



**Helensburgh Heritage Trust**

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## NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2017

Hello everyone!

Since the sad death of Kenneth Crawford last Summer no-one has felt able to produce a newsletter in the same style as he did. However a lot has been going on at the Heritage Trust lately, and so here is an update for you.

**Put this date in your diary now! Unveiling of a memorial at Kidston Park on 1st July.** For a long time the Heritage Trust has wanted to commemorate the activities of the Marine Aviation Experimental Establishment (which was also known as RAF Helensburgh) at Rhu hangars during the Second World War. Thanks to the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust a memorial will be unveiled at Kidston Park on Saturday 1st July at 1100 - you can read more about their activities at [www.abct.org.uk](http://www.abct.org.uk). This memorial is a co-operative venture with the Heritage Trust, and it will be unveiled by Robin Bird; his father was the official photographer for MAEE and many of you will remember the excellent talk which Robin gave us a few years ago. Please come and attend this event. We are delighted that the work of the brave men and women who were based there will now be remembered.

**Subscriptions.** Thank you very much to everyone who paid their subscriptions by standing order at the start of April. Reminders have been sent to those who don't have standing orders and, if you are one of them and if you have any queries, please contact me.

**Gift Aid.** Please remember that the Heritage Trust is only able to claim gift aid if you have told us that you are a UK taxpayer. If for any reason you have ceased to be a UK taxpayer, can you please let me know?

**Generous donation.** Unfortunately the Helensburgh and District Civic Society has decided to wind up – it is sad to see a long-established organisation disappear. They decided to split the money in their bank account amongst a number of local societies, and I am delighted to say that they have just given the Heritage Trust £1500. The Trustees may decide to commemorate this generosity with one or two big purchases, rather than just keep the money in reserve.

**Battle of Glen Fruin cairn.** A new explanatory board has been erected beside the cairn which commemorates the Battle of Glen Fruin. Many thanks to Luss Estates and to an anonymous donor for helping to finance this project. Once the shrubbery around the site has been cleared up, an unveiling ceremony will take place; a date for this has yet to be decided.

**Doors Open Day.** I am delighted to say that Doors Open Day will almost certainly be celebrated in the Helensburgh area on the weekend of 23rd and 24th September. Details as to which buildings will be open have yet to be finalised, but it may be that stewards will be required for some of them. If you are interested in helping, please let me know.

**Display cabinet in the Civic Centre link corridor.** We have at last been able to fill the cabinet in the corridor which links the old and new parts of the Civic Centre.

When George Maclachlan completed 60 years of service as town clerk of Helensburgh in 1906, the burgh council commissioned local artist Sir James Guthrie to paint his portrait. A copy which is on long-term loan to the Heritage Trust is in the cabinet.

Also on display is the magnificent collection of silverware donated to George Maclachlan at the same time as the result of public donations. The silverware was gifted to the Heritage Trust some years ago by his great-granddaughters.

The last item in this display cabinet are the official robes worn by the Provosts of Helensburgh. We had hoped that their official chain of office might also be displayed there, but unfortunately Argyll & Bute Council (who own the chain) have been advised by their insurers that it should not be displayed there.

**Other displays in the Civic Centre.** The cabinet nearest to the Marriage Room has displays on Deborah Kerr, Jack Buchanan, and the collection of bottles. The middle cabinet has a miscellany of articles on the top shelf, including our Boer War clock. On the lower shelves are a display about the local Boys Brigade centenary and Helensburgh's coats of arms. The cabinet nearest the entrance has information on Bonar Law, John Logie Baird, and a collection of seashells. Our provost's lamp is located between two of the cabinets.

It is intended to replace the displays in two of these cabinets in August with information about the past, present and future of the Hill House.

**Permanent displays in the Library.** The fine model of the Comet which was gifted to the Heritage Trust five years ago is now on display at the entrance to the library, along with various items relating to the vessel and to Henry Bell.

The former Heritage Centre upstairs in the library has now become the John Logie Baird room. It contains the "Unknown John Logie Baird" display (back from loans to schools and to the University of Strathclyde), the original televisior which belongs to the Library, and the Heritage Trust's working replica TV kit. An upgrade to the latter has taken place and so it is now working better than ever – however strange to say, it functions better when the sun is not shining! Some work still remains to be carried out in this room.

**Other displays the library.** Up on the balcony there are displays about the life and work of the important local architect, William Leiper. Work is in hand to set up other displays on the balcony and also to hang paintings there - so watch this space!

**Helensburgh Tree Conservation Trust.** The beautiful street trees of Helensburgh are a significant feature in the heritage of the town, and so the Heritage Trust has for many years been a member of the Tree Conservation Trust. However if Heritage Trust members would also like to become individual members of the Tree Conservation Trust, you can do so by looking at its website which is [www.treetrust.co.uk](http://www.treetrust.co.uk)

**Winter programme.** The list of speakers is now nearly complete, and we have booked the marriage room in the Civic Centre once more. As before the dates will be the last Wednesday of every month from September to March (but excluding December).

Needless to say, I shall keep you informed of forthcoming events!