

# CLISH-CLASH



**The e-newsletter of the Scottish Local History Forum**

Scottish Charity SCO15850

ISSUE 44

JANUARY 2021

ISSN 2055-6411

A VERY GOOD NEW YEAR 2021  
TO EVERYONE

## SLHF NEWS

■ Welcome to *Clish-Clash*, the e-newsletter of the Scottish Local History Forum, giving you information on what's happening in various parts of Scotland. Please enrich the picture by sending us local history news and information about events where you are. Simply go to <https://slhf.org/contact-slhf>. Use this link too to give us feedback on *Clish-Clash* (and thanks to those members who have already been in touch).

■ The ongoing closure of the National Records of Scotland is becoming a serious matter for historians and academics, not least the PhD students whose projects rely on access to the archives and for whom extensions to PhD candidature might not be possible (depending on the source of their PhD funding). The Forum is supporting a campaign to move towards reopening the NRS, adding its name to an open letter on this matter to the Minister. The new Covid variant will of course mean that caution will continue to remain paramount.

■ The **Trustees'** agreed at their 7<sup>th</sup> December meeting that their meetings will continue to be via Zoom (with the exception of one face-to-face meeting in the next 12 months). Zoom has proven to be both efficient and effective. We also hope that continuing with this way of meeting might encourage potential Trustees from further afield in Scotland to put themselves forward to be Trustees. Please contact us (as above) if you are interested in becoming a Trustee to help run the Forum..

■ **New Trustee:** Jamie Sutherland, one of the social media team, has recently volunteered and been co-opted as a Trustee. There are now two Trustee vacancies (see previous item).

■ **New Advisory Committee Members:** Trustees agreed to co-opt Ian Shearer (Friends of Kinneil), Ian Copeland (Cupar Heritage) and Sandra Purves (Broughton History Society). This brings the Advisory Committee to its full membership of 12.

■ **Social media** is one of the many ways in which we keep people informed of what's happening so we are

delighted that in a recent week the SLHF **Facebook** page reached over 1100 people. Visit and follow us on <https://www.facebook.com/scottishlocalhistoryforum>

■ **SLHF 2021 EVENTS: The Annual SLHF/National Library of Scotland talk 2021** will be given by Tom Dowds on 'The 1820 Uprising – The view from the East', This is likely to take place using Zoom and please watch the website for further information.

The Trustees are monitoring the pandemic before deciding on events for 2021 and their format. It is hoped to run a Walk-&-Talk event as well as the conference on 'Scottish Sports and Pastimes' postponed from 2020. Dates and formats will be announced later.

■ **JOURNAL:** The next two issues of the Forum's journal will be *SLH* 108 (late January) and *SLH* 109 (April). They will both contain the usual balance of Articles, Notes & Queries, News Features and Reviews, although from Journal 109 'Notes & Queries' will be renamed 'Short Papers'. This change reflects the fact that we are receiving more shorter articles and few queries. The decision will be kept under review. As far as the News Features section is concerned, it can be confirmed that *Clish-Clash* will continue to cover most of the day-to-day local history society news. However, we also receive substantial material on 'national events with a local context' that seems appropriate for the journal. A current example is the introduction in Scotland of 'Red Wheel' plaques marking significant sites of transport history (similar to the 'Blue Plaques' that mark former residences of famous people). The 'Red Wheel' series has been

## CONTACT DETAILS

'*Clish-clash*' means repeated gossip, so do email your local history news & information to [scottishlocalhistoryforum@gmail.com](mailto:scottishlocalhistoryforum@gmail.com) (or via our website contact form <http://slhf.org/contact-slhf>)

*Clish-clash* is sent to all members who have provided a valid email address. To opt out, choose 'Newsletter' on the website contacts page. *Clish-Clash* is also freely available on our website. Go to <https://www.slhf.org/newsletter>

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ISSN 2055-6411

developed elsewhere in the UK over the last decade, but the first Scottish examples were unveiled as recently as 2019, as reported in *SLH* 105 (Spring 2020). The National Transport Trust as providers of the plaques has had difficulty in organising appropriate ceremonies during lockdown, but has come up with a satisfactory formula, involving just three people: one to 'present' the Red Wheel; a local person to receive it; and a photographer to record the occasion. One such ceremony, inaugurating a 'Wheel' to commemorate the first railway in Scotland, was held at Cockenzie on 21 September 2020, and will be reported in *Journal* 108. Another of the kind, to commemorate the world's first sea-going train ferry, took place at Burntisland on 16 December 2020 and will be covered in *Journal* 109. Fortunately, the photographer on both occasions, John Yellowlees, was happy to submit a photo for publication in *SLH*, together with a report of the event.

■ An important milestone for the **SLHF website**: in November we took our 2000<sup>th</sup> order via the website (a new member). Total value taken via the website to date is £24,359.

## LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES & MUSEUMS

■ At the time of writing (Jan 2 2021), all of the country with the exception of the Scottish Islands is now in Tier 4. Some archive venues have gradually reopened and rather than aim to list all those that are or are not, we ask you please to contact individual archives. We will however continue to update the situation with the National Library of Scotland and the National Records of Scotland. In an ever-changing situation the latest Scottish Government guidance on travel and opening of public facilities such as libraries can be found at <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

■ The **National Library of Scotland** had reopened their services for library card holders but the latest news on the National Library of Scotland website is that Library buildings are closed to the public until 19 January at the earliest. Click here for an update on Library services <https://www.nls.uk/service-disruption>. Our thanks to Jennifer Giles for the following news from the National Library of Scotland.

■ **Collecting the Pandemic**: Since the start of lockdown the National Library of Scotland has been collecting publications that document and record the pandemic so that future researchers will know what life has been like throughout Scotland during this pandemic. This is ongoing but from the start has included the material published to help us all, such as information leaflets and e-resources produced by community groups, campaigns and charities, local councils, health boards, government organisations and faith groups. As time has gone by, these organisations are also now producing first-hand accounts and reports of the pandemic's impact on their

communities, as are trade and professional organisations. Academic works and journals are also now being received covering everything from medical research to the impacts on sport and the economy. Much of this is only published in electronic format, which we also collect by legal deposit. A major focus of activity has been to collect websites, twitter feeds and public-facing Facebook pages. These will be especially important for future researchers as much of our lives and activities have only been visible on these platforms and they are truly authentic voices. At time of writing, the Library has archived 4096 new Scottish Covid websites and Covid pages within existing sites. These cover a vast array of organisations and all will be included in a Covid-19 collection in the UK Web Archive, along with those collected by the other legal deposit libraries. While most of the collecting activity at present is of published works, we are also collecting film and manuscripts.

If you can help or would like more information please contact Jennifer Giles ([j.giles@nls.uk](mailto:j.giles@nls.uk))

**Country Life Archive**: The National Library has recently taken out a subscription to "Country Life Archive". This new e-resource is the full text archive of issues of *Country Life* magazine from 1897 – 2005, in colour and fully searchable. Concentrating on country estates and all aspects of rural living, this gives fascinating contemporary details of country houses, lifestyles and leisure pursuits, but in so doing also gives insight into the ideas and culture of the time. It is also full of amazing photographs, adverts and biographical information. This wonderful resource is a must for all interested in British and Scottish society over the period, especially local historians and genealogists. However, it is also a joy just to browse, and there is sure to be something of interest to everyone. Find the resource from this link: <https://auth.nls.uk/eresources/browse/307>. To use this from your home you will need to register online as a Library reader and to have a postal address in Scotland. This is very straightforward to do and the information is here: <https://auth.nls.uk/join/>.

■ **National Records Scotland NRS** on-site services are still closed. They are currently working on plans for a phased re-opening and are likely to open initially with reduced opening hours and facilities, and visiting will include a range of new measures to ensure everyone's safety. The latest position can be found here <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/about-us/service-status> The campaign to re-open NRS has been noted above.

■ The **Mitchell Library** is closed for at least three weeks from December 23.

■ **Scotland's Rock Art Project** has a Photography Challenge for photos of rock art. Closing date 31

March 2021. Details and the terms and conditions for entry here: <https://tinyurl.com/y36dyr2g>

■ **Historic Environment Scotland** has awarded funding of £194,349 to eighteen coast and water heritage projects. Details are available here. <https://tinyurl.com/y5gowk7s>

■ **In Their Own Write** is a three-year, AHRC-funded project, running from 2018 to 2021, which uses letters from paupers and other poor people, and associated manuscript material such as petitions, sworn statements and advocate letters (those written on behalf of paupers) to investigate the lives of the poor between 1834 and 1900. It is run jointly by The National Archives (TNA) at Kew and the University of Leicester. The majority of work focuses on the many thousands of volumes of poor law correspondence (MH12) held by TNA, much of which has been little used by historians:

<https://intheirownwriteblog.com/about/>

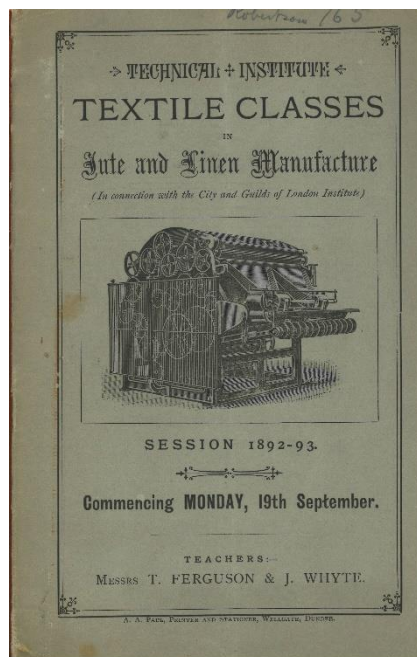
■ **Scotlands People** has recently issued a newsletter including details of updates on their work including the uploading of almost 1,000 more maps and plans of areas of Scotland, all with a link to the Year of Coasts and Waters 2020. A new article from Scotland's Peoples focuses on several of these plans and their connection with Scotland's early surveyors and engineers, including the plans of Thomas Telford, Scottish civil engineer, architect and stonemason. <https://tinyurl.com/y2o95y6l>

■ **JSTOR** is a digital library of academic journals, books and primary sources. It provides access to a wide range of material and you can also sign up for a weekly digest. In addition, during the current pandemic they have made a much wider range of items available for free until at least June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021 <https://about.jstor.org/covid19/>

■ **Abertay University Archives'** first exhibition is available online. "A Factory in Miniature: Abertay University and Jute Training, 1889-1984" is a joint virtual exhibition with the Verdant Works Museum in Dundee as part of Abertay 25, the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The exhibition explores the history of the University's Textiles Department through archive collections from both Abertay University and The Verdant Works Museum. A virtual 360 degree walk-through follows the Textiles Department from its beginnings in 1889. The Department's international reputation for the quality of its training grew and developed in the face of the wider changes in the economy and industry that brought new challenges, leading eventually to its closure in 1984. An interview with Jim Gordon, the last Head of the Textiles Department, supplements the exhibits. The exhibition is also at:

<https://www.abertay.ac.uk/visit/a-factory-in-miniature/>



Front cover of Dundee Technical Institute Textiles Classes Syllabus for 1892/3 session, showing a jute finishing card machine and the names of early teachers who delivered textile classes. These classes started in 1889, a year after the Institute was established.

Image reproduced courtesy of Abertay University Archives (ref ABY-DTCSA-7-2-2).

■ **British Library Sound Archive Resource** has more than 6.5 million recordings of speech, music and other material, providing a rich resource for scholars and researchers. Amongst the collections is *Sisterhood and After (The Women's Liberation Oral History Project)*, which includes interviews with historian Sheila Rowbotham, playwright Michelene Wandor, academics Juliet Mitchell, Ann Oakley, Cynthia Cockburn and Lynne Segal, barrister Vera Baird, journalist Bea Campbell, and psychotherapist Susie Orbach. More details at <https://www.bl.uk/subjects/sound#>

## SOCIETIES

■ **Loch Ard Local History Group** and the **Strathard Community Trust** have recently launched a local web site focussing on the area's history and heritage. In development over the past two years, it includes contributions from several local historians as well as a significant collection of local postcards. The site is here <https://strathardheritage.org/>

■ The **Women's History Network (WHN)** is seeking proposals from students working in women's history, to present at their Inaugural Student Conference on 8 March 2021, International Women's Day. This Conference will be a welcoming, supportive and inclusive space, offering the opportunity for both undergraduate and postgraduate students to present and discuss women's history. The Keynote Speaker will be Dr Lucy Delap, Reader in Modern British and Gender History at the University of Cambridge. The WHN also hosts a blog 'Case Studies in Blame: Victorian Physicians, Working-Class Women and Tuberculosis in Scottish Charity Hospitals' by Amy W.

Farnbach. Also available are details of the Network's Winter Seminar Series 2020-2021:

<https://womenshistorynetwork.org/>

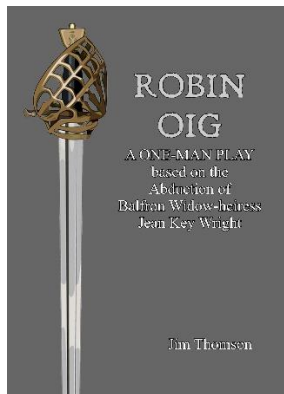
■ **Scottish Labour History Society's** December 2020 Newsletter includes news of SLHS member Alex Cathcart's new film. *A Lion Rose in Paisley* concerns the life and times of Willie Gallacher, the former Communist MP, and can be viewed on the Renfrewshire Council cultural website, REN TV, at:

<https://www.renfrewshireleisure.com/short-films/>

A new blog by Esther Davies, the great-granddaughter of former South Ayrshire Labour MP, Alexander Sloan, has been added to the SLHS website at <https://tinyurl.com/yxdsx9rn>

■ Always innovative in promoting local history in fresh ways, **Balfroon Heritage Group** has now published a one-man play about the fascinating tale of Rob Roy's favourite son's trial for the abduction of Jean Key from Edinbellie near Balfroon.

The play is set on Robin's last night in his condemned cell having been found guilty of 'hamesucken' – breaking in with ill-intent – and carrying off the recently widowed Jean. The court has believed the Key Family's account of the events and the written testimony of the young heiress who by this time has died of smallpox in Glasgow. Author Jim Thomson explains that some years ago he had adapted the court transcript papers (JC3/29 – National Records) into a modern trial format but it proved to be unwieldy. He recently thought that Robin Oig's version of events could lend itself to a one-man play format. The young MacGregor had always maintained that he and Jean had had a romantic relationship before the carrying off but that her mother would not have allowed her to go with him voluntarily so soon after the death of her first husband John Wright. This play would let Robin Oig tell his side of the story.



**Balfroon Heritage Group** has decided that there will be no copyright or performing rights implications for anyone staging the play which weighs in at about 4,500 words. They can be contacted at [info@balfroonheritage.org.uk](mailto:info@balfroonheritage.org.uk)

## WEBSITES

■ **Elephind** <https://www.elephind.com/> is a new web site that provides an opportunity to search historic newspapers worldwide. It features collections from the USA, Australia and New Zealand.

■ **ReelStreets** is a website that started some 20 years ago to identify areas that have appeared in feature films. It is feely searchable and includes many Scottish locations.

<https://www.reelstreets.com/region/scotland/>

## PODCASTS

We continue our regular feature on podcasts with some recommendations based on recent listening. If you come across a podcast that you would like to recommend please let us know by sending a message to <https://slhf.org/contact-slhf>

■ BBC Scotland has a new series called **Time Travels**, presented by SLHF-member Susan Morrison and exploring the rich and sometimes murky depths of Scotland's past. Episodes cover such topics as a Bad Husbands and Scottish Songs...interesting:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000kq56>

■ **Completely Burns** is a series from 2010 which is still available with over 300 poems recorded by actors from all generations:

<https://tinyurl.com/y425x9np>

■ On the theme of **Robert Burns**: an episode from **In Our Time** in October 2019 has Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the Ayrshire poet.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0009kkn>

■ Meanwhile on the BBC World Service a new series called **Spitfire** tells the story of the people who had to build this iconic plane which changed the course of World War 2. Told over 10 episodes it is well worth a listen in these long evenings:

<https://tinyurl.com/y5fpgadg>

■ Continuing the World War 2 theme **The Psychiatrist and the Deputy Fuhrer** is presented by historian Daniel Pick. He uses previously unreleased papers to tell the extraordinary story of what happened when a psychiatrist examined Rudolf Hess in a British military safe house in 1941:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds>

■ **National Museums Scotland**: you'll find a whole host of films and animations (plus the odd podcast) to help you delve into their remarkable collections here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y3vyoy44>

## PUBLICATIONS

■ **Borders Witch Hunt 17<sup>th</sup> Century Witchcraft Trials in the Scottish Borders** by Mary W Craig. Luath Press 2020. 224pp. Hbk £14.99 (ISBN: 978-1913025557).

<https://www.luath.co.uk/product/borders-witch-hunt>

■ **Huts: a place beyond—how to end our exile with nature** by Lesley Riddoch. Luath Press 2020. 272pp.

Pbk £9.99 (ISBN: 978-1913025632). *And see below (p.11)*

<https://www.luath.co.uk/product/huts>

<https://www.lesleyriddoch.com/books>

■ **The Unremembered Places: Exploring Scotland's Wild Histories** by Patrick Baker. Birlinn 2020. 224pp. Hbk £14.99 (ISBN: 978-1780276373). <https://birlinn.co.uk/product/the-unremembered-places/>

■ **The Northern Barrage - A Fence Across the North Sea** Inverness Local History Forum 2020. 120 pp, 240 photographs, Pbk £9.99 (ISBN: 978-0954820640). Available in several Highland outlets or direct from the Inverness Local History Group.



■ **Scotland's Science: Stories of pioneering science, engineering and medicine (1550 - 1900)** by John Mellis. Independently published 2020. 350pp. Pbk £10.99 (ISBN 979-8645849627).

■ **The Anvil of Scottish History: Stories of Stirling** by Murray Cook (a member of the SLHF Advisory Committee). Extremis Publishing 2020. 154pp Pbk £10.99 (ISBN: 978-1999696252). <https://tinyurl.com/y4sed2ng>

■ **The Real History of (Clan) Gunn** by Alastair Gunn. Lulu.com 2020. Paperback 60pp. £10.00 (ISBN 978-1716484421). <https://tinyurl.com/yxko9fyv>

■ **History Scotland**, 21(1), Jan/Feb 2021 includes a new series on Scotland's Second War of Independence and the significance of the bagpipe and World War One. <https://www.historyscotland.com/>

■ **Celebrating Archaeology in Scotland 2020** Scotland's Archaeology Strategy publishes a booklet celebrating projects in Scotland that relate to the aims of the strategy. This year the publication is a bumper edition <https://tinyurl.com/y68p6gsb> and includes a

profile of Highland Regional ScARF and ARCH's Experimental Archaeology project, as well as information about the Hilton of Cadboll Community project and DNA results from the Portmahomack 6-headed burial.

■ **Scottish Review** is published weekly by the Institute of Contemporary Scotland and some editions feature articles of relevance to history and heritage. In its 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020 issue an article called *The Unknown Warrior* by Barbara Millar is well worth a read. <https://www.scottishreview.net/BarbaraMillar546a.html>

■ The **Public Domain Review** is dedicated to the exploration of curious and compelling works from the history of art, literature, and ideas. It focuses on works now in the public domain, the vast commons of out-of-copyright material that everyone is free to enjoy, share, and build upon without restrictions. You can subscribe to their fortnightly newsletter which sometimes offers Scottish items including 'The Orkney Finnmen Legends: From Early Modern Science to Modern Myth' <https://tinyurl.com/yf4w7l8>

■ The latest newsletter from the **British Association for Local History** has a strong focus on digital engagement and is well worth a read: <https://tinyurl.com/y4x3dhzd>

You can also participate in the BALH 2021 survey which is open to anyone. It will take approximately 20-25 minutes and the results of the survey will be published at the BALH Local History Day and AGM on Saturday 12th June 2021. <https://tinyurl.com/y4rrhvyp>

■ *Vernacular Building* is the annual journal of the **Scottish Vernacular Buildings Working Group**. The latest issue *Vernacular Building* 43 (2020) is now available <http://svbwg.org.uk/publications.html>. Back-issues up to number 29 (2005) are free to download. More recent back-issues and various thematic issues are also available for purchase.

■ Professor Richard Rodger in his recent article 'Making the Census Count: revealing Edinburgh 1760-1900' (**Journal of Scottish Historical Studies**, Vol 39) argues that local historians and others need better access to historical censuses (which are currently only available for a fee). Rodger argues that these censuses have been paid for via our taxes and therefore we should have free access to them as they are released. This is an important issue for all local historians. <https://tinyurl.com/y3vrs56w>

■ The latest **Royal Scottish Geographical Society** newsletter (Winter 2020) has a strong focus on Russia and celebrates that their equivalent body, the Russian Geographical Society over the last 175 years. <https://www.rsgs.org/the-geographer>

■ **Neidpath Castle and its Lairds** by Steve Dubé is the story of “probably the earliest and certainly the grandest” of the Scottish Border Tower Houses. Published in a limited and numbered 1st edition of 300 by Kirklands Press, 16 Kirkland Street, Peebles, EH45 8EU, price £20 ISBN 978-0-9956703-1-0

■ **Scottish Archaeological Journal** Volume: 42, Number: Supplement (October, 2020) The Mann, the Myth Conference Report is now available <https://www.eupublishing.com/toc/saj/42/Supplement>

■ **Retour**, the Newsletter of The Scottish Records Association (Issue Number 34 Autumn 2020 ISSN 1479-9634) is packed with very useful news including details of the development of Abertay’s archives (see above). It also describes Your Scottish Archives, a

unique three-year project to gather and make available Scottish Archives through a dynamic online portal to be developed and managed by the Scottish Council on Archives (SCA) in partnership with Jisc/Archives Hub. <https://www.scottishrecordsassociation.org/retour>

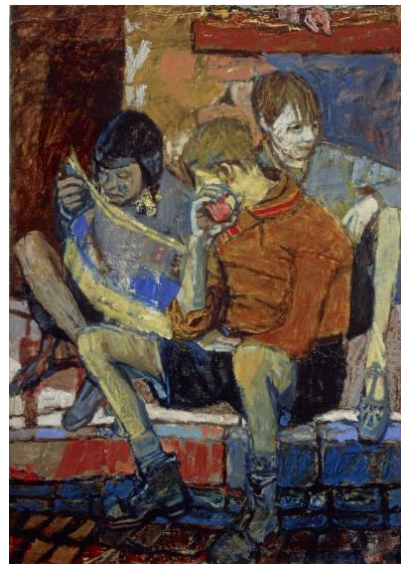
■ The December issue of the **Art UK** newsletter includes a report on the work of “forgotten women artists” including Joan Eardley. Joan Eardley is not “forgotten” in Scotland, with several notable exhibitions of her work in recent years – Clydebank in 2015 during our Annual Conference, and more recently at the Lillie Art Gallery in Milngavie. She is renowned for her paintings of Catterline and of inner-city Glasgow children.

<https://tinyurl.com/yxggqjpu>

Joan Eardley (1921–1963) is well known for her paintings of Catterline on the North Sea coast in Aberdeenshire (left) and for her sensitive and affectionate paintings of children from the Cowcaddens area, Glasgow, where she had a studio (right).



Joan Eardley, *Catterline in Winter*



Joan Eardley, *Street Kids*

## USING ONLINE SOURCES

### Some Personal Views

SLHF Trustees have been asked to highlight websites they have used for their research. Our final contributor is Don Martin.

“I make fair use of the **ElectricScotland** website (<https://electricScotland.com>), mainly because of its ready access to the five-volume standard work *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland* by David MacGibbon and Thomas Ross (David Douglas, Edinburgh, 1887-92). It also has texts for a wide range of out-of-print local histories such as the following random examples:

- William Nimmo, *History of Stirlingshire* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed 2 vols (London & Glasgow 1880).

- Robert Renwick and Sir John Lindsay, *History of Glasgow*. 3 vols (Maclehose, Jackson & Co, Glasgow, 1921-34).
- William Drysdale, *Auld Biggins of Stirling: its closes, wynds and neebour villages* (Eneas Mackay, Stirling, 1904).

The MacGibbon & Ross volumes are provided in facsimile, but some of the other books have been transcribed into modern type. No doubt some people will find this helpful, but others might find it annoying.”

If you have a website to recommend, please send further details to <https://slhf.org/contact-slhf> and why not create a listing in our online Directory. It’s free and easy to do. Go to: <https://www.slhf.org/node/add/directory-organisation>

## ON LINE EVENTS

### Forthcoming events

■ With the ongoing pandemic some societies are offering their members on line presentations. If you are organising an event, please add it to the listings on the SLHF website, just as you would for face-to-face events: <https://www.slhf.org/submit-event> Meanwhile here is a flavour of what has come our way, both forthcoming and recorded.

■ **ARCH Talks** Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> Jan, 7:30pm: Lorraine Evans will be speaking about 'Exploring Funerary Architecture and Symbolism in the Scottish Highlands'. Bookings via EventBrite website <https://tinyurl.com/y38ygpx> (with links also from the ARCH events calendar). Bookings may be capped at 100, so book early, and please cancel if you cannot make it.

### Recorded events

■ **North of Scotland Archaeological Society NOSAS** has an impressive range of talks from Shetland to Assynt covering such topics as 'Telford in the Kyle of Sutherland' and 'The kelp industry in Lochbroom—looking beyond the statistics' For the full list and links, go to <https://tinyurl.com/y6xcjhxe>

■ The **Sutherland Longhouse Project** had a number of online talks instead of a final conference. Go to the Historylinks website <https://tinyurl.com/y4tyuaj7> where you can also read the project book and read blogs about the workshops.

■ In **Highland Object podcasts**, local museums profile one of their objects (organised by XpoNorth and Museums Highland Heritage). Items include the Rosemarkie cross slab, the Ballachulish Figure, a dogskin buoy, the Carbisdale hoard, and much more. The project invites the public to suggest objects. See <https://tinyurl.com/y5gebajp>

■ **Kirkintilloch and District Society of Antiquaries** has continued its series of virtual meetings: <https://tinyurl.com/yykxlkt9>

Dr Ivan Ruddock, physicist and retired academic, presented the second online talk, on the life and brief career of a nineteenth century scientist 'Archibald Scott Couper: Kirkintilloch's forgotten pioneer of chemistry'.

The third of the online talks in the 2020-21 season of the Antiquaries was by the Society's Secretary Don Martin on Peel Park and entitled 'The Peel of Kirkintilloch'.

■ **Abertay Historical Society** has continued to share their excellent series of presentations using YouTube. Norman Atkinson OBE had a long and distinguished career in Museums and Cultural Services in Angus

and shared some of his thoughts about evidence of the Picts from the surviving stones in this area:

The Picts of Angus & Gowrie by Norman Atkinson  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVt3Pnph1n8>

Sarah Aitken of Dundee City Archives has contributed an article to the next issue of *Scottish Local History* on the subject of Logie: Scotland's First Council Housing Scheme and her presentation commemorating the centenary of the scheme is now available to view at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGLghDys\\_YU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGLghDys_YU)

If anyone fancies a glimpse of Dundee's Christmases Past, they might enjoy the latest short presentation by Kenneth Baxter of Dundee University Archives: <https://tinyurl.com/y54nca95>

■ The **Society of Antiquaries of Scotland** has several presentations to view on their channel which includes Dr David Caldwell FSAScot and President of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland who presents a lecture "In search of a national identity – Scotland's material culture" and "Glasgow Potteries and the British Empire" by SLHF Trustee Graeme Cruickshank. <https://tinyurl.com/y5curxbf>

■ **Bannockburn House** in Stirling has several history related presentations on its channel including:

'The First Frontier in the Roman Empire' The unremarked line of Cohort Forts and Watchtowers between Doune and Perth, by Jim Roche.

'Stirling Now and Then' by David & Sheila Brown, a pictorial tour of Stirling and St Ninians looking at how the townscape has changed during the age of photography. <https://tinyurl.com/y3q9rg5e>

■ **The Royal Scottish Geographical Society** has an interesting presentation where Jo Woolf their Writer in Residence delves into some of her favourite items from their archives. It's a fascinating insight into explorers and exploration: <https://tinyurl.com/y4fakv9b>

■ The **British Association for Local History's** YouTube channel includes a series of short presentations including:

Claire Kennan, on Britain's Most Historic Towns, and What Is Local History? A talk by Professor Catherine Clarke for the BALH 2020 AGM <https://tinyurl.com/y2vt2ugm>

■ **Historic Environment Scotland** has a number of online exhibitions including The Photography of Erskine Beveridge and Great Scottish Interiors: <https://tinyurl.com/y4zq68qm>

■ The **Scottish Vernacular Buildings Working Group** held an online conference, **Working from Home in the Vernacular Period**, on Friday 20th

November. These four papers from the mini-conference were recorded:

Mark Watson: Where are the weavers' windows?  
Hand loom shops in the Scottish linen and cotton industries.

Richard Bebb: The Welsh Cegin - Work, Rest and Play.

Hannah Kingsbury: A Farmer-miner landscape:  
Cowhouses and the practice of smallholdings in Castle Bolton (Lower Wensleydale, North Riding).

Linda Fitzpatrick: Home from the Sea: living and working in Scottish fisher housing.

The recording should be available soon so please watch this site: <http://www.svbwg.org.uk/events.html>



*Weavers cottage, Kilbarchan*

■ **National Library of Scotland** During lockdown, the National Library of Scotland has been presenting a programme of vibrant online events to enjoy from home. Watch recordings of a selection of their live talks here: <https://www.nls.uk/player>

■ **Highland Archive:** A series of short films under the banner 'Learn with Lorna' have been developed, initially aimed at those home-schooling. It was soon realised that a wider audience was tuning in. The first fourteen films covering topics as diverse as WWI, Jacobites and Transport were accompanied by specially created online resources and have now been viewed around 60,000 times and shared around the world.

<https://www.highlifehighland.com/archives-service/>

## BOOK REVIEWS

### Recent Stenlake Albums

There is general consensus that many of the photo-albums published by Stenlake Publishing Ltd of Catrine play an important role in improving availability of photographs of Historical, social and economic interest. Nowadays most of the albums belong either in the 'Bygone ...' (or 'Old ...') series, which continue to

provide a full range of photographs of bygone scenes, or the 'Then and Now' series which has a modern colour photo opposite an old B&W picture on each double-page spread. Albums in the latter series probably have less of social & economic interest, partly because this interest is diluted by the need to afford space for two views of each scene and also because there tends to be a preponderance of general street scenes (which provide a straightforward opportunity for a 'now' match in colour). Recent Stenlake 'Then & Now' publications, all priced at £11.95 include:

Raymond Hood: *Carluke Then and Now*. pp.48 ISBN 978 1 84033 862 1

John Fyfe Anderson: *Gourock Then and Now*. pp.56 ISBN 978 1 84033 874 4

David Millar: *Kinross-shire Then and Now*. pp.56 ISBN 978 1 84033 873 7

Hugh Maxwell: *Stevenston Then and Now*. pp.56 ISBN 978 1 84033 875 1

All have some interesting material. The Carluke album has a photograph of Carluke's well-known windmill tower as it was in 1920, facing one of the tower as it looks today. In fact it appears much the same in both views, unlike the adjacent mill-house which has been rebuilt. Sadly there is no sign of the windmill sails even in the older view and we learn that we would need to go back another century to find them in place.

The Gourock album has some interesting views of bygone shops, two of which have been superseded on their respective sites by blocks of flats; and there is a photograph of Gourock's roller skating pavilion, which was demolished during the 1930s.

The Kinross-shire album has a 'then and now' pair of views of the substantial Lochleven Sluices which were built to channel water for use by local industries. The pair of views confirms that the sluices retain much of their former appearance today, and indeed they are still in use. Another interesting pair of views, of the well at Scotlandwell, shows how the ornamental structure that was built over the well about 1860 has been carefully maintained, down to the present time.

The Stevenston album has photographs of Nobel's extensive explosives factory at Ardeer nearby, which at its peak employed 12,000 people. Also of note in this album is a group of golfers on a long-gone nine-hole golf course at Ardeer in June 1891, which is a convincing view of what local golfing was like in late nineteenth century Ayrshire. Reviews of some recent Stenlake albums in the parallel 'Bygone ...' series will appear in future issues of *Scottish Local History*.



## MEET AN SLHF TRUSTEE

### Finlay McKichan



I am a secondary History teacher by origin. While teaching at Stirling High School I began an M. Litt thesis on local government in nineteenth century Stirling. This was my first major excursion into local history and was completed

when I started working in the college which after two mergers became the School of Education of Aberdeen University. As a college tutor I was involved in the 1970s and 1980s in school-based in-service projects, most of which involved local history. An aim was to use primary sources which were edited to be accessible. For example, Census schedules were used to work out how fishermen moved from small North East ports into Aberdeen as trawling developed. School logs enabled country children to see how their predecessors were often kept off school at harvest time and transferred to another school annually as their father moved to another farm after the feeing market. The reports of parliamentary commissions gave evidence of the working conditions of mill children in Aberdeen and, in Highland schools, whether people had been moved from or to their area during the Clearances. Children were asked how much they could work out from old photographs, such as those of George Washington Wilson.

College tutors wrote schoolbooks, and I had one published on the Highland Clearances. The research for this showed that the Seaforth estate, covering Lewis and parts of mainland Ross-shire, and one of its most colourful proprietors, Francis Humberston Mackenzie (later Lord Seaforth), were largely unresearched. This has been my retirement project. It has involved countless journeys to Edinburgh, regular ones to London and two to Barbados in search of archive material. It has resulted in several journal articles and book chapters and in 2018 the publication by Edinburgh University Press of *Lord Seaforth: Highland Landowner, Caribbean Governor*. In this I discussed the management of his Highland estate, his career as a politician and raiser of regiments, his attempts as governor of Barbados to increase the rights of enslaved labourers and free people of colour, the failure of his plantations in Guiana and the subsequent sale of Ross-shire lands. I was fortunate to have it shortlisted for the 2019 Saltire Society History Book of the Year award. I have now started work on a biographical study of Seaforth's daughter and heir Mary, a fascinating woman of ability, who was involved in both Ross-shire and imperial issues. Another local history interest is my membership of Aberdeen City's Aberdeen Built Ships Project. The careers of individual ships are recorded on

[www.aberdeenships.com](http://www.aberdeenships.com). As a SLHF Trustee I am the minute secretary, have a watching brief on governance issues and chair the Advisory Committee, which represents societies and organisations in membership of the Forum.

## MEET A LOCAL GROUP

■ Ian Shearer, Chair of **The Friends of Kinneil**, introduces the group. Ian is a new member of the SLHF Advisory Committee.

The Friends of Kinneil in Bo'ness support Kinneil House and Museum, their scenic 200-acre designed parkland, and the adjacent Nature Reserve (created with admirable vision from the site of the massive former Kinneil Colliery, on the Forth shoreline).

With around 80 members, the charity is run entirely by volunteers. It started in 2006 following a threat to Kinneil Museum, then operated by Falkirk Council. This saved the free local museum, in the estate's stable-block, from closure. Open year-round, it is run to this day by the Council's leisure/heritage arm, Falkirk Community Trust, and features the interesting history of the port and industry of Bo'ness, as well as the more ancient parish of Kinneil.



*Kinneil House, Bo'ness*

Kinneil House, the estate's striking centrepiece, is an outstanding 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup>-Century palace. To those in the know an astonishing 'hidden gem' with significant potential for greater appreciation, it has suffered under-investment. After the loss of Hamilton Palace in the 1920s, Kinneil is among the grandest surviving former strongholds of the Hamiltons, who, as Scotland's 'premier' noble family, have played a leading role in history over seven centuries. It was built by James Hamilton, 2nd Earl of Arran, soon after stepping down as Regent to his cousin, Mary Queen of Scots, to whom he was also heir presumptive (in the process also becoming Duke of Châtellerauld).

The house was miraculously saved in the midst of demolition in 1936, upon discovery, in the rooms forming the Duke's private chambers, of some of Scotland's finest Renaissance domestic wall paintings – much admired by today's visitors.

Since 2006, we have worked hard with Historic Environment Scotland, who care for the house, to try to encourage its re-opening and restore its profile. It had been closed by HES in the 1980s. There are now around 10-15 open dates each year (well below its potential capacity, and with far fewer openings than other HES properties of comparable significance), on which we help to run free guided tours and other events.

The thread running through our activities and the various Kinneil sites is 2,000 years of history. We have gained a reputation for researching and communicating that history, particularly through social media, reaching far beyond Bo'ness. In 2016 we won a Scottish Heritage Angel Award, in the 'Sharing and Celebrating' category.

Our 'local' history is also global. Kinneil Estate is on the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site. We initiated the annual 'Big Roman Week', to explore and celebrate that frontier. Right on the line of the Wall, arguably our most internationally consequential monument is the James Watt Cottage – the small ruined workshop where, from the late 1760s, Watt secretly developed his steam engine with the then tenant of Kinneil House, Dr John Roebuck (co-founder of nearby Carron Ironworks). In 2019 we contributed energetically to UK-wide events marking Watt's Bicentenary. Kinneil has other strong connections to industrial and mining history. The popular Bo'ness & Kinneil steam trains now run through its woods.



*James Watt Cottage/Workshop, Kinneil*

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the house was home to the philosopher Dugald Stewart; and in the 20<sup>th</sup>, the estate was Scotland's first true motor-racing venue – its quirkiest claim to fame – hosting the Kinneil Hill Climb, now enjoying an annual 21<sup>st</sup>-Century revival.

In 2015, a Kinneil development masterplan to 2025 was agreed. Improvements around the estate have since been made and new initiatives such as a 'Hidden Heritage' discovery trail, partly funded by LEADER, are welcome. The official partners have yet to capitalise fully on the estate's manifold exceptional assets, or progress the plan's main aim, investment in the house. This is now further set back by COVID, but remains the main objective.

For more information, including on how to join Friends of Kinneil (£3/year), visit [www.kinneil.org](http://www.kinneil.org).

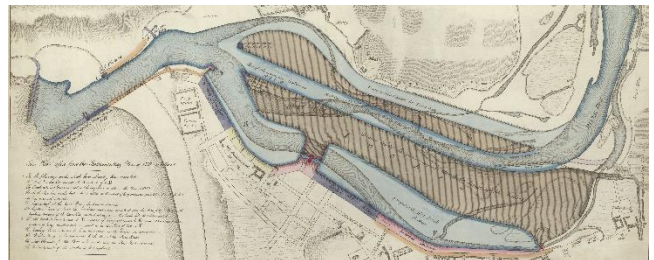
## NEW ONLINE MAPS AT THE NLS

Chris Fleet, Senior Maps Curator at the National Library of Scotland, continues his series on new online material.

### ■ Stevenson civil engineering plans of Scotland, 19th-20th centuries

In November, the National Library of Scotland added 1,072 detailed Stevenson civil engineering plans online relating to Scotland. The majority of these plans relate to harbour works in coastal towns, but there are significant numbers of maps relating to bridges, canals, railways, and river engineering, all of which can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/y6bjcibt>. The Stevenson family also served as engineers to the Northern Lighthouse Board, and drafted plans and profiles of lighthouses. The collection also includes a range of related printed mapping, including charts, county maps, and Ordnance Survey plans used for reference purposes, and often annotated. Many of the plans show projected works that were not necessarily carried out in practice. This is around half of the Stevenson collection relating to Scotland; the other plans are undergoing conservation work to allow them to be scanned in future.

- Further information at: <https://maps.nls.uk/additions.html#97>



Detail from: Thomas Telford, *Plan for Improving the Harbour of Aberdeen* (ca. 1828). The full plan is online at: <https://maps.nls.uk/view/218516639>

### ■ Commercial mapmaker series maps of Scotland, 1870s-1930s

In December, the National Library of Scotland added online 214 series maps by Bartholomew, Gall & Inglis and W. & A.K. Johnston to its website <https://maps.nls.uk/series/>. Most of these medium-scale maps, primarily at the half-inch or quarter-inch to the mile scales, are useful for giving a regional overview of the landscape, and showing the latest travel routes by road, rail and steamer. These Edinburgh-based commercial cartographers used Ordnance Survey maps for their primary content, but usually redrew the maps at smaller scales, adding colour and related content to create different,

distinctive styles of mapping. These maps are folded and have only recently been able to be scanned.

- Further information at:  
<https://maps.nls.uk/additions.html#98>

#### ■ Estate maps of Scotland, 1760s-1950s

In December, the National Library of Scotland added a further 224 estate maps online, excellent for showing detail of the rural landscape <https://maps.nls.uk/estates/>. These maps were made to support estate management by particular landed estates, including those of the Lockharts of Lee (1770s-1950s), primarily in Lanarkshire, and those of the Fletchers of Saltoun (1750s-1870s) in East Lothian. We are also grateful to the *Dumfries Archival Mapping Project* for scanning maps relating to Dalswinton Estate (1768) in Dumfries-shire and Earlstoun Estate (1769-1830) in Kirkcudbrightshire.

- Further information at:  
<https://maps.nls.uk/additions.html#99>



Detail from: John Hay, *Design for a Kitchen Garden, Orchard, and Flower & Winter Garden, at Salton Hall...* (1818). The full plan is online at:  
<https://maps.nls.uk/view/219455498>

## HUTS and LESLEY RIDDOCH



Lesley Riddoch is an award-winning broadcaster, journalist, author, cyclist, land reform campaigner & lover of all things Nordic. In issue 88 of *Scottish Local History*, she wrote about Norway's Hut Traditions and the Curse of the Indoor Scot. Here, she brings the story up to date.

■ Ten years' academic study has been a tough challenge and a long haul for a journalist accustomed to daily deadlines. Novelty was certainly part of the reason for embarking on a PhD in 2010, jointly

supervised by Strathclyde and Oslo Universities - but the biggest motivation was to get closer to the Nordic nations I've long admired and scratch an itch about huts.

I rented a hilltop bothy in Aberdeenshire for seven eccentric years during the 1990s and always wondered why next to no-one did the same. Trips to Norway, then Sweden and Finland made me realise family huts are very normal at wooded latitudes - everywhere that is except Scotland.

I was lucky to get a Norwegian Government grant to live in student accommodation at Oslo University for four summer months in 2011, to study the *hytte* (hutting) islands of inner Oslo fjord which were divided up into hut plots for *barnerike* (child-rich) east end families in 1922 - amazingly, the very same year Carbeth was founded a thousand miles west in Scotland. This coincidence created the backbone for a comparison between the two hut sites and countries. As a journalist, the easy bit was finding people and piecing together some oral histories of the two sites. Learning Norwegian at three different courses was absorbing and traipsing across every floor of sundry university libraries and archives quickly became my 'new normal'. After all, unravelling the story of huts touched on history, geography, agriculture, housing, leisure, sport and much more. I once had a fascinating conversation with a Norwegian geographer about the impact of humidity on hut construction.

Research was going well, until life got in the way. Health problems, political developments and house moves saw research stall - until a final push (and a rearrangement of footnoting styles to fit new university guidelines) pushed the PhD over the line in December 2019. I was lucky to get a small grant from Creative Scotland to take 2 glorious months away from weekly newspaper column writing, so I could turn the PhD into a more general book - *Huts, a place beyond*, published by Luath in June 2020.

Of course, just when I'm ready to end a decade obsessing about huts, the public is suddenly interested - spurred on by the Thousand Huts campaign and the cooped-up frustration of Covid lockdowns. It feels good to have contributed something useful to what will hopefully become a resurgence of interest amongst Scots in our long exile from the land.

*Huts, a place beyond* £9.99 via  
[www.lesleyriddoch.com/books](http://www.lesleyriddoch.com/books)

*(Editors' comment:* Readers interested in huts and hutting might also be interested in this PhD thesis: Rachel Hunt (2016) *Huts, bothies and buildings out-of-doors: an exploration of the practice, heritage and culture of 'out-dwellings' in rural Scotland*. PhD thesis, University of Glasgow; <http://theses.gla.ac.uk/8057/>)

## CAN YOU HELP?

In this feature we post selected requests for information or help we have received from people researching Scottish local history. If you would like to submit a request to be published in *Clish-Clash* (your contact details will be withheld unless you state otherwise), or if you would like to respond to a request, please contact the Forum <https://slhf.org/contact-slhf> SLHF does not do research for individual enquiries but queries such as this are generally circulated among the Trustees to see if we can point the enquirer in the right direction. We will also post responses.

■ My great grandfather was from Aberfeldy, and I'm trying to trace any family members that are still there. His father was a reverend from that area in the 1800's, their names are Rev John McLaren and he married an Elizabeth Fisher who came from Perthshire. I would be very grateful if you had any information on any of these families. Thanking you for your time, and hope you are safe. Yours faithfully Kathryn, Sydney, Australia.

### Response

I may have information for Kathryn in Australia who has sought help re her ancestors Rev John McLaren and Eliz. Fisher in Aberfeldy. If you gave me her email address, or her mine, I might be able to help. AF

■ Hi there, I live in Belgium. Very close (2 miles) from my home there is a village that called Zondereigen. On 23 May 1944 there has crashed a Lancaster ND 745 of the 15 squadron. We would like to try to find all crew members and make a memorial at the crash site. 4 of the 7 died instantly and 3 survived and one of them was Ian M. Gillespie. I saw on your site that you have mention that Ian. Could you help me with info about him and could you bring me in contact with the family? I'm very curious who this HERO was.

### Response

*We explained that we have nothing on the SLHF website related to this person. We were then contacted as follows:*

I am a retired [UK] Police Officer, and I have been assisting with some of the UK ends of [the Belgian] enquiries. The reference he makes to Ian Gillespie and your site relates to a document you published some time ago, and subsequently republished some years later, with a link to: <https://tinyurl.com/y6acgcwc>

Ian Gillespie was aircrew from a downed Lancaster that [the enquirer] refers to, and spent the end of the Second World War as a POW in Stalag Luft III and IIIa.

The text of the document implies that he was seen as local to the Inverary location, and wording suggests that he may have been a contributor to the final document.

We are keen to locate and contact and surviving family to explain the project that has been initiated in Belgium

and what they are looking to achieve. We have an indication that Ian was born in 1918, his birth registered at St George reg district, which caused me to question the Inverary Roll of Honour tributes.

I believe he may have subsequently settled outside of Scotland, with a most likely death in Worksop, Nottinghamshire in 1975. However Scottish BMD records are not helping us with his origins or possible family, so any data that you may hold on record about Ian, would be greatly appreciated if you are able to assist.

*If you have any information, please contact us via <https://slhf.org/contact-slhf>*

■ I am researching my wife's family history and find that several of her McGILCHRIST ancestors lived in Baldernock. In particular Robert McGILCHRIST, a smith living in Kirk House 1749 to 1755 and who married Agnes FERGUS. Also their children John, Gabriel and Jean McGILCHRIST. John was a farmer and he married in Baldernock and stayed there until at least the early 1800s. Is there anyone in your society who might have further information on these people?

### Response

*One of our Trustees is a neighbour to the Baldernock Kirkhouse and responded with map and census information. The enquirer – an archivist and researcher for a village local history group in southern England – was alerted to the National Library of Scotland's maps website and replied:*

Thanks for all the information you have sent. I have incorporated the two map extracts showing Kirkhouse into the family write-up - together with a reference and acknowledgement to yourself and the National Library of Scotland maps website. They look good and certainly add interest. The maps website is a treasure trove, and is proving to be very useful. Thanks for pointing it out.

*Using the maps, the enquirer had identified a house in Baldernock that could not previously be traced, thereby also improving the Trustee's local knowledge.*

Find out about what's happening in local history around Scotland on the SLHF website:

<https://www.slhf.org/events>

<https://www.slhf.org/calendar>

Submit your events at:

<https://www.slhf.org/submit-event>



<https://www.slhf.org/scottish-local-history-directory>

## LOCAL HISTORY and COVID FACE MASKS



Some members of the Scottish Local History Forum will have heard the joint talk 'Pillar to Post' given by Geraldine Perriam (pillar boxes) and Paul Bishop (phone boxes; strictly phone 'kiosks'). The daughter of a friend of theirs down south heard about this talk and made bespoke

Covid face masks for Geraldine and Paul.

The top mask (Paul's) shows the rare K2 phone box, which was never seen outside London – too big, too heavy and too expensive to be used elsewhere. There are still K2s to be seen in London and the original model of this kiosk for the competition to pick a new design for phone kiosks is in wood, and located in the entrance to the Royal Academy on Piccadilly. It was the entry of the architect Giles Gilbert Scott, the grandson of George Gilbert Scott, the architect of the University of Glasgow building in the West End of Glasgow. Quite a family!

The more familiar phone box, the smaller and near ubiquitous K6, was also designed by Giles Gilbert Scott. These phone boxes were made of cast iron and most were cast at the Lion Foundry or the Star Foundry, both in Kirkintilloch; at the Carron Company foundry in Falkirk; or at the Saracen Foundry in Possil, Glasgow. Check the bottom of the back wall of a phone box for the foundry plate telling you where it was cast.

The lower mask (Geraldine's) shows a pillar box (post box). There are many more types and models of pillar boxes than there are of phone kiosks and this is a standard model that we all recognise. However, it is probably what is called an anonymous pillar box because it lacks the Royal cypher of the reigning monarch when the particular box was manufactured (or artistic licence means that the cypher was omitted from the design of the face mask cloth). Post boxes from Queen Victoria's reign have the VR cypher and so on throughout the subsequent monarchs. A particularly rare pillar box is one from the very short reign of Edward the Eighth, with EVIIIR on the door. There are at least two of these in Glasgow and one in Milngavie.



*A K6 phone kiosk (left) and a K2, side-by-side in St John's Wood High Street, London*



*A rare Edward the Eighth pillar box in Glasgow's West End, cast at the Carron Foundry.*

### QUOTE OF THE MOMENT

'You may be the first, but make sure you're not the last'

Kamala Harris' motto, which came from her late mother