



The Grange Newsletter

Grange Association

May 2023

ISSUE No. 136



Stories inside

Returning, reporting, researching, recalling

www.grangeassociation.org

Registered Scottish Charity SC025491

Following the AGM, the Grange Association has several new Committee members. You'll find their details in the list of Contacts below. We are very grateful for the years of service given by the members who have retired, several of whom are continuing to provide advice and assistance. We are still looking for a Treasurer - see the short piece on page 11 for more detail on this.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter. It includes articles on the history of the area, a report on the AGM, brief information on our new Chair, news on events in Grange Cemetery, a glimpse into the lives of seven generations of a family, a delightful reminiscence piece about weekends in the Lammermuirs, an update on planning applications and a gardening article from our new Garden Group leader.

Jenny Dawe, Editor

Contents

History & Heritage

Craigmount School Part 2
Page 3

GA News

AGM 2023
Spotlight: John Elliot
Page 4

Trees

Walnut and limes

Cemetery news

Page 5

Profile

McLeods and MacLeods:
Hilary knows her place
Pages 6-8

Nature Notes

Fish supper in the Sitkas
Page 9

Planning Update

Page 10

Gardening

Grange Fair
Treasurer needed
Useful Contacts
Page 11

Events

Talks
Page 12

GRANGE ASSOCIATION CONTACTS *Committee members

* John Elliot (667 9339) 1 Lauder Loan, EH9 2RB	<i>Chair</i> chair@grangeassociation.org
* Mark Batho (667 2332) 12 Blackford Avenue, EH9 2PH	<i>Vice-Chair & Events</i> mark.batho@grangeassociation.org
* Lucy Richardson (07870 307224) 31 Fountainhall Road, EH9 2LN	<i>Hon Secretary, Newsletter Distribution & Fair</i> secretary@grangeassociation.org
* Richard Brown (07899 914678) 31 St Alban's Road, EH9 2LT	<i>Interim Hon Treasurer, Newsletter Advertising</i> treasurer@grangeassociation.org <i>Membership</i> membership@grangeassociation.org
* Maggie Anderson (07941 530674)	<i>Events</i> events@grangeassociation.org
Nigel Ayton (662 8720) 2 South Lauder Road, EH9 2LL	<i>Planning</i> planning@grangeassociation.org
* Jenny Dawe (447 1296) 1 Strathearn Road, EH9 2AH	<i>Newsletter & Cemetery Research</i> newsletter@grangeassociation.org
Lynn Errey (07734 442668) 72 Findhorn Place, EH9 2NW	<i>Garden Group</i> gardens@grangeassociation.org
Donald Henderson (07733 332214) 2 Seton Place, EH9 2JT	<i>MSCC Community Liaison</i> donald.henderson@grangeassociation.org
* Molly Ludlam (667 6232) 20 Tantallon Place, EH9 1NZ	<i>Home Energy</i> home-energy@grangeassociation.org
Matthew Nicholas (667 7686) 4 Lauder Road, EH9 2EL	<i>Astley Ainslie Community Engagement</i> aah@grangeassociation.org
* Peter Pitkin (447 3220) 8 Blackford Road, EH9 2DS	<i>Tree Advice</i> trees@grangeassociation.org
* Neil Robb (07834 617374) Grange Loan, EH9 2ER	<i>Web Services</i> website@grangeassociation.org
* Sue Tritton (667 8027) 6 Grange Terrace, EH9 2LD	<i>Leaf Clearing, GPCC Liaison & Cemetery Amenity</i> suetritton@btinternet.com
<i>Hon President:</i> Sofia Leonard (667 2339); 12 St Alban's Road, EH9 2PA; sofia@jbleo.plus.com	

Cover collage: *MacLeods return to McLeod family home, pp6-7 (photo: Jenny Dawe); Grange Association AGM 2023, p4 (photo: Neil Robb); Craigmount School, p3 & pp6-9 (photo: courtesy of Hilary MacLeod); Sitka plantation, p9 (photo: David Parker, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia).*



To advertise in *The Grange Newsletter*, contact Richard Brown (07899 914678) email: treasurer@grangeassociation.org

Newsletter contributions, photographs and feedback are welcome. Send to Jenny Dawe email: newsletter@grangeassociation.org

HISTORY & HERITAGE

History of Craigmount School, 52 Dick Place Part 2: 1899-1911, Misses Gossip

Following her article in the last newsletter, Grange Association Secretary, Lucy Richardson, continues with the history of the school from the time of James Sime's retirement in 1899 to the charismatic Gossip sisters taking over and changing it to a popular girls' school.

Once James Sime retired in 1899, the delightfully named Nina Gossip (1856-1937) and her sisters Jessie (1858-1937), Mary (1866-1960), Charlotte (1869-1955) and Elizabeth (1871-1961) took over the school and changed it from a boys' school to one for girls. All are designated as headmistress in the 1901 census apart from the youngest, Elizabeth aged 28, who was a governess. They were responsible for 49 female boarders aged 11-19 and had seven servants to help.

The Gossips grew up on Chalmers Crescent and their father, appropriately enough, was a journalist. In the Craigmount Magazine of 1960 there is an article by Dorothy Forman about the Gossip sisters stating they started the school as "a result of the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank in 1878". The family "lost their all in this".

These entrepreneurial sisters ran a succession of schools before taking on Craigmount. Their first school opened on 1 October 1884 at 4 Blantyre Terrace, Merchiston; the next in the Lodge in Forbes Rd, Bruntsfield, in 1887; and then, in 1895, Falcon Hall, Morningside. In 1899 the ladies are advertising the school at Craigmount. They "have rented for a long term of years..... they will have a Gymnasium and Swimming Bath. The grounds extend to Three Acres and include Croquet Lawns and Tennis Courts." The sisters were running schools from at least 1884-1911, a period of 27 years, 12 of which were at Craigmount.

Classes usually accommodated 10-15 pupils and there were approximately 15 full-time teaching staff including the Principal. There were also specialist visiting staff and perhaps 10 or so non-teaching staff such as a matron, cook, maids, gardener etc. The roll increased gradually to 150

pupils aged 5-18 with more day girls than boarders. The girls slept in curtained cubicles within dormitories in the Red and White houses.

At this time few girls took exams or were encouraged to pursue a career. Instead, they were expected to marry: "... the Misses Gossips chief aim was to provide a sound Christian foundation upon which the girls could build their lives." (Taken from text by teacher Mary Fraser containing history and reminiscences of Craigmount.) They spent part of every Sunday attending church and no doubt there would



Craigmount School in 1913, courtesy of the Usher family, from 'Memories of the Grange', pub. Grange Association 2003

have been morning and evening prayers during the week.

The 1960 article by Dorothy Forman about the Gossips states: "They were strikingly individual as to character, each a strong personality, yet they lived their whole lives in harmony"; "They loved young people un sentimentally and understood them"; "They were highly intelligent women with a gift for teaching".

Retiring in 1910, the eldest sister, Nina, was 54 years old. As life-expectancy was shorter a hundred years ago, perhaps they felt it was time to move on. It is also possible they made enough money running their schools that retirement was economically possible. They moved to Colinton and then to Granttown-on-Spey and Kingussie.

The family grave is in the Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh, where the parents and four of the sisters are

buried. They appear to be a remarkable and inspirational family.

The Gossips were succeeded by several other female teachers until in 1939 the

school was evacuated to Scone Palace. In 1952 the school moved to Minto House in the Borders where it closed in 1966 due to a crumbling building and a falling roll. There are many other stories to be told!

THE LATE MISS N. B. GOSSIP

THE funeral took place on Saturday to the Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh, of Miss Nina Barbara Gossip, who passed away at her residence, Coulnacolle, Kingussie. Deceased was a sister of the Rev. Professor A. J. Gossip, Trinity College, Glasgow. The family was previously in residence in Edinburgh, where Miss Gossip and her sisters founded the Craigmount Girls' School. Miss Gossip resided in Granttown-on-Spey for a time before taking up residence at Kingussie.

The Scotsman, 05 July 1937

GRANGE ASSOCIATION NEWS/SPOTLIGHT

GRANGE ASSOCIATION AGM 2023

Our 2023 AGM was held on 21 March. We presented the accounts and reported our activities in 2022, including our season of talks which had been a welcome return to in-person meetings after two years of remote Zoom meetings.



Outgoing Chair, Nigel Ayton

The reports remain available in the [Library](#) section of our website.

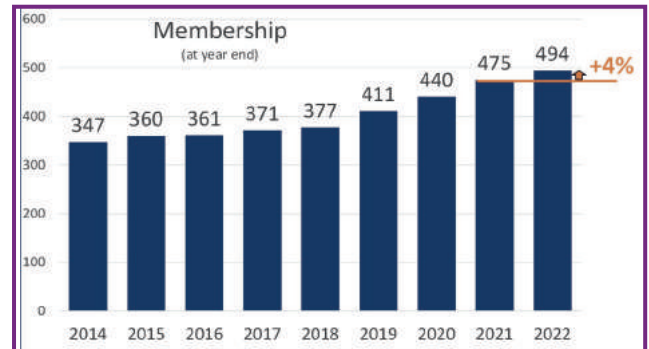
Membership of the Grange Association grew by 4% over 2022, which reassures us that our services continue to meet the needs of the residents of the Grange. If you are not already a member, do go to our website and complete an application to [join us](#).

The 2023 AGM marked a number of changes to the Committee, with several members having served the maximum four years. These included my own role as Chair and I expressed my gratitude to the Committee who had worked so well together over the last four years, including the difficult period of the Covid restrictions, to ensure that the Association continued to thrive and grow. I paid special thanks to outgoing committee members: Martin Sinclair, Treasurer; Jean McCutcheon,

Events; and Roger Kellett, former Vice-Chair and Planning lead. Nominations had been received for new Committee members and the meeting unanimously endorsed the appointment of John Elliot as the incoming Chair. Richard Brown has agreed to perform the duties of the Treasurer while we continue to seek a new Committee member for that role. If you can help the Committee with that or any other aspect of its work, please let us know by emailing or calling one of the [Committee](#) (details on page 2).

It has been an honour and a pleasure to serve as Chair for the last four years and, seeing the strength and breadth of the new Committee, I am confident that the Association will continue to grow under its new Chair and Committee members.

Nigel Ayton



SPOTLIGHT on John Elliot, new Chair of the Grange Association

Son of a Borders farmer, I decided early on that the hill sheep trade was not for me. A programme about the work of solicitors led to my career. I became a partner in an Edinburgh firm in 1973, retiring at the end of 2011. During my career, I was President of the Law Society of Scotland and Deputy Keeper of HM



Writers to the Signet. Outside the law, I was chair of a charitable care home for several years during a period of massive change for that home and for the care sector.

Around the time I retired, my wife and I decided to move (children long gone) from our family house in Morningside. We didn't know where we would end up, but the dice were loaded towards the Grange and how happy we are that that was the case.

We have thoroughly enjoyed the friendly and positive environment of our "new" home and I look forward to contributing to the work of the Grange Association in maintaining and improving that. The work of the Association in respect of planning, trees, leaf clearing, enhancing Grange Cemetery and providing information is important for all of us.

When it's worth protecting...

... it's worth protecting properly. Blackford is proud to support the Grange Association in looking after this special community for everyone.

For families and businesses, we help bring the peace of mind and confidence that what matters most is also protected.

Please contact Michael Gregson in our Edinburgh office: michael.gregson@blackfordinsurance.com 07900 647 423

Blackford.

Proud insurance supporter of the Grange Association.

Blackford is a trading name of Blackford Group Limited, authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (Firm Reference 831508). Registered Office: Blackford Group Limited, 26 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh EH2 4ET (Registered SC616744). Blackford Group Limited is an Appointed Representative of James Hallam Limited, authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (Firm Reference 134435).

TREES/GRANGE CEMETERY

Peter Pitkin reports on a black walnut and a black day for two limes

In the January 2022 issue I remarked on the planting of three trees at the east entrance to the cemetery: a walnut and two columnar oaks. I was concerned that a walnut might be unsuitable because of its widely spreading crown – but I did wonder if it might be an American black walnut which has a narrower pyramidal shape. Having seen the tree in leaf, it is indeed a black walnut. The Council has planted another, with some other interesting but questionably suitable trees, on Newbattle Terrace.

The black walnut originates from the eastern half of the US. It is highly valued for its timber – the wood is darker than European walnut, distinctively blackish. Some early aeroplane propellers were made of black walnut and it was popular for 20th century 'Modern' American furniture. But by 1920 the tree was becoming scarce in the wild.

The leaves are bigger than those of the European walnut, up to two feet long, and in the US the tree can grow to a height of 150ft. In the south of England the tallest trees are around 100ft, but in Scotland it is unlikely to exceed 60ft. The nuts are said to be "of no value as food", but American websites tell us how to harvest and prepare them. It will be interesting to see what the local squirrels, which are so fond of ordinary walnuts, think.

All walnut trees produce a chemical called juglone. In black walnuts, juglone has been shown to inhibit the growth of plants growing beneath or close to a tree. It appears to be widely

present in the green tissues of the black walnut and seemingly becomes toxic when exposed to the air, particularly when the tissue is injured. In certain forms (including black walnut sawdust) and in significant quantities juglone can be toxic to humans.

Returning to Grange Road, there is something more immediately disturbing to report. In November the council was notified of a proposal to fell two lime trees in front of a house at the lower east end which were said to be "damaging [a] stone boundary retaining wall". These two trees are a significant feature of the area and, in leaf, they effectively soften the approach looking east to the buildings on the corner with Causewayside. There is a poorly maintained party wall that is slightly distorted by one of the trees. At the streetward end it is cracked. But the low front wall with its railings is intact and the neighbouring house's high wall fronting the road also remains unaffected. The crown of the tree closest to the street overhangs the road. Any concerns about branches falling in the street could be addressed by trimming back the crown and removing dead wood. Should such precautionary action be considered insufficient, a case for felling on grounds of public safety could only conceivably be made for that tree.

On 16th December, nevertheless, the council informed the applicant that permission to fell the trees was not required because "the work has been identified as being urgently required in the interests of safety". At the time of writing, four months later, the trees are still standing, as is the wall.

Grange Cemetery News

New opportunity to visit the catacombs: Helen Harris and others will be available to take visitors round the western catacombs chamber (the only one with interments) on **Sundays in June from 14:00-16:00**.

New notice board: The Council has provided a new notice board for our use at the West Gate of the Cemetery. Look out for posters and information about the Cemetery and forthcoming events.

New wildflower beds: Following the success of the first wildflower bed near the East Gate that gave such a long-lasting colourful display last year, Edinburgh City Council has provided wildflower seeds for our volunteers to plant in two new beds by the side of the path above the catacombs.

New bee/hedgehog cages: One of our volunteers, David Watson, with advice from Graham Stone, has installed two wire boxes filled with dry leaves to attract overwintering bees and possibly hedgehogs.

New Doors Open event for 2023: We are starting to make plans to welcome visitors to **Doors Open on Saturday 23 September and Sunday 24 September**. Volunteers and leaflets will be available from 12:00-17:00 to give information about memorial stones, catacombs and what we are doing to encourage biodiversity in Grange Cemetery.

Shared Ownership Kilravock - Oswald Road



**You can purchase 50% or 75% of the property
Prices start at £62,500**

Properties available to applicants aged 60 & over

Support from on-site staff, emergency call system

Move closer to family or friends

Find out more about our shared ownership by calling us on: **0131 668 4247** (option 2) or email us at

admin@viewpoint.org.uk

PROFILE: McLeods and MacLeods



L to R: Hilary & Kirsten MacLeod in Blackford Road; Bruce Chalmers & Saxon McLeod, 1941 wedding; Alexander N McLeod, banker; Angus McLeod, Edinburgh Parks Superintendent

Mother and daughter, HILARY and KIRSTEN MACLEOD, talk to JENNY DAWE about their McLeod ancestors in Grange Cemetery and elsewhere

Hilary knows her plaice

Let's sort out two spelling matters first. Same clan, but the **McLeods** are the ancestors of **Hilary and Kirsten MacLeod**, who gained their spelling through Hilary's marriage. And the sub-title casts a nod to the six novels, including *All is Clam* and *Cod only Knows*, in Hilary's *The Shores Mysteries*. Incidentally, the books are worth a try if *Revenge of the Lobster Lover*, which I read recently, is anything to go by. Well-written with quirky characters, evocative land and seascapes (for thirty years Hilary spent her summers in Prince Edward Island in "a little old house near the ocean"), plenty of humour, and a satisfactory conclusion. Hilary describes her novels as Village Noir. Think Alexander McCall Smith in Canada but edgier and darker.

The roots of this article lie in 2015. Hilary MacLeod - former Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio host, Montreal Radio News Director, columnist, and Media Studies Professor at Loyalist College, Ontario - on a visit from Canada, and her daughter Kirsten MacLeod, then a Lecturer and now Reader in Modernist Print Culture at Newcastle University, came to Edinburgh. They were encouraged by "an at-first-truculent cab driver who got into the spirit of things" to see if anyone was in at the fine B-listed sandstone double villa in Blackford Road, built in the early 1850s, where Hilary's mother and grandparents had lived. They were in luck. They were greeted warmly and shown round. Hilary recalls she had "a murky Victorian vision" of her mother's home and was amazed to find "a lovely, open, airy home with a beautiful garden, yet still retaining many original fixtures and fittings". They visited again in 2016 and this year, Hilary having recently relocated to England. The current homeowners, the Macdonalds, Grange Association members, could not have been more hospitable or knowledgeable about the house they have lived in since 1973.

For our purposes, this glimpse into the lives of seven generations begins on the Misty Isle. **Donald McLeod**, son of Alasdair of the MacLeods of Raasay, was born on Skye, probably around the 1760s. Married to Mary, he had "several sons" including Alexander, John and Norman. In Roderick MacCowan's book on the lives of eminent 19th century Christians, *The Men of Skye*, published by The Scottish Reformation Society in 1902, one of the

longest chapters is on Alexander McLeod. There it is said that Donald "was in favourable circumstances and in a position to give his sons a liberal education". Son John (1785-1834) became a tacksman of Balmore, a lease-holder sub-letting land, and a factor for MacLeod of MacLeod in Dunvegan and for MacGilleChalum of Raasay, managing land. He was described as an exemplary Christian. Son Norman (1801-1866) became innkeeper at Struan but, not seen as religious, he warrants little mention in the book. He does, however, play an important part in the life of the next generation.

MacCowan, scathing about the perceived deplorable state of the ministry at the time, offers little on the early years of Donald's son **Alexander McLeod** (1790-1836), tacksman of Ung-na-cille, Snizort, but waxes lyrical about the time after he had "undergone a saving spiritual change". He is described as "a consistent, intelligent Christian, full of zeal", a man of culture and of principle, a person who practised what he preached, hospitable and generous.

Physically, he was "above average height, of dark appearance, and pleasant to look upon". In his late 30s, Alexander was appointed a catechist by the Highland Missionary Society. His journals describe his efforts to instil true worship in the island. In 1830 he wrote enthusiastically about worship in Harris and John Morrison, the poet, who later wrote glowingly of Alexander in *Am Firean*, a long elegy with the first two verses an acrostic for ALASDAIR MACLEOD.

In October 1836, Alexander stayed overnight in a house at Braes, near Portree, after a day of catechising. It is believed the blanket he was given to lie on was the source of the fever that killed him on his return to his home at Skeabost Bridge. Within two months, his wife Christina (née Campbell) and oldest son and daughter had died of the same illness. Son Angus survived.

Angus Alexander McLeod (1827-1902) had been born at Skeabost Bridge to Alexander and Christina in June 1827. Orphaned at the age of nine, his late father's brother Norman and his wife Margaret took Angus to live with their family at the now derelict dormered cottage of Struan Inn, Bracadale, Skye. Sometime between the 1841 and 1851 censuses, Angus began the horticultural work which he continued till 18 months before his death. He worked as a gardener in several stately homes, including Thirkleby Hall, Yorkshire; Burghley House, Lincolnshire; Wentworth House, Yorkshire; and Milton Hall, Cambridgeshire. By 1856, he was at Newbattle Abbey,

PROFILE: McLeods and MacLeods cont.

Midlothian, where he worked for 19 years for the Marquesses of Lothian. The 1861 Census records Angus as Head Gardener. Angus married for the first time at Newbattle in 1856. His wife Christina Blaikie (1831-1858), a carpenter's daughter, died a few months after the birth in 1858 of their son, William Kerr McLeod, named after the 8th Marquess. Hilary and Kirsten knew nothing of Angus's first-born until, while investigating the family tree, they found William's name as "son" on Angus's death certificate.

"Never a whisper about William Kerr in the family", Hilary notes. Yet, William, a gardener, named one of his twin daughters, Annie Gaunt, after Angus's second wife. William, his wife and daughters are commemorated on a stone in Allenvale Cemetery, Aberdeen.

In Renfrewshire in 1864, Angus married his second wife, Lanarkshire-born Anne Gaunt (1837-1911), daughter of Thomas Gaunt and Mary Buntin. Anne may have been coy about her age with it varying between documents. She and Angus had four children, born at Newbattle: Mary Buntin (1865); Annie Gaunt (1869) who went on to marry Sir Thomas Crisp English, the renowned surgeon who saved Winston Churchill's life in 1922 in a tricky operation to remove a perforated, gangrenous appendix; Jean Ramsay (1871); and Alexander Norman (1873).

In 1875, Angus was appointed city gardener by Edinburgh Town Council (Edinburgh Corporation from 1895), retiring through ill health in 1900 as Superintendent of Public Parks. During that period, the city acquired many green spaces, including Blackford Hill, Braid Hills and Inverleith. Angus was very well-regarded. Reports in *The Scotsman* in the 1890s of annual visits by Edinburgh Public Parks Committee to municipal lands describe Angus's work in glowing terms. He is heartily congratulated on his taste and judgement, his innovative planting of trees and flowers, and his creation of walks in areas such as Princes Street Gardens, Inverleith Park and Calton Hill. In 1890, he won the Neill Prize and Medal for services to the Royal Horticultural Society and horticulture in general. His obituary in the *Edinburgh Evening News* in 1902 states: "It was in great measure due to his quiet but assiduous labours that the improvement of the city ... was so successfully carried out." Angus and family lived in Sylvan Place for over 40 years and he and his wife, who died in 1911, are commemorated on the family memorial stone in Grange Cemetery.

Alexander Norman McLeod (1873-1943) was born at Newbattle to Angus and Anne in October 1873. Schooled at George Watson's Boys' College from 1883 to 1890, he maintained his connection as President of the Athletic Club and of the Watsonian Club. In 1891, Alexander started his banking career as an apprentice at The National Bank of Scotland (now incorporated into Royal Bank of Scotland), working his way up to clerk in the Leith Branch in 1897, Inspectors' Department at Head Office in 1907, Inspector of Branches in 1916, and Superintendent of Branches in 1927. He was a member of professional organisations, serving on the Council of the Institute of Bankers in Scotland. An article in *The Teller* on Alexander's retirement in 1936 commends him as a fine orator and raconteur with "impeccable scholarly English, spiced with the very salt of wit", with "outstanding qualities of mind and intellect", a man who led shrewdly and humanely, inspiring loyalty and affection. But Alexander was much more than a banker. He had wide interests in sport, especially cricket, and culture, both literary and musical. Well-read with a particular interest in Elizabethan drama, he was also a collector of beautiful and rare artefacts. His retirement gift was a Chippendale bureau bookcase.

Alexander, then living in Edinburgh's Bruntsfield Terrace, married Beatrice Jane Alexander (1878-1957) in 1915 in Glasgow. The new Mrs McLeod has an interesting past. Her marriage certificate gives her as "B J Watson, Widow, age 33", daughter of George and Mary Alexander (née Heggarty). Yet, the daughter born in 1878 in Londonderry to George and Mary (née Heggarty, not Hegarty) was named Jane, not Beatrice. In Manchester in 1910, a daughter, Beatrice Louisa Alexander, was born to Jeanie Alexander. Sadly, nine months later, Beatrice Louisa, now surnamed Watson, died in Londonderry, "born to Donald and Jeanie Watson, Manchester". There seems to be no record anywhere of such a marriage to a Watson. This suggests the possibility that to cover her unfortunate circumstances, Jane Alexander invented a marriage for her return to Londonderry and, at some point, decided to adopt her short-lived baby's name as her own. Thus, she became Beatrice Jane Watson. It makes for intriguing family history.

In January 1916, Beatrice Jean Saxon was born to Alexander and Beatrice. She was their only child. The family were then living in Dean Bank Lane. In 1929, Alexander bought the family house in Blackford Road for £1,500, selling it in 1940 for the same. From water taps stamped 1930 and wiring done in the 1930s, the current owners surmise that Alexander updated the house considerably.

Alexander died in 1943 and Beatrice in 1957. Both are commemorated in Grange Cemetery.



Still in the house

Their daughter, **Beatrice Jean Saxon McLeod** (1916-1995), known as Saxon, attended St Trinnean's School. Opened in 1922, pupils were taught to suit their own interests. She later went to Craigmount School. [See article on p.3.]

Saxon married Turiff-born Bruce Abernethy Chalmers (1915-2003), son of lawyer Hugh Chalmers and Grace Chalmers, née Erskine, in St John's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh, in June 1941. Their marriage certificate gives Saxon as a secretary and Bruce as a solicitor but



Craigmount School: Saxon, centre front

both "now engaged in war services" - Bruce as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery; and Saxon as an Assistant Section Officer (ASO) in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF). *The London Gazette* of 16 May 1941 notes the appointment as ASO of Aircraftwoman 1st Class Beatrice Jean Saxon McLeod, with her commission as an officer "for the duration of the hostilities" advertised two months later. The WAAF, established in 1939, was a vital part of the RAF's war effort.

The Chalmers were colourful characters. Bruce Chalmers did use his MA LLB (Edinburgh) as a solicitor, but Hilary describes him as "a man of changing interests" who had diverse jobs including wartime Spitfire and Hurricane pilot, university administrator, business executive and opera manager. Hilary describes her mother as "a very dramatic person, with a beautiful rich voice, who had wanted to be an actress". Saxon died in Montreal in 1996. Bruce died in 2003.

Hilary Jane Chalmers, later MacLeod, was born in 1949 in Edinburgh to Bruce and Saxon. Her elder siblings, Brian and Frances, were born in 1942 and 1947 in Edinburgh. Sister Deirdre was born in 1958 in Montreal.

Cont. overleaf

PROFILE: McLeods and MacLeods cont.

Hilary describes her early schooling as “literally all over the map”, including Southampton, Bristol and Mexico City. The family were continually on the move. “My father moved us and thirteen trunks across the Atlantic by ocean liner five times before I was 13.” One such journey is documented in Trans-Atlantic Passenger Lists for 1957, showing the family arriving in Southampton in March and sailing back during September. Life became more settled in 1962 when the family arrived in Montreal, Quebec. There, Hilary went to “a bit of a blue stocking school, Trafalgar School for Girls”, founded in 1887 by a Scotsman, Donald Ross. At McGill University, Hilary studied language and literature (English, German, Spanish and French). Halfway through her degree, she married Alec MacLeod, also with family from Edinburgh. Daughter Kirsten was born in 1969. Hilary’s successful career has centred on the printed and spoken word as a broadcaster, teacher and writer. What about her novel-writing? “I started writing when I was 5. I always aimed to write novels, not just academic papers. Some years before retirement, I thought it was time to get moving and I embarked on the first of my *Shores Mysteries*. A sabbatical in 2007 led to the publication of *Revenge of the Lobster Lover* in 2010.” This first novel won the CBC Bookie Award in 2011 for best mystery of the year.



For many years, Hilary divided her time in Canada between a cottage in Ontario and Sea View, Prince Edward Island, a home she found by chance one dark and stormy night in 1990 fleeing a landlord whose fancy for her was not reciprocated. Sea View is now owned by her niece but Hilary’s interaction with the house, where she wrote so much, and the community she became part of will be published

soon in *For the Love of Sea View* (Acorn Press).

What is her writing routine? In Sea View she would get up very early to write for two or three hours. She says she is often surprised at what her characters do but has more control over descriptions of scenery and personalities. It usually takes three drafts before she submits to her editor before the final draft is worked on. Has she ever had “writer’s block”? “It’s important to keep to a routine but the Covid years had a big impact on my capacity to break the inertia and get going. I went into overdrive after that.”

Hilary accepts that marketing is also “part of the writing job”. She has written boldly: “There’s nothing I won’t do for my books.” That has included wearing a lobster fascinator and huge, creepy glasses to sell her first novel. On occasion she claims to be “the author, the supplier, the shipper, the stocker and the accountant”. If you’re not prepared to do that, she says: “You’ll disappear in the buzz around others.”

Given how the Canadian Maritimes inhabit her novels, it’s hard to imagine Hilary in Sunderland, England, where she now lives. But she has her beloved cats and daughter’s company to compensate. Her early itinerant life has led her to feel somewhat rootless. “I have no home. I can’t have a home.” Yet, she adds: “I do feel Scottish and I really resented being taken away from the UK as a child.” Now, it is a delight for Hilary to visit Edinburgh: “I wake up and it smells new and fresh to me, no matter what the air. But the past always goes through my mind.” Coming from parents who were only children, Hilary tells of going round Grange Cemetery and finding a Grieve gravestone: “I recognised the names and felt that I

had relatives and real roots here.” Her grandfather’s sister Mary Buntin McLeod was married to Sommerville Grieve.

Kirsten MacLeod, born in Montreal in 1969 to Hilary and Alec, followed her mother 20 years later to Trafalgar School. She completed two degrees at McGill University – BA (Drama and Theatre) in 1993 and MA (English Literature) in 1997. Then, she gained her PhD in English Literature at the University of Alberta in 2002 and a Masters in Library and Information Studies in 2009. Clearly a very accomplished scholar, Kirsten was also an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Alberta from 2007 to 2010. Kirsten moved to England to become Lecturer in English Literature at Newcastle University from 2010 to 2019, with promotion to Reader in Modernist Print Culture in 2019. She has an impressive list of publications emanating from her research on decadent literary movements of the 1890s in Britain and America; literary and artistic magazines of the 1890s; French book design; book collecting and archives; and on many well-regarded authors, including Henry James, Emile Zola and Marie Corelli.

Kirsten’s interests include amateur theatre, book collecting and genealogy. It is her interest in genealogy that led to seeking out the family home and investigating her ancestors. She had done research on authors she was studying and “got the hang of it.” Then, she comments: “In the summer of 2014, I got addicted to it!” Like all genealogists, she says: “I went down wrong pathways. I had heard Mum’s stories but didn’t always believe them because they didn’t seem to fit with what I had found. But many of the snippets turned out to be true.” Kirsten used to prefer Glasgow to Edinburgh but after mapping her ancestral places now has “a sense of family in Edinburgh and those connections have become precious to me”.



Grange Cemetery memorial stone to Angus & Anne and Alexander & Beatrice McLeod

Born, bred and educated in Canada, Kirsten feels Canadian but points out that Canadians generally see themselves in terms of their ancestral roots – Scots, French, Irish, and so on. “I came to England when I was 17 and felt very Canadian, whereas in Canada I had felt more British.” Her accent identifies her as “other” but don’t ask Kirsten – or Hilary – “Where are you really from?” or “Why did you come here?” They get tired of explaining.

Hilary and Kirsten both feel connections to their ancestors. Their own lives in many ways reflect the characteristics and interests of those before them. Donald, six generations ago, made sure his sons had a good education: both Hilary and Kirsten have devoted much of their lives to learning and teaching. Alexander, five generations back, a fine preacher and catechist, is a precursor to the later generations’ broadcasting, teaching and writing. Hilary’s well-kept gardens in Canada hark back to Angus, the gardener, four generations ago. Alexander Norman,

three generations back, Hilary’s grandfather, with his cultural interests and joy in drama, give way to Saxon and her wish to have been an actress, Hilary’s unfulfilled desire for the same and Kirsten’s academic work and amateur dramatics. And Alexander Norman’s choice of the Grange for his family home, and their visits here, inspired Hilary and Kirsten to come full circle and maintain the connection by joining the Grange Association earlier this year.

[With big thanks to Pat Storey for help with the genealogical detail when I was perplexed. JD]

NATURE NOTES from Tom Breheny

Fish supper in the sitkas

In my younger days I liked to spend occasional weekends in the Lammermuir Hills sleeping in the sitka forest plantation under a rustic shelter and using a deep bed of dried sitka needles under my bivvi bag for luxurious comfort. The area has a loch, a burn and acres of wild moorland above the treeline. I packed some basic foodstuffs like bread, bacon and cheese. The narrow burn cut under the soft peat banks creating some deep pools and a half pound trout was considered a decent sized fish for a meal.



Detail from Sitka plantation by David Parker, CC BY 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons

One afternoon I peeped into a clear pool and spied three brown trout hanging in the current, one behind the other, with the biggest one up foremost. I observed them from a high bank as I lay in the heather casting no shadow. Their only cover was a large flat stone on the back of the pool on the bend. I cast a worm in the middle of the pool and the largest fish glided across but ignored the wriggling hooked worm. On the second cast all

three trout darted under the stone out of sight. The warm sun was on my back and I was happy to play the waiting game.

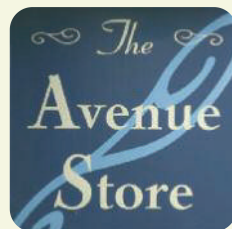
I walked slowly away from the pool and took out my fly box. I had plenty of patterns to choose from but only knew the names of six of them. I tied on a brightly coloured wet fly and crawled back to the steep bank overlooking the pool. The three fish were back in the same formation waiting for any natural food to drift downstream. I let the soft breeze work the fly on the fine nylon line and dapped it gently on the surface of the pool. The big trout positioned itself, snatching at the fly from below then spitting it out again in the blink of an eye. My heart sank. The fish ignored the same fly when I presented it again. When I tied on a new fly they all showed interest and inspected it but none of them would bite. Novelty was needed if I stood any chance of catching one.

About half a mile downstream I had passed a long dead sheep stinking in the hot sun, crawling with maggots. I was desperate to catch one of those fish and hiked back down the hill where I located my smelly woolly ewe bait. I gathered a handful of grubs in an empty crisp bag. When I got back to the pool the three fish were still there. I fixed a live bait to a fly named the bloody butcher and the wriggling maggot

looked impressive with its newly attached wings. As I lowered the rod and dapped the fly gently onto the surface of the pool, the big trout came up like a torpedo and hooked itself as it dived. My rod bent over and I had my fish. I waited about ten minutes before I went back to the pool. The two other fish were back feeding again, apparently unconcerned by the sudden disappearance of their former associate, and I caught both within minutes using the same fly with fresh maggots attached. It had taken me about three hours to catch my fish supper and I was a happy man as I trudged wearily back to my cooking spot higher up the hill near the plantation.

One of the best fuels for speedy cooking was the sun bleached dead woody stems of scrub heather that had been burned off the previous year by the keepers for the benefit of the grouse. These grey sticks gave off very little smoke and produced a fierce heat, but they burned rapidly and an adequate supply was needed for cooking your meal. I used a wire coat hanger to skewer the fish to speed up the roasting over the open fire.

The trout were delicious, even the crispy skins. I slept like a log in my cosy shelter, exhaustion being a factor for a good night's sleep. The sounds of the wind in the trees above me were like the waves on the shore and it was hard to stay awake. Once a tawny owl woke me in the middle of the night from my slumbers, calling from a tree nearby. In the morning a passing roe deer, with its bark like a dog which might unnecessarily alarm a novice camper in the woods, woke me from a pleasant dream as the sun was rising.



The Avenue Store
36 Blackford Avenue
EH9 2PP
0131 668 3274

WE ARE OPEN 7 DAYS
from 6.30am until 8pm

We Offer a FULL Grocery Range which includes Instore Bakery, Chilled & Frozen Foods, Newspapers & Magazines PLUS...

A Great Range of Wines, Beers & Spirits at Great Prices!

WE CAN ALSO OFFER YOU FREE HOME DELIVERY

www.avenuestore.co.uk

for details and offers

PLANNING UPDATE by Nigel Ayton

Check the planning guidance on our website to see whether you need permission to do work to your home or to lop any tree in the Grange: <https://grangeassociation.org/planning/>
 All planning applications and notifications of tree work in the Grange can also be viewed there.

Since the last newsletter, which included applications pending for 12 properties, there have been a further 33 applications and 33 decisions for planning and/or listed building consent in the Grange, plus three appeal decisions. We lodged comments on eight of these new applications, after consulting members nearby. Members who stay near to the site of each application receive an email from us inviting comments. [Join us](#) if you wish to receive these emails.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS and DECISIONS December 2022 - April 2023

Applications granted:

§ GF 11 Beaufort Road EH9 1AF 35 Sciennes Road EH9 1NS	LBC for double glazing Garage extension; roof lights; remove chimney.
35 Sciennes Road EH9 1NS	Variation: Additional rooflight
7 Chalmers Crescent EH9 1TS 41 Lauder Road EH9 1UE	Garden room at rear Variation: Timber rear cladding to garage and drawing corrections
§ 11B Grange Road EH9 1UQ 11A Hope Terrace EH9 2AP 12 Hope Terrace EH9 2AP	New WC Two-storey extension Replacement garage with plant room and attic
14-16 Hope Terrace EH9 2AR	Variation: Reconfigure porch to No 14
§ Flat 2, 123 Grange Loan EH9 2EA Carlton CC, 180 Grange Loan EH9 2EE 120 Grange Loan EH9 2EF	LBC to reconfigure flat Extend fence 50m to East New entrance lobby with utility and shower rooms
67-69 Grange Loan EH9 2EG	CLP for removal of six decorative trusses
§ 2B Lauder Road EH9 2EJ	Greenhouse to front and paving
1 Trotter Haugh EH9 2GZ	Upgrade external doors and bay window
13 Oswald Road EH9 2HE *¶ 28 Dick Place EH9 2JJ	Upgrade conservatory Extensions beside and above garage with balcony (as amended)
15 Findhorn Place EH9 2JR 2 Seton Place EH9 2JT 10 Seton Place EH9 2JT 18 Seton Place EH9 2JT	Side extension Porch and garden room Garden room Garden office and replacement windows
9 Wyvern Park EH9 2JY *# 23 St Alban's Road EH9 2LT *¶# 86 Relugas Road EH9 2LZ	Solar panels to roof New driveway Loft conversion with bathroom and 2x2F balconies (as amended)
# 92 Relugas Road EH9 2LZ	CLP for alterations to rear windows and doors
25 Findhorn Place EH9 2NT # 4 Relugas Place EH9 2PY	12 solar panels on roof Front porch and rear extensions

Applications refused, withdrawn or being appealed:

Δ 1F1, 9 Sciennes House Place EH9 1NN 15 Palmerston Road EH9 1TL	Retrospective change of use to self-catering flat: Refusal upheld Variation: Dormer cheek materials zinc, not slate: Refused
7 Chalmers Crescent EH9 1TS	Garden room at front: Withdrawn
Δ § 10 Chalmers Crescent EH9 1TS	Rear roof terrace and external stair: Refusal upheld
Δ § 60 Grange Road EH9 1TT	LBC to: Remove wall between living room and kitchen: Refusal upheld
§ 36 South Oswald Road EH9 2HG	Single-storey extension and garage alterations: Withdrawn
* Flat 3, 97 South Oswald Road EH9 2HH	Glazed balcony to south: Withdrawn
*§ 30 Mansionhouse Road EH9 2JD	Replace garage with new two-storey house: Withdrawn
# 31 Relugas Place EH9 2PY	CLP for: parking in front garden: Withdrawn

Applications pending at 19 April 2023:

*§# RHSC Mortuary Chapel 9 Sciennes Road EH9 1LF *15 Palmerston Road EH9 1TL	LBC for: Conversion to residential use with public access to murals Dormers with cheek materials zinc, not slate; GF rear extension
*§ 51 Lauder Road EH9 1UE	Garage conversion with entrance to Hatton Place; rear terrace
* 5B Hope Terrace EH9 2AP § 194 Grange Loan EH9 2DZ	New three storey house LBC for metal-framed rear French door
*# 30m West of 171 Whitehouse Loan EH9 2EZ	5G telecoms mast 20m high
§ 4 Glenisla Gardens EH9 2HR § 24 Mansionhouse Road EH9 2JD	LBC for double glazing Amendments to GF extensions and new glazed link
*§ 24 Mansionhouse Road EH9 2JD	Reconfigure 2F rear dormers to French doors and balcony
* 20 Dick Place EH9 2JJ	Rear and side two-storey extensions
§ 57 Fountainhall Road EH9 2LH	New windows, rear doors, vehicle gate, and internal alterations
¶ 15 & 15A Eden Lane EH10 4SD	Create new unit, change annexe use to STL (in retrospect)

LBC = Listed Building Consent	STL = Short-term let	§ = Listed Building	# = Outwith Grange conservation area
CLP (CLE) = Certificate of Lawfulness Proposed (Existing)		* = Comment or objection submitted by Grange Association	
GF/1F/2F = Ground Floor/First Floor/Second Floor		¶ = Application modified	Δ = Appeal concluded

GARDENING/FAIR/NEEDED/CONTACTS

New Beginnings

We all enjoy the waves of springtime crocuses and daffodils in the Meadows as a herald to the new growing year. But for some, post lockdown, 2023 has been exceptional in new gardening beginnings. For me, this has involved following on from Edythe to coordinate plant exchanges, organise garden events such as the Grange Fair plant sales and outings to visit open gardens.

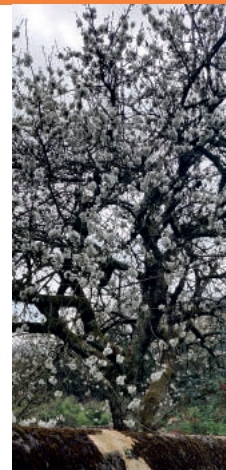
First since 2019, this year's annual garden outing will be on **Friday 07 July to Floors Castle and Monteviot House** in the Borders. Time to spread our wings! If you are interested in attending, please contact me on lynn.errey@gmail.com

Our AGM speaker, Professor Graham Stone, emphasised the importance of nurturing the pollinating insects in our gardens. Residential gardens, with their wide variety of flowers and shrubs, provide up to 85% of the nectar available to pollinators in a given season. Availability of nectar is not down to size of garden, as even windowboxes and pot plants can be rich sources of energy for pollinators, given the right variety of plants.

Graham also pointed out that while nectar is essential for powering insect flight muscles while they gather pollen, not all pollinators can use every flower. For instance, various species of bee have different body size and mouth parts so that what is ideal for one species is not usable by another. Open-faced flowers such as dandelions, or other daisy-like

plants, yield nectar more readily than funnel flowers such as foxgloves or modern daffodils. Seasonal fluctuations in planting also affect pollinators, since they need nectar in every season to breed, gather food and overwinter.

The question arising is: What can we do to enhance the availability of nectar to the widest number of pollinators throughout the gardening year, whatever the size of garden? Like Jack Spratt and spouse, can we offer pollinators food in the lean months as well as the fat? For excellent answers, go to <https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/articles/urban-nectar-provision> for a comprehensive list.



Lynn Errey

Grange Association Treasurer needed

The Grange Association serves 3,000+ households in the area and has a membership of around 500.

Following Martin Sinclair's retiral as Treasurer after four years in the role, Richard Brown generously agreed at the AGM to be Interim Treasurer for 3 months until a new one could be found. If possible, we would like to have a new Treasurer in post by the end of June.

There's no need to be an accountant to maintain the records and deal with invoices, payments and receipts. Help will be given until the new Treasurer is bedded in.

PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING IN THIS VITAL ROLE. If you'd like to know more about it, contact Richard at: treasurer@grangeassociation.org

GRANGE FAIR 2023

After its absence since 2019, it was wonderful to see the Grange Fair back in Fountainhall Road and Library on Saturday 13 May. Many thanks to the Library, the local community, stall holders, visitors and volunteers who helped make it such a great success. Special cheers to Lucy Richardson and Julia Cormack for their tireless planning and presence on the day.

The sun shone, the music created a festival atmosphere and the Yeas Hung Ga lion dancers enthralled the audience. Food and drink outlets kept hunger at bay. There were loads of activities for children and excellent stalls offering everything from baking and bric-a-brac to plants, pottery and tombola.



We plan to carry a full report in the next Grange Newsletter.

USEFUL CONTACTS

MP for Edinburgh South: Ian Murray

Tel: 0131 662 4520 ian.murray.mp@parliament.uk
Office: 31 Minto Street, Edinburgh EH9 2BT

MSP for Edinburgh Southern: Daniel Johnson

Tel: 0131 541 2145 daniel.johnson.msp@parliament.scot
Office: 134 Comiston Road, Edinburgh EH10 5QN

Local Councillors

Tel: 0131 200 2000
Email: Cllr.Firstname.Surname@edinburgh.gov.uk
Address: City of Edinburgh Council, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ;

Southside/Newington

Steve Burgess
Pauline Flannery
Simita Kumar
Tim Pogson

Morningside

Marie-Clair Munro
Ben Parker
Neil Ross
Mandy Watt

EVENTS/Ads

Grange Association Talks

In the second half of the **2022–23 season** we had talks on *The Language of Stones* (Dagmar Weston), *Scotland 2070* (Henry Sillito) and *How to build a bee restaurant in your garden* (Graham Stone). Links to different aspects of the meetings (including the AGM papers and the slides to Graham Stone’s talk) are available on our website at: <https://grangeassociation.org/events/talks-2022-23/>

Meetings take place from October to March on the third Tuesday of each month, and we hope to start the **2023–24 season** on Tuesday 17 October 2023. The next newsletter will give more details. We look forward very much to seeing you at St Catherine’s Argyle Church, Grange Road.

If you know or hear of a possible speaker, please let us know. We will also be needing someone to provide refreshments at the beginning of each meeting, as well as an Audio-Visual organiser.

Maggie Anderson, Talks Organiser
events@grangeassociation.org

THE GRANGE Open Studios

Saturday 24 June, 12-4pm.

Visit artists’ and artisans’ studios in the Grange. Fine, abstract and

collage artists, pottery demonstrations, jeweller and photographer. More details on Grange Association Forum at <https://grangeassociation.org/forums/search/Grange+Studios> and look out for the green venue boards on the day.

W BREMNER ROOFING

- Family run business for more than 25 years
- Free no obligation quotes
- From small roof repairs to complete renewals
- Slating
- Built-up felt roofing
- Lead and zinc work
- Rhones installed, repaired and cleaned
- Chimneys, cement work and harling



Tel: 0131 667 4594 | Mobile: 0797 1713855

Domestic & Commercial Roofing Contractor,
 7 Ladysmith Road, Edinburgh EH9 3EX

Email: wb4roofing@btinternet.com Web: www.wbremner.co.uk

R MacDonald Developments Ltd

Carpenters, Joiners, Builders

All kinds of work carried out by first class tradesmen. 50 years experience in the building trade. Please call 0131 662 0424 or 07583 877796 for free advice and estimates. Extensions and renovations architect also available. Email: rsmacdonaldltd@yahoo.com All work guaranteed.



Fiona Hastie - Self-employed

Mobile/Freelance Hairdresser

Hairdressing in your own home by Jenners trained stylist with many years’ experience. For an appointment to suit, please call mobile 07932 763522; home 0131 447 1968; or email fionahastie@me.com

Babka

Open 7 days a week from 8.30 am.

“the best beignets in Edinburgh”.

Artisan café/bakery between
Tollcross & the Meadows

20 Brougham Place,
EH3 9JU.

Sourdough bread freshly baked on site

Tel 0131 228 6906



ARE YOU IN PAIN?

Chiropractic – Sports Massage

Back pain, neck pain, headache, lumbago, joint pain, sciatica, frozen shoulder, tennis elbow.

We can help.

Our highly qualified and experienced chiropractors and massage therapists will help you get out of pain so you can do the things you want to do.

Call today to arrange your initial consultation

0131 259 4537
hello@oakfieldhealth.com
www.oakfieldchiropractic.com

The Coach House,
 7 St. Albans Road
 Edinburgh,
 EH9 2PA

Initial
 consultation
 Half Price
 Offer £25

