

Former Band member Ian Watt contacted the Pipe Band to inform them that he had in his garage a number of items that belonged to the previous Pipe Band when it disbanded, which he was willing to return to the new Band. This assisted the Band greatly in their efforts to encourage new members and to provide some equipment to get the band started. Among the items rediscovered was twenty metres of 'Red Hamilton' tartan cloth which has since been made into kilts for the present Band members. Other items included drums, a Band shield and a copy of the original constitution for the Band which has now been updated. Having sought grant funding, undertaken fund raising efforts and received several kind donations from supporters, the Pipe Band was then able to provide the basic needs to enable the Band to get started. Practising with chanters and drum pads, a young but enthusiastic company have grown from strength to strength in quality and numbers. Presently there are 41 registered members. In a very short space of time the Band has progressed from chanters to pipe bag, and the sound of the pipes can often be heard throughout the community.



Stonehouse Pipe Band 2008; The Cross

In 2008, the Pipe Band played its first official engagements. On the day of the Agricultural Show, the Band marched through the streets of Stonehouse playing a selection of appropriate tunes. The Band also led the Gala Day procession through the village and played to an appreciative audience at the bandstand in Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park. The Band is now in great demand throughout Lanarkshire and the village can be proud of its achievements in such a relatively short time and we wish them every success in the future.



Stonehouse Pipe Band at The Cross, 1967

## The Braw Stonehouse Pipers

### Tune: A Hundred Pipers

The braw Stonehouse pipers croon a', croon a':  
 The braw Stonehouse pipers croon a', croon a':  
 Nane wi' ye at Cowal could blaw, could blaw,  
 They won Lauder's shield an' Argyle's an' a'.  
 The Duke ne'er thocht that the wee weaving' toon  
 Could rear sic a clan o' brave pipin' loons;  
 When ithers they hadna a breath tae draw,  
 The braw Stonehouse pipers played awa', played awa'.

Some say 'twas favour that got them the prize,  
 I wadna believe it: they're jist tellin' lies;  
 Their reels an' strathspeys were foremost in tune,  
 An' the like o' them ne'er was heard in Dunoon  
 The folk a' stared when they saw Lauder smile  
 When the judge gied his verdict tae the Duke o' Argyle;  
 When Harry heard Stonehouse had won the twa shields  
 He danced Cailum Callum three times in the field.

The braw Stonehouse pipers marched roon', marched roon',  
 An' played a selection o' auld Hielan' tunes;  
 Then crossed ower tae Gourrock an' there got the train,  
 Which took them safe back tae auld Stonehouse again  
 The braw Stonehouse pipers croon a', croon a':  
 The braw Stonehouse pipers croon a', croon a':  
 Nane wi' ye at Cowal could blaw, could blaw,  
 The braw Stonehouse pipers croon a', croon a':

*Knowetap Laddie*

This song composed after the author read an account of the pipe bands success at the Cowal Games. The article was taken from the Motherwell Times in September 24th 1909.

# STONEHOUSE HERITAGE GROUP NEWSLETTER

# 17

**August 1909 - August 2009**

## **Stonehouse Pipe Band World Championship Centenary**

This year, Stonehouse Pipe Band celebrates its 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary and 100 years since winning the world championships in 1909. The Band was formed on 11<sup>th</sup> October, 1899 under Pipe Major Hector McInnes, accompanied by his two sons on drums and Peter Summers as the Drum Major. Together they formed the foundations of the band which grew steadily in numbers whilst practicing in Townhead School going on to their greatest achievement at the Cowal games in 1909.



*“The Pipe Band added fresh laurels to their name at the Cowal games last Saturday by the annexing of the principal prizes. It was quite on the cards that they would be among the prize winners but it was rather a pleasant surprise when it was known that they had carried before them, winning both the “Harry Lauder” and “Argyll” shields, with the championship of Scotland, and the prizes of £18. The shields were presented by the respective donors, and in handing over the “Lauder” shield, Mr Lauder said he was pleased his shield was going to Stonehouse, a place he knew so well. The Duke of Argyll, in presenting the “Argyll” shield, said he had to sing Harry Lauder’s chorus and compliment the band on their success. Great excitement prevailed in the village when the telegram*

*announcing the good news was received. At the request of several gentlemen, the Silver Band turned out to assist in welcoming the victors. On arrival at the station the pipers had a rousing reception, and were carried shoulder high to the Cross preceded by the Silver Band playing lively music. Again and again cheers were raised by the crowd of several hundred gathered at the Cross. After a selection by the pipers the villagers dispersed, thoroughly pleased and proud of their band. It is expected that the shields will arrive next week, and arrangements are being made for them being handed over to the custody of the Parish Council.”*

Hamilton Advertiser, 4th September 1909,



### **Stonehouse Pipe Band Re-formed**

In 2006 Fred McDermid approached the recently formed Stonehouse Development Trust with the idea of re-forming the Stonehouse Pipe Band. The Band had ceased to function for some thirty years but undaunted the Trust took up the challenge.

Morag Cook (Trust Director) led the initiative and through her commitment and enthusiasm campaigned successfully in gaining the support of former members of the Band and other interested individuals. Morag’s dedication to this enterprise resulted in around a dozen or so potential members attending a series of meetings which led to the re-establishment of the Stonehouse Pipe Band on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2007.

# Extracts from Townhead Public School Headmasters Diary



Townhead class 1914-15

The following deaths (pupils, local person or dignitary) are recorded through the Townhead Public School masters diary between the years 1882 and 1917. The reader will note that a number of pupils died from illnesses that we now take for granted as treatable. A full searchable database including the Headmasters Diary is available on the groups website [www.stonehouseheritage.co.uk](http://www.stonehouseheritage.co.uk).

Unrestricted access to the databases is available for £11.00 and this will last one year. Access can be done via the website or by sending a cheque to the Treasurer at 4/5 the Cross Stonehouse.

## **27th January 1882**

The Primary Teachers Having To Go To Coatbridge Tomorrow To Be Examined, Were Relieved From Their Duties For This Afternoon. Wednesday Was The Half Yearly Fast Day, And There Was No School. Mr John Macfie, Banker A Member Of The School Board, And One Who Took A Deep Interest In The Education Of The Parish, Died In His Own House Very Suddenly On Wednesday Evening, Heart Disease Was The Cause.

## **22nd September 1883**

Jas Buchanan, A Scholar While At Play In The Playground Fell And Dislocated His Arm. Jas Hamilton An Attractive Little Fellow In The 3rd Standard Died This Week.

## **10th June 1887**

Jeanie Allan, West Mains. A Scholar In The 2nd Standard Of This School, Died This Week After Several Weeks Illness.

## **12th April 1889**

Mr M. Hamilton Clerk Of The School Board Died On Tuesday. He Is To Be Buried Today. All The Schools Being Closed In The Afternoon, Out Of Respect To His Memory.

## **12th December 1890**

Drawing Exam Schedules Came This Week. Arch. Gillies A 4th Standard Pupil In This School Died On Monday After 4 Weeks Illness.

## **20th November 1891**

Mr Wotherspoon Teacher Of Camnethan Street School Died Last Sabbath, He Was Buried Yesterday And The Schools Were All Out By Order Of The Board.

## **8th January 1892**

Opened Wednesday With 168 And Very Little Increase Yesterday Or Today. One Of Our 4th Standard Girls Died Today Of Consumption.

## **29th January 1897**

Drawing Examination Was Held Yesterday, With The Exception Of One Boy, Robert Brown Who Died Of Measles, Every Boy On The Schedule Was Present Viz. 110. Mr Ewen Was The Inspector.

## **13th September 1901**

One Of Our Scholars Died In Glasgow Infirmary This Week After A Few Days Illness. Headmaster Changed Rooms With Miss Clark, Teacher Of Standard 4 Classes. Std. 5 And 6 Are Now In One Room The Larger Room, Under Headmaster, And John Anderson, P.T. Of The 4th Year.

## **25th March 1904**

Yesterday The Schools Were Closed At Mid-Day As A Tribute Of Respect To The Late Major General Sir Francis Sinclair Lockhart, Who Died Last Sunday, And Was Buried In The Grounds Of His Own Castle At 1-30 Pm Yesterday

## **19th November 1909**

A Little Girl A Pupil In Our Lowest Class Died Yesterday Of Meningitis After Three Weeks Illness, Mary Ritchie Was Her Name.

## **6th May 1910**

King Edward 7 Died Last Friday Night Quite Suddenly. He Has Been Called The Peacemaker And All The Nations Lament His Death.

## **24th May 1912**

A Number Of Children Are Extremely Irregular In Attendance. James Foster A Little Boy Who Was Sent To Hospital For Scarlet Fever And Was Discharged Cured Of Fever, But Entirely Broken Down Otherwise Was Buried Yesterday, He Was An Only Child Too.

## **2nd March 1917**

I Was Put In Category A, And May Be Called Up Soon. William Brown, Westown, Died On Sunday In Motherwell Hospital, He Was Present Last Thursday. Another Boy In The Same Class Is Off With Fever This Week, And Today The Sanitary Inspector Looked At The Hands Etc, Of All The Pupils In That Room, But Could Find Nothing Suspicious..

## **23rd March 1917**

There Has Been Snow This Week, And The Attendance Is Down, A Kinderspiel In Connection With One Of The Churches Has Also Affected The Attendance. A Boy, Walter Haddow, Age 8 Died Last Night In The Royal Infirmary Glasgow, Where He Had Gone To Undergoing An Operation For Appendicitis.

# In memory of 3rd Radio Officer James Russell Burns

**Born: 1913 / Died: 26th June, 1941**

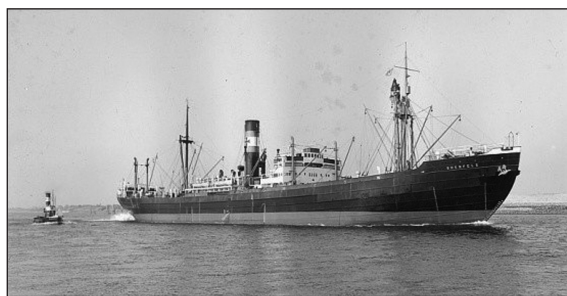
Before the start of the Second World War, James managed the Radio Shop at The Cross (now the butchers shop) for his father Robert Burns (who owned the Black Bull at the time). He was a keen ballroom dancer and competed at the Tower Ballroom in Blackpool prior to joining the Merchant Navy.

He was killed on the same day, in 1941, as his cousin (Squadron Leader Alex Torrance) was wounded flying in defence of Malta.

James was the Radio Officer on board the S. S. Empire Ability which was part of a convoy en route from Africa to the UK. The ship, with sixty people on board, was sunk by a U-boat commanded by Jost Metzler off the coast of Africa on 26th June, 1941

The S.S. Empire Ability was formerly a German ship, the Uhenfels, which was captured in 1939 off Freetown, Sierra Leone

On that fateful day, the Empire Ability was a part of convoy SL-78, when it was attacked by U-boat U-69. The ship, under the command of Master Herbert Flowerdew, was carrying a cargo of 7,725 tons of sugar, 238 tons of rum, and 400 tons of groundnuts.



The convoy was 200 miles southeast of the Azores when U-69 attacked during the night, first sinking the SS River Luger, and then hitting the Empire Ability with a single torpedo. The Empire Ability caught fire and was abandoned. It sunk just 21 minutes later.

One of only two casualties was James Burns while the rest of the crew, gunners, military personnel and passengers successfully abandoned ship. The survivors were picked up by the SS Amerika and transferred to the corvette HMS Burdock. They were subsequently landed safely at Milford Haven.

The U-69 (nicknamed the Laughing Cow) was commissioned in 1940 and sunk 17 Allied ships before being sunk itself in 1943 by HMS Fame in the North Atlantic. The U-boat was lost with all hands (46), but by then Metzler had transferred to U-847 which did not see active service before the war ended. Jost Metzler, who was born in 1909, died in Germany on 29th September, 1975.

James R. Burns is listed on Panel 37 of the 1939-45 Tower Hill Memorial in London (see separate article in next edition) which commemorates men of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets who gave their lives to preserve the life of the nation and who have no grave but the sea.



## Books donated by Mr. Gerald Hunt of New Zealand

Stonehouse Heritage Group wishes to record its thanks to Mr. Hunt for returning to Stonehouse two books that had found their way to Renwick, in Marlborough Province, New Zealand around the middle of the 19th Century. In those days people went out from UK with "a box of books" amongst their most valued possessions.

One is a restored copy of Euclid's Geometry sent a couple of years ago (at the time an article was provided to the Hamilton Advertiser which was published and later included in Newsletter No. 3 which is currently accessible from the group's website).

The other is a Ruddiman's Latin Primer from Stonehouse Subscription School which has been sent for re-binding. Mr. Hunt has been the restorer of books for the Renwick Library for many years.

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## Donation

The group have received a donation of £500 and various items of office equipment from the family of the late Jim Davidson who died recently. The cash donation is for the further publication of information obtained or transcribed by the group to be published on our web site [www.stonehouseheritage.co.uk](http://www.stonehouseheritage.co.uk). Jim's daughters Hilary and Kathryn have been provided with membership to access to our website and we wish to acknowledge their generous donation.

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## Book Binding

Following the re-discovery of the headmasters diaries for Greenside school and Camnethan Street school which were in a sorry state of disrepair the group have arranged to have the diaries re-bound with Cameron bookbinders Glasgow. By re-binding the books this should ensure that they remain in good condition for future generations. It is hoped that these books will be transcribed over the winter months and be ready for uploading onto our website during 2010.