



Milngavie Heritage Centre

Newsletter - No.2.

Report on March Heritage Exhibition



Opening of Heritage Exhibition – Sport in Milngavie

The “Sport in Milngavie” Exhibition from 3rd to 10th March 2012 was held in the Court Room in Milngavie Town Hall and attracted over 400 visitors.

The Exhibition was supported by East Dunbartonshire Council as one of the Events in their Annual Local History Week and was opened by Provost Gotts with Councillors Bill Binks and Jim Gibbons in attendance.

Milngavie Heritage Centre Website : www.milngavieheritage.org

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The “West Highland Way” Presentation was very well attended and successful. The evening kicked off with an introduction from Callum Christie on the world wide interest of the Walk. He then introduced John Hooper, a well known local resident, who gave a short power point presentation highlighting his WHW walks in both directions and providing an insight into the walking / weather conditions, what to wear and the wildlife that can be seen along the route.

Following on, Callum introduced Tom and Margaret Hunter, who over 30 years ago, were responsible for the Walk being given its designation and now recognised as a World attraction. The Heritage Centre were delighted to have had Tom and Margaret as guests and they had agreed to let EDC copy their documents which shall be held by Milngavie Heritage Centre for all to review and for generations to come. A short question and answer session over tea and coffee completed a most enjoyable and informative evening.

Evaluation of Request Questionnaire.

A request Questionnaire was also available for completion by visitors at the Exhibition. It was a relatively straight forward one page questionnaire asking questions relating to area travelled from to the Centre, age and if visited the previous exhibition.

A healthy 24% of the visitors responded and were mostly from Milngavie as expected. There were about 50% in the over 60 age category and the under 60's comprised a good proportion of under 15 year olds associated with the school visits. The 25-35 age group were however under represented.

Most visitors had a general interest in Heritage, however it was interesting to note that 38% had not been to the previous Exhibition although it too had been well attended. There was expressed a need for more regular exhibitions at the Centre with themed presentations and with the use of audio visual material.

A more detailed account of the evaluation is given in the enclosed sheet.

Membership and AGM.

During the Exhibition the Group received a number of completed Application Forms to become Friends of the Heritage Centre.

The Group have pleasure in circulating this Newsletter as a Report of the Heritage Exhibition and would like to extend an invitation to all Friends of the Heritage Centre to their AGM on Thursday 24th May at the Former Court Room in Milngavie Town Hall at 6.45 for 7pm.

Displays will be in place in the new wall mounted frames (courtesy of an ED Community Grant and news announcements given of other grant applications). Tea and coffee will be provided after the AGM and if time allows there could be a short power point presentation to conclude the evening.

Hope you all can manage to come on the 24th when further information on future presentations will be announced.

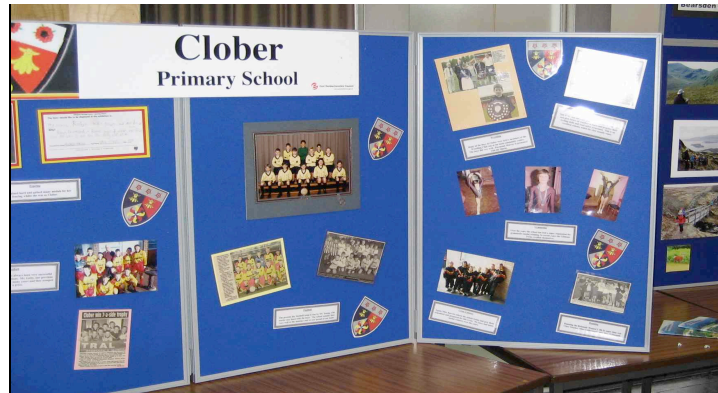
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Exhibition Displays and Presentations.

In addition to displays of sports photographs from the collections of East Dunbartonshire Leisure and Culture Trust, there were also displays from sports organisations, namely, Milngavie Boys Club, Bearden & Milngavie Ramblers, Milngavie Bowling Club, Milngavie Golf Club, Clyde Cruising Club at Bardowie and Milngavie Wrestling. Many thanks to all these organisations for their contributions.

Once again the local schools contributed very worthwhile displays to the Exhibition. School classes also visited the Exhibition and many of the pupils took part in the Provost's Quiz Competition.



During the Exhibition Week, two excellent Evening Presentations were given, one on "Sport in Milngavie" and the other on the "West Highland Way".

The "Sport in Milngavie" Presentation was introduced by Colin Castle with power point illustrations of many sporting activities and events in East Dunbartonshire. The events included the Opening of the Allander Sports Centre in 1977 by Princess Anne and a demonstration which had taken place from a group of young fencers from the Allander Club in the presence of Princess Anne.

Colin then referred to the fact that he had been a very enthusiastic fencer. He spoke of fencing being known as the "chess of sport" which requires not just skill with a foil, sabre or epee but also the ability to seek out an opponent's weaknesses and exploit them. He mentioned that fencing over the years had thrived at the Allander under the coaching direction of the Sport Centre under manager, Hans Mater, and had produced junior national champions and 3 Scottish National Squad members.

A second very interesting talk also of a less well known sport was given by Councillor Bill Binks on his main sporting interest of archery. Bill spoke about his archery club and demonstrated the assembly of the different parts of his archery equipment.

Bill also said that it had been a privilege to demonstrate the sport during the week to an enthusiastic group of school children. One thing that was appreciated was that both boys and girls can compete on an equal footing. Some Maid Marians are as good as the Robin Hoods in the sport ! The questions put to him were very astute and intelligent. He had a great time talking to the children and hoped that in the future he would see some of them at some of the clubs in the area of Milngavie.

Finally, we were treated to a remarkable story by John McCourtney of perseverance to an Olympic standard for the 1968 Mexico Games in wrestling. John started wrestling in 1959 at the 41 Club when he was 9 years old and trained with the very basic equipment and conditions. They had no washing facilities or showers so in the summer time, after training the lads would head up to Mugdock Moor to cool off with a swim in Abie's Loch. At the age of 14 he was a reserve for the Great Britain team at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. Unfortunately he was not called so did not get a trip to Tokyo.

This however made John more determined not to be chosen as a reserve for the Mexico Games and for the next 4 years he travelled to Turkey for 6 weeks training with the Turkish National Wrestling Coach. His method of transport the first year could be considered quite amusing as it was on a Lambretta scooter with a friend Finlay from Easterhouse and took over 5 days to get there. Subsequent years were more comfortable as he was able to travel in a mini van but at his own expense.

John recalls that in 1968 on winning the British Wrestling titles at Freestyle, Greco' Roman and Traditional he achieved automatic qualification for the Great Britain Olympic team for Mexico. On meeting his fellow team mates, he discovered that 3 of them had been to high altitude training while he was given a bottle of iron tablets as his special training contribution. At the Games while he did not win his contest he felt he had wrestled very well and was awarded a Commemorative Medal for competing. Photo below shows a poster for the Mexico Games and clothing for the sport of the Games

