

HALKIRK HERITAGE & VINTAGE MOTOR SOCIETY

Newsletter



Issue No.6 - February 2008

<p>Members subscriptions were due in January and should be paid to the Membership Secretary, Mrs Joan Porter, Mingulay, Gerston, Halkirk KW12 6XQ. The current membership stands at over 70 persons, which is very good for a small village and district.</p> <p>The Society has organised two heritage talks over the winter period. Alan Lannon of the Caithness Family History Society gave an informative and humorous presentation on how to trace your family tree. He noted that most people were curious to find if any descendants were a black sheep of the family, as this was much more interesting! The History Society members deal with a lot of search requests from people who live in other countries and generously provide their time and efforts for free.</p>	<p>More information on this society can be found at the web address; www.caithnessfhs.org</p> <p>In January, local historian Sandy Gunn from Thurso gave a talk on Halkirk's Robert MacKay who was also known as "The Caithness Violinist". Robert was a great poet who would often pen poems "on the spot" for friends and hand them over at the end of an evening. He was a regular contributor in the local papers and perhaps his most famous poem is the Caithness dialect poem "e Midge", which is often recited at the Caithness Festival.</p> <p>Sandy also gave a brief talk on Halkirk's War Memorial, which is unusual in that it features a grieving war widow and her son, rather than a soldier.</p>	<p>Many local people donated money towards the cost of the memorial and in 1919 they raised £741. The names of 63 local men who fell in the Great War are engraved on the memorial, along with 16 from the 2nd World War and 1 from the Northern Ireland troubles.</p> <p>Sandy is involved in a huge project to photograph and list all the names on the stones in the Caithness graveyards and he described the challenges involved.</p> <p>Sandy surprised everyone by detailing some Halkirk events that were reported in the Caithness Courier in the period 1949 to 1952, including our Chairman Billy Manson winning a prize at a fancy dress competition.</p> <p>Towards the end of a very informative evening, Sandy</p>
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<p>Generously donated the following to the Society;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Halkirk events as reported in the Caithness Courier from 2/3/1949 to 19/11/1952. 2. A list of subscribers to the War Memorial fund and details of the two dedication ceremonies. 3. A book of poems and letters written by the Caithness Violinist. <p>The talks were open to Society members only, but with attendances of only around 12 in number it has been decided that future talks will be open to members of the public.</p>	<p>Thurso historian Alan McIvor, will give the next talk on Monday 21 April 2008 at 7pm. Alan is writing a book on Thurso's history and he will cover this topic in his presentation.</p> <p>The Society had a stand at the Caithness Heritage Fair held in Wick in November 2007. The big attraction was the display of Edward Sutherland's vintage car mascots. These were featured in the Antiques Roadshow which was filmed at the Castle of Mey last July and aired on the BBC in January.</p> <p>The Fair was quiet, but many people were impressed with the quality of the stand and commented that they did not know the</p>	<p>Society existed, hence some good PR was generated</p> <p>The Society will again stage a summer exhibition in the Ross Institute. This will be open during July and August. A grant application is being made to "Awards for All" and if successful this will provide funds for new displays.</p> <p>The Society's AGM will be held on Monday 21 April at 8pm in the Ross Institute and this will be followed by a Management Committee meeting.</p> <p>James Gunn, Society Secretary has moved house and can be contacted at Houstry Mains, Harpsdale, Halkirk KW12 6UJ Tel. 01847 831558.</p>
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Thurso River Flood in October 2006 – the worst in living memory

