



April 2021

Greetings to all our members and friends, well, it is now more than a year since our first lockdown in the UK, so hopefully everyone has met their goals and achieved something in the long periods of incarceration!!

News of the century is the release of Kirk Session minutes at Scotlands People, see some ramblings later after the news section, and also some notes on the Statistical Accounts which can give useful background to lives of our ancestors.

I hope that readers will consider dropping, a line through the Contact form on the website, or direct to enews@gwsfhs.org.uk , with feedback, and suggestions on links to useful resources they have discovered.



Society News

- **Meetings** - Invitations for Members to register will be put on the website at <https://www.gwsfhs.org.uk/boxes-members-area/meetings-presentations/> about a week before the Meeting, and through link on website homepage.

Annual General Meeting, at 7.30pm on **Monday 19th April 2021** the 44th AGM will be held virtually by Zoom. Please register at <https://www.gwsfhs.org.uk/boxes-members-area/governance/> or by link on website homepage. See the notice on p21 of the latest Journal, please attend to see the faces running the society, and keep us quorate . If you you have some skills to offer, or could volunteer as an ordinary member, the secretary@gwsfhs.org.uk would be delighted to hear from you.

Glasgow's Dancing Days - by Norry Wilson, from [Lost Glasgow](#) - **Monday 26 April 7.30pm**
Talk this month is a week later than normal because of the AGM

Monday 17th May 2021 - A short **EGM** to update the constitution, relating mainly to changes allowing online working, and membership processing on the new website, this is also notified by members mailing. This will precede our next talk on Photo Restoration.

- **Opening Hours**

Sadly we can't predict when we will be able to open the premises to members . Consequently we have limited news to report on new library and database additions.

● Journal

3 times a year. You should have received issue No 120 by now. Members will see a draft copy of a colour version on the website in Journals area – this is for discussion and the committee would appreciate any comments you send to vicechair@gwsfhs.org.uk.

After many years of diligent work preparing the journal, Sheila, our editor is no longer able to carry on the task. If anyone is able to contribute to editing or preparing the layout of the next journal the committee would welcome support from members, drop a note to secretary@gwsfhs.org.uk.

● Library

Hopefully we will be able to get access to physical resources soon!! The Library catalogue can of course be searched online, at least you could prepare a list to consult when the premises open again.

● Datasets

We are getting ready to upload one of the most interesting data sets – the burial records for the Calton burying ground. There's 37,000+ burials between 1792-1854 with details of names, relatives, occupations, cause of death etc. Checking is almost complete. The next one after this will probably be the (approx. 300) Monumental Inscriptions for the same burying ground – so a big boost for the East End of the city.

● Website

Check out the website tabs – there's lots to discover.

Click on <https://www.gwsfhs.org.uk/articles> and access a wealth of interesting items submitted by members. Diana's photo-sleuthing articles reveal how to uncover the hidden secrets of your family album, and the Lost Graveyards series identifies ancestral burial grounds long vanished from the map

The webmaster is turning her attention to the Members' Area/Resources section and is looking for suggestions as to what sections to add, and what websites to list in each.

Current sections include: Journals from other societies/ Handouts from presentations/ Useful websites/ Other Family & Local History societies/ FAQs/ Acronyms/ Templates & Forms. You can check what's already online here : <https://www.gwsfhs.org.uk/boxes-members-area/resources/>

Please email any suggestions to webmaster@gwsfhs.org.uk with names and urls.. If you are willing to spend some time collating and preparing content (in a Word format file), she'd love to hear from you.



News from elsewhere

● NRS and Scotlands People

In March the National Records of Scotland (NRS) released scans of 6000 volumes of Kirk Session for the Church of Scotland through a new Virtual Volumes section on Scotlands People. Not all of the Established Church records (CH2 series) have been uploaded yet, and some volumes which contain records after 1900 will not be released because of potential confidentiality issues. Including other Presbyterian Churches there are about 25,000 volumes of Church history in total – so lots more to release in future! See Ramblings below for more discussion.

- SAFHS Conference
Last years Scottish Association of FHS had to be cancelled because of Covid, but, this year Borders FHS, with the help of Emma and Graham Maxwell's Zoom expertise, will host a virtual Zoom Conference on Saturday 17th April 2021. Details at <https://www.safhs.org.uk> , with programme and registration link to this free conference day of informative talks.
- ScottishIndexes
Their 10th Conference of talks is announced to watch on 22 May 2021, with registration link on their website at <https://www.scottishindexes.com> . Here you can also download the handout from the last conference with notes from all the talks.
- Renfrewshire FHS
The next zoom talk will be “**James Watt’s Legacy in Greenock and The Watt Institution**” by **Lorraine Murray (Archivist Inverclyde)**, on 15th April 2021 at 19:30 . Check their website for zoom link closer to the time at <https://renfrewshirefhs.co.uk/meetings/>
- Chris Paton's blogspot <https://scottishgenes.blogspot.com/p/links.html>
Chris always has useful updates on new resources, always worth following. Recently he listed updates to the British Newspaper Archive - nothing touching our area, but 9 Irish additions, with earliest from 1837.
- One of our contributors has asked if anyone in Glasgow area can help with her programme research on WW2 evacuees :-

Ella St John McGrand ella.stjohnmcgrand@voltage.tv

Hello,

Hope you're well and it's ok to reach out to you. I'm a Producer working on a new 3 part series for Channel 5, made by Voltage Productions called 'Countdown to War'. In each episode, we countdown to WW2 from 1-3 September 1939, to unpick and unravel what was going on as the nation prepared for war. Our presenters will be referencing documents from the time, meeting experts and visiting locations to show the audience what was going on just before and when war against Nazi Germany was officially declared.

One of the stories I'm developing is how children were evacuated from urban to more rural location as part of Operation Pied Piper. I understand that many people who have memories and stories of being evacuated may now have sadly passed away but I was wondering if you know of anyone at through the Glasgow & West of Scotland Family History Society who would be willing to speak to me? I'm looking for people (or their relatives who know of the evacuation story) who were evacuated over 1-3 September from Glasgow. I would like to know how their families prepared them for evacuation, how they got to the train/bus station, what the journey to the unknown destination was like, where they were billeted and their experience of being away from their families.

If you have any members who would be interested, please forward my email to them. My contact number is 07734437340.

Many thanks,
Ella



Ramblings

With the release of the Kirk Session records here are some notes to give some guidance on how to find the actual dates of coverage and remind users of the OPRs that they may not be complete! Around the dry detail it is interesting to get contemporary background story of the areas where your ancestors lived, to get a feel for what their lives were like. One important source is the Statistical Accounts of Scotland.

- **The Kirk Session (and Presbytery) Minutes**

<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk> has added a new Virtual-Volumes section to access scans of the Kirk Session records, with login you have unlimited access to the pages of the volumes uploaded. Virtual Volumes tab has links to a number of useful guides. With the name of your parish simply use 'Search our Records' then 'Place' search to see available files in 2 or 3 clicks. If you are lucky, and have the correct spelling, you will get the list of volumes, nothing is indexed, and will not be; so there is a good project for you!! Buried among, often boring day to day admin you can find people and their problems, with irregular marriages, fornications, payments to the poor, and also wider historical matters discussed. Sometimes Mortcloth accounts and other BMD info which should be in OPR registers also appears. Before about 1700 the handwriting can be challenging, training from some websites may be useful eg.

<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/guides/reading-older-handwriting> .

Where you do not find documents with simple place search, try the Virtual Volumes page, it has 3 search boxes, where you can search by number if known, by Record Creator, or Place, where there is an A to Z list to check spelling. The centre box seems to work with fewest clicks with a simple parish name. Volumes may not be uploaded yet, may not exist, or volume may contain post 1900s information which will not be released for confidentially reasons. Only the Church of Scotland series CH2 parishes are currently loaded, other Churches in CH3 series are not covered at present. To check if records exist, it is important to understand how records were collected, this was not with the OPRs by the Registrar General, but, by the then Scottish Records Office, now the National Records of Scotland (NRS), consequently the CH2 numbering is different from the Parish numbers! To check full catalogue holding, go to the NRS website at <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/catalogues-and-indexes> , from the homepage you have to go through Research and Catalogues-and-indexes, which is a pain. At bottom of screen it offers you 3 searches!! 2nd is for other archives offices and 3rd is for private archives, so you want the first, [National Records of Scotland online catalogue](#), enter your parish name to get the full list of all records which exist, with date range; add the words Kirk Session, and check the AND boolean (this search does not support quote marks to select all words), to see only KS entries. Don't worry where it says "not held" at right, many originals are transferred back to local archives, If there is a blue reference number then it exists, if you click on number it will show where original is kept, but it will have been scanned, and should soon? be uploaded if not there already. Note the Reference number and return to Scotlands People, as a double check, enter the number in the first search box on the Virtual Volumes page. The date range does not guarantee the content is complete, you will often find a few weeks or months missing just when you need them!!

An interesting Research Guide on ScotlandsPeople, which mainly relates to OPRs, is at

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/old-parish-registers/list-of-old-parish-registers> .

However at the bottom of that page is a link to [Appendix 1: kirk session records \(our reference CH2\) containing pre-1855 birth, death and marriage entries](#), and the converse [Appendix 2: kirk session and other material found in the Old Parish Registers](#).

In the middle of that page is a link to [Detailed list of the Old Parochial Registers of Scotland](#) this links to the original 1872 list of OPR coverage when the volumes were originally catalogued, it contains detailed summary of dates missing or damaged, on facing pages. For Neilston parish you see B.1688-1784 is incomplete, within the date range, blank and damaged periods are detailed eg.

XXI. RENFREW—contd.					
572. Neilston .	3	(1) B. 1688-1784; D. 1744-1816; (2) B. 1785-1819; (3) M. 1737-1819.	3	(1) B. 1820-54; (2) M. 1819-54; (3) Proclamations 1820-33; D. 1822-31.	

Neilston.—B. Blank Aug. 1690–Jan. 1702, exc. two entries for 1701; also Aug. 1735–May 1737. The margins of the leaves prior to 1740 have been much wasted, rendering many entries more or less imperfect. Mothers' names not recorded till 1737. M. After 1766, the fact of Marriage is often omitted in the entries till 1816, from which date to 1833 there are separate Records of Proclamations and Marriages. D. Blank Nov. 1771–Jan. 1776, and (exc. four entries 1777–78) May 1776–Oct. 1783. Only four entries July 1793–Jan. 1805. Blank also (exc. two entries 1814–16) May 1811–Nov. 1822.

Worthwhile checking if you don't find entry in OPR, there may be a gap!. For the Kirk Session you need to be aware of the same potential problem, if there is a gap in record, you won't find what you are looking for, so it is worth noting gaps as you read through!!

● Statistical Accounts

The First (or Old) Statistical Account was carried out from 1791-99 when Sir John Sinclair sent a questionnaire to each parish minister requesting a narrative of the geography, climate, natural history, population, agriculture and industry of their Parish, 21 volumes were completed by 1799. Because it is compiled mostly by ministers, locally, it is the closest you can get to a description of life in the 1790's. Later the New (or second) Statical Account was published between 1834 and 1845, so it is interesting to see how things evolved in this period of industrialisation. The Third Statistical Account was published between 1951 and 1992.

A number of sites give access to the Stat Accounts, but perhaps the easiest to navigate is the University of Edinburgh at <https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/home>. The order of parishes printed in volumes is random, probably as they were collected in. This site has a clickable county map gives a list of parishes and shows location, then a list of resources gives you the volume number and takes you to page images. The images of the 1st or Old Statistical Account are not so good, but readable with enlargement. If you want to read a lot, you can take volume number to https://electricScotland.com/webclans/statistical_accounts.htm website and at the bottom of page select 1st Stat Account and volume number, to download a better Google scan of the whole volume.

Reading the old style text can take some getting used to, as the letter 's' is printed in old style form, it may look like 'f', but without full crossbar in print, or as a long form in italic :-

f f = s, f f = f so don't embarrass yourself by reading the text with a lipf!.

You may also find out why some Parish records were lost (not left!!), for example :-

† Mr. JAMES MENZIES was the last Episcopal minister, and continued to officiate long after the Revolution. In his time, the records of the parish were left, by his house taking fire.

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Extracts from Callander Parish in Perthshire, Volume XI section 50, p596 footnote, showing relative quality of 2 sources mentioned above. You never know what you are going to find!

Ideas, opinions and techniques from contributors to e-News, are for information of readers, they do not necessarily reflect the opinions or recommendations of the Society.

To be in contact with others you can go to :





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