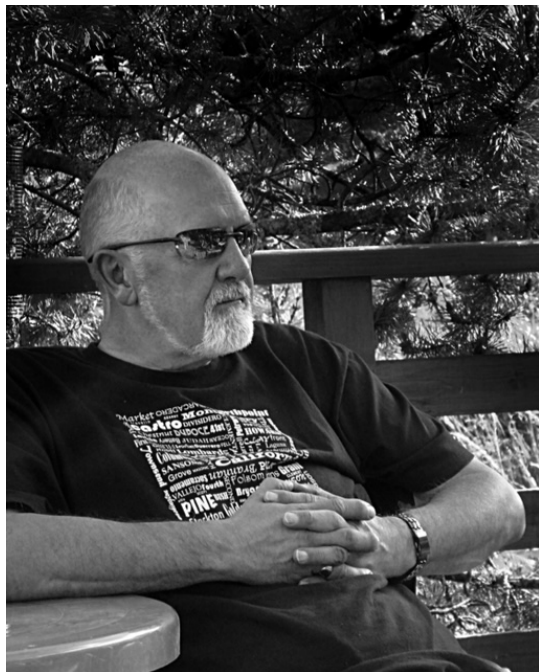


Our final open meeting of the 2022-23 season took place on 27th April and included a fascinating talk by Jack Egdell about the Glasgow Garden Festival Construction 1985-88



Jack is a Dundonian who completed his civil engineering degree there in 1969 before moving to Cumbernauld Development Corporation where he worked in the Main Roads group for four years on the design of the infamous Cumbernauld roads layout.

In 1973 he began working for R.J. McLeod, the civil engineering contractors, and stayed with them for forty years until his retirement in 2013. During that period, he progressed from site engineer to site project manager before spending the final years in their head office pricing new tenders.

Back in 1985 he had just finished the construction of the car parks at the new S.E.C.C. and then he moved across the River Clyde to start work on the Glasgow Garden Festival Site, where he spent the

next three and a half years.

The meeting also included our AGM, at which it was agreed that our existing committee members would continue in their current roles.

30th March 2023 - Open Meeting - Archie McLellan, William Burrell and the Role of the Glasgow collectors - a talk by Duncan Dornan



This was a very interesting talk from Duncan, who is the Head of Museums and Collections for Glasgow Life.

Duncan spoke first about Archie McLellan (1795-1854), a Glasgow coach builder, who as well as being a magistrate and town councillor, believed passionately in the power of art to improve the lives of working people in the city. He started to build the McLellan galleries on Sauchiehall Street with shops underneath the public

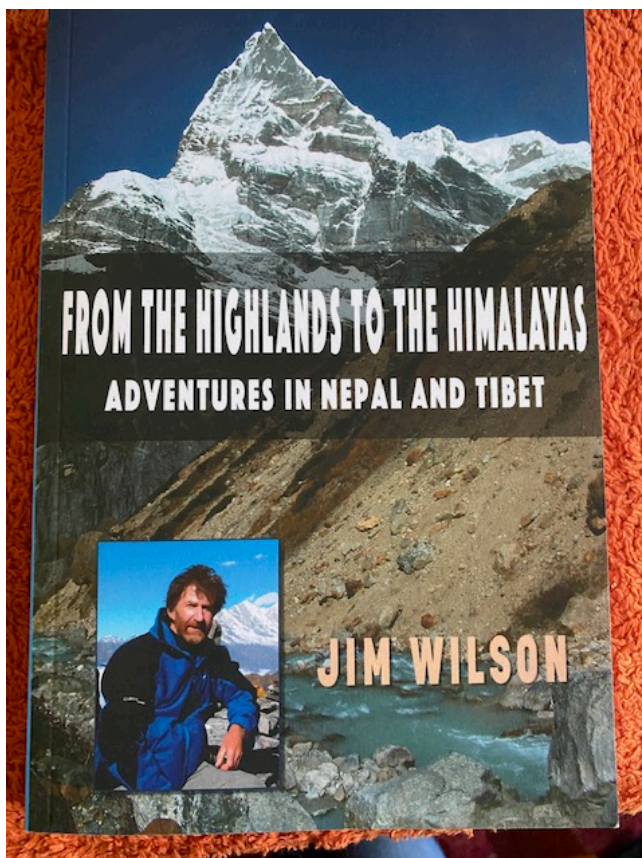
exhibition space and wanted to leave both the building and his extensive collection of old masters to the city. Unfortunately, when he died the costs of erecting the building were found to have bankrupted his business and he left huge debts. His executors sold the building and the collection to the town council for £44,500.

It was particularly interesting to learn from Duncan about the competing tensions surrounding the acquisition by the town council in the 19th century, with the collection sometimes being regarded as a highly valued educational and cultural asset and at other times being viewed as a costly liability the council could ill afford to maintain. These sorts of tensions are clearly not only a modern phenomena.

William Burrell (1861-1958) was a wealthy Glasgow shipping merchant, who through shrewd investment purchased around 9,000 paintings, antiques, textiles, ceramics and stained glass. In 1944 he and his wife Constance donated his collection to the City of Glasgow on the understanding that the collection would be kept together and a building erected to display it in a countryside setting. After many years of searching for a suitable site, the Burrell Collection Museum was opened in 1983 at Pollok Country Park. The building has recently undergone a major refurbishment to enable the collection to continue to be displayed and looked after for future generations.

23rd February 2023 - Open Meeting - From the Highlands to the Himalayas - a talk from Jim and Margaret Wilson

Jim was born and brought up in Holytown. Jim and Margaret have lived in the Clydesdale area (mostly Lanark) for over 45 years. They have 4 grown up sons, 3 grandsons, 1 granddaughter and 2 Gordon Setters.



Jim and Margaret are members of the Upperward Mountaineering Club in the Clydesdale area. Margaret is a member & Committee member of Lanark & District U3a.

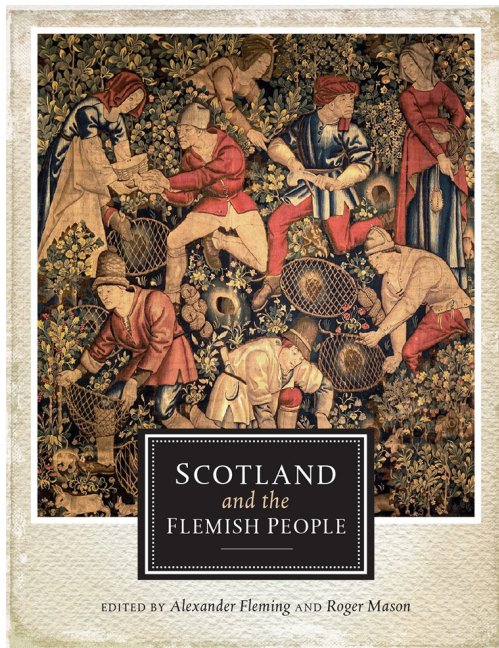
Jim has climbed all 282 Munros in Scotland & has climbed in several other countries. Margaret has climbed some Munros and climbed in other countries too!

Jim went on “the trip of a lifetime” to the Himalayas in 2003 and raised over £2500 for Cancer Charities. He was invited to do a presentation on his Himalayan Adventures at Lanark Library just before Lockdown.

Jim then decided to write and publish a book as his Pandemic Project and “From the Highlands to the Himalayas” is the result (assisted by Margaret).

We all enjoyed Jim and Margaret sharing their adventures in Nepal and Tibet.

26th January 2023 - Open Meeting - The Flemings of Biggar: a reassessment - a talk by Charles Rigg

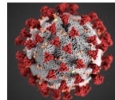
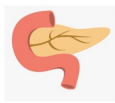
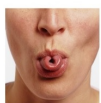


There was another great turnout for this afternoon's fascinating talk by Charles Rigg. Charles began by describing how a group of prominent Flemish incomers settled in the area around Biggar during the 12th century. Some Flemish nobles had arrived in England with the Norman Conquest. The Scottish King David I wanted to modernise and develop his kingdom economically by 'Normanising' it, giving land to Normans such as the Bruce family and to Flemings such as Baldwin who became Lord of Biggar. It is thought the Clydesdale group of Flemings may have come here from Yorkshire. We know these landowners were Flemish because their names are Flemish and they have left their traces in local place names, such as Lambin (Lamington), Tancred (Thankerton), Simon Loccard (Symington). Their Norman credentials can be seen in the remains of motte and bailey (or just motte) castles found in the area, for example at Burnbraes, Biggar. They

became involved in sheep farming, exporting wool back to Flanders for the textile industry.

The second part of Charles's talk was about the Fleming family, starting with Robert Fleming who was a prominent supporter of Robert the Bruce and is said to have been with him when he killed John Comyn at Greyfriars Kirk in Dumfries in 1306. The Fleming family motto "Let the deed shaw" is supposed to date back to this event and relates to Robert holding aloft the severed head of John Comyn outside the church. Robert was given land by Robert the Bruce and Bruce's successor made him Earl of Wigtown. Robert's second son, Patrick is thought to have married an heiress of the line of Baldwin of Biggar when there were no surviving male heirs and as a result he became Lord of Biggar. Charles spoke about the colourful and occasionally bloody family history of the Fleming line, culminating in Robert, the first Lord Fleming who received his peerage from James II in return for his support against the powerful Douglas family.

24th November 2022 - Open Meeting - It's All in your Genes - a talk by Rosalind Holmes



November's open meeting was well attended despite the dreich weather on the day and we all enjoyed the talk by Rosalind Holmes. Rosalind managed to make a very complicated subject easy to understand and very interesting. It was extraordinary to hear how your genes can affect absolutely every aspect of your

life, including, as it turns out, how your body reacts to infection with Covid.

27th October 2022 - Open Meeting - Letters from a Desert Rat - a talk by Liz Allan

There was another good turn out for October's Open Meeting and we all very much enjoyed the talk by Liz McIntyre Allan « Letters from a Desert Rat ».



Liz's father died when Liz was a wee girl and her mother rarely mentioned him. However, when Liz's mother died, Liz found a brown leather suitcase at the back of her wardrobe which contained around 300 letters written from her father to her mother during World War II, while he was away fighting in North Africa and Italy. Liz wondered whether she should read them, as they weren't written to her, but eventually decided she would and when she found that in one of the letters her Dad said to her Mum « I hope you're saving these letters because one day I'm going to write a book » she knew what she should do. She became her Dad's editor.

The excerpts which Liz read from the letters were fascinating and triggered lots of memories amongst the audience of war time stories told in their own families. Most of the letters were matter of fact, rather than romantic, but there was one lovely line in the one letter in the suitcase from Liz's mother to her

father, in which she accepted his marriage proposal. She said she would love him "until the moon turned tartan" - what a wonderful way to say yes!

The book of the letters can be bought from Amazon (Other bookshops will also stock it)

29th September 2022 - Open Meeting - Malawi - a talk by Karen Gillon

There was a good turn out for the first open meeting of the 2022-23 season today at which we enjoyed an interesting talk from Karen Gillon. Karen spoke about Malawi, a country she has come to know well, as she has visited it a dozen times over the years with the Church of Scotland Guild.

It put our current energy crisis into perspective to hear about the people in Malawi, who have no running water, gas, oil or electricity and are facing many diseases as well as ecological problems due to cutting down trees to use as fuel, overfishing their lakes and the frightening effects of climate change.

Despite these severe challenges, however, Karen spoke optimistically and positively about the future of Malawi which she felt will be transformed by the availability of solar power and the better education of the children of Malawi.