local doctors' and dentists' waiting rooms.

Newsletter online

We have a dedicated page of our own on the Broughton community paper's website (www.broughtonspurtle.org.uk). On their home page you'll see **Broughton History Society** in the left-hand column: click on that for general Society information, the syllabus for 2012/2013, and back issues of the newsletter.