

WELCOME

After the lockdowns and all the rules and regulations of the past couple of years, it is nice to get back to some normality. It has been a very sad time for some facing illness and loss alone. Our thoughts have been with them but that is no replacement for a physical presence.

At our first face to face monthly meeting in the Glasite Hall, people told each other how much they had missed meeting their fellow members and catching up with their news. Many had been very busy with grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Gardens had also taken up a great deal of time.

Now that volunteers are back and new ones have been introduced to the team. The lectures and meetings on Zoom are a distant memory. Wishing everyone festive cheer and a happy and healthy New Year.



CWGC WALK AT BALGAY CEMETERY

On 11th August we were given a tour around the Balgay cemetery by Scott Galloway, a volunteer for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. We learnt about the stories behind the headstones.

Despite it being a particularly hot, sunny day, everyone enjoyed the walk. We thank Scott for his time and an interesting tour.



LAUNCH OF NEW BOOK

Linda Nicoll and Elizabeth Merchant launched their book, **Dundee Schools Past and Present**, at Morgan Academy on 16th November. Linda and Elizabeth had put together a marvellous display of photographs highlighting a variety of schools over the centuries.

Mr Johnny Lothian, Rector of Morgan Academy welcomed Lord Provost Bill Campbell and invited guests to the school for the launch. The Lord Provost congratulated the authors on their book and mentioned the pride Dundonians had in their old schools.

Linda then talked about the book and how she and Elizabeth had carried out their research at the Archives. The book covers over 200 Dundee schools including board schools, church schools, Roman Catholic schools, industrial schools and some private schools.

The book is on sale at the City Archives office and online:

<https://friendsdca.square.site/> - you can opt to pay for postage or arrange to collect your copy from the office or another Friends event.

WILLISON HOUSE

We were sad to see the recent fire at the old Robertson's building on Barrack Street. We thought we would share some notes about the history of the building, which started off life as a church.

In 1716 the Rev. Dr John Willison (1680-1750) was appointed as one of the ministers in Dundee. Dr Willison and some of his congregation disagreed with the established church and formed School Wynd U.F. Church. In 1808, there was a further break leading to a new congregation meeting first in Baltic Street and then in premises in Bell Street.

The new congregation acquired part of the garden that had belonged to Dr Willison on what is now the corner of Barrack Street/Willison Street. In 1814 a church was built on part of the site.

In 1842, the then minister and congregation passed back into the Established Church of Scotland, adopting the name "Willison Church". The following year, the congregation again seceded, joining the Free Protestant Church of Scotland.

Willison and Bell Street U.F. Churches united in 1928 and the united congregations worshipped at Bell Street UF Church (renamed St Cuthbert's in 1934). The Willison Church building on Barrack Street was sold to Messrs John L Robertson, Ltd, in May 1928 for £3,000

John Robertson of Messrs John Robertson & Co, Tally Street was born in Orkney. He came to Dundee in the 1870s and started a business as a wholesale cabinetmaker. About 1893, Mr Robertson joined the firm of Messrs Crabbe & Middleton, Tally Street. In January 1898, Mr Robertson took over the business and extended it making it one of the largest furnishing businesses in the city

Robertson's Furniture Store was situated in the Bell Street Halls next to the YMCA,

before they bought Willison Church in 1928. The firm remodelled the property twice, until it was no longer recognisable as a church.

Known as "Willison House" the building we knew was designed by H Pierce Robbie c.1934 and listed as a category B building by Historic Scotland in March 1994. Robertson's House Furnishers closed in 2011 and the building stood empty for several years. The present owner had plans to redevelop the site, but in November the building was destroyed by fire and has been razed to the ground.

We do hold a collection of documents relating to Robertson's which was deposited when the shop closed. This is held under the reference GD/JR.

FRIENDS EVENTS

The events sub-committee is busy organising and coming up with ideas for Friends outings next year. As some of these are likely to be outwith Dundee, we are looking for volunteers who would be willing to be designated drivers for events.

Trips are likely to be in Angus, Perthshire or Fife. You don't need to commit to anything just now – after all we don't know what the visit will be or when it will happen.

We would just like to know how many people would be willing to do this so that we can decide whether trips by car would be feasible.

If you would be interested in volunteering to be a designated driver for a trip please email archives@dundeecity.gov.uk or phone 01382 434494.

Once we have confirmed the location and details of a trip we will then contact our list of potential designated drivers to see if they would be willing/able to go along. This will then help us work out the number of people we can provide transport for.

2022 AT THE ARCHIVES

2022 at the archives has seen the return to pretty much normal. After 2 long years we were able to return to the office in March and re-open to the public in a restricted way. After restrictions were lifted further, and a reshuffle of furniture in the searchroom, we were able to increase the number of visitors and welcome our volunteers back in August. Over the last two years our waiting list for people interested in volunteering had at one point reached nearly 40. So, we have started recruiting some new volunteers - some have already started and others will follow in January.

When we were able to get back into the office, we could also resume our in-person deposits. As at the start of December we have had 62 deposits of material, covering a wide variety of records. These have included the records of George Clark, a teacher at West End Academy (Ref: GD/X1556), the log books of the North Carr Lightship (Ref: GD/X966), a photograph of a female tram conductor (Ref: GD/X1542), additional records of the Dundee Operatic Society (ref: GD/DOS), the Orchar Park Bowling Club collection (ref: GD/X514), and a collection of magazines, newscuttings and photographs relating to Whitfield High from their successor Braeview Academy. Whilst many of these collections are uncatalogued, many are still available to view upon request. If you have any documents, letters, photographs, postcards, or other items that you would like to deposit at the archives please get in touch.

We have also been catching up with work that we couldn't do from home. This has included continuing to catalogue collections, such as the school records within the council collection. We've also started a big reshuffle of the stores. We've been re-adjusting some of our shelving to better store volumes and boxes so that we can get more into our stores. We've also

moved some of our more frequently used items to locations closer to our searchroom.

Whilst we have been catching up with work in the stores, we haven't been able to do much in the way of outreach. Sarah, our Assistant Archivist did go out to Blackness Library in April to give her talk about the Logie Housing Scheme – Scotland's First Council House Scheme. She will also be giving the talk at a (delayed) centenary celebration at the scheme itself on 9th December. It will be great to be able to share the history of the scheme and the first residents with the current residents. We do have some events in the diary for 2023 so we are looking forward to getting out more to spread the word about the Archives.



ARCHIVES CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

Monday 19 th December	Open
Tuesday 20 th December	Open
Wednesday 21 st December	Open
Thursday 22 nd December	Open

THEN CLOSED UNTIL

Monday 9 th January	Open
--------------------------------	------

LUNCHTIME TALKS

Talks are held in the Glasite Hall, St Andrews Church, King Street. Disabled access is available via the car park entrance. The doors of the Glasite Hall open at 12:30pm with refreshments of tea/coffee and a biscuit available. Lectures commence at 1.00pm.

Please note that the speaker may change due to factors out-with our control.

*****There will be no lunchtime talk in January 2023*****



Thursday 2nd February 2023

Early Development of Newport
Mairi Shiels



Thursday 2nd March 2023

“A town where women rule the roost”: a history of Dundee’s Irish Women
Niamh Coffey



Thursday 6th April 2023

The Nine incorporated Trades of the city

Dr Toma Pustelnikovaite

Booking is not essential for attending the talks but recommended as this helps us to know how many people to expect and how many chairs to lay out. To book, please visit www.eventbrite.com/cc/fdca-lunchtime-talks-14329 or phone 01382 434494

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

Do you often attend the lunchtime talks on Thursdays? Would you be interested in helping out?

We are seeking volunteers to:

- help set up the Glasite Hall
- to make tea and coffee for attendees.
- to look after the book stall

Volunteers would be assigned a role on a rota so you wouldn't need to be there every month. You could offer to do any role, or just one particular role, e.g. the teas.

If you are able to help please contact Bill Grant, Bob MacDougall, Gillian Molloy or any member of the FDCA Committee.

Alternatively, if you send an email to the archives (archives@dundeecity.gov.uk) or phone us (01382 434494), we can pass on your offer to help out.