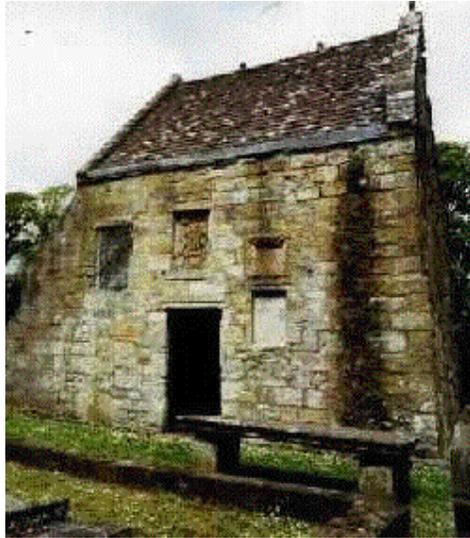
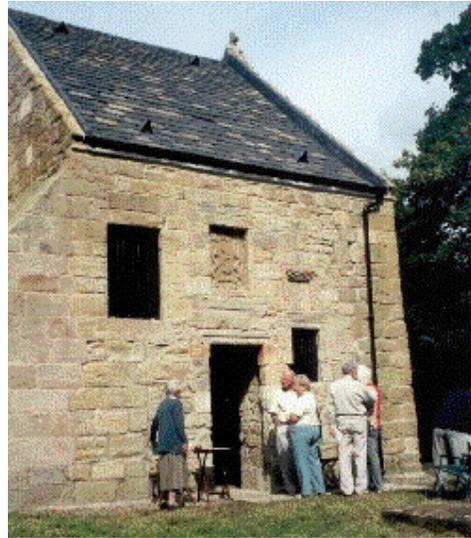


# F.O.L.K. NEWSLETTER

November 2002



Before



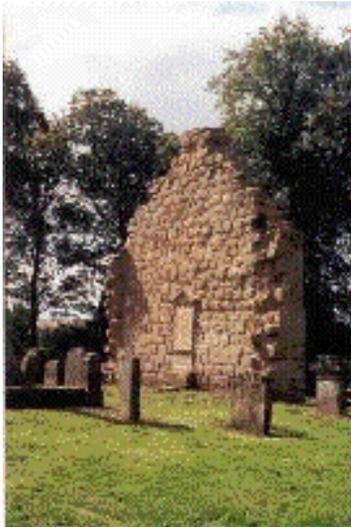
After

## Work at Kirk Nearing Completion

The past year has seen many changes at the Kirk and at last the restoration work is nearing completion. Ivy and other vegetation that was eroding the West Gable have been removed and the masonry stabilised. The stone work has been cleaned, repaired or replaced and new guttering and down pipes fitted with drainage placed at the base of the building. Once bricked up windows have been re-opened and new grilles fitted. The rendering inside the Choir has been removed and returned to the original stone work and the wooden ceiling repaired giving a light airy atmosphere to the interior. The initial plan was to replace damaged or missing slates. Once the slates were removed vandals destroyed around 75% of them resulting in the fitting of an entire new roof.

The vandalism of the roof slates in conjunction with the poor weather conditions and wrangles over work required and funding has delayed much of the work. Although the keys to the Kirkyard are still in the hands of contractors, it is now only minor alterations required to comply with Historic Scotland. Lady Barbara Countess of Loudoun has kindly gifted the funds for replacement gates to the Kirk. Currently we are seeking funds for the repair and stabilising of the Burn wall and replacement of the bridge parapet at the Kirk entrance to make it safe and provide more suitable car parking facilities.

For further information please feel free to contact  
Susan Smith, Membership Secretary, 122 West Main Street, Darvel, Ayrshire, Scotland, KA17 0EZ  
Tel (01560) 321813 Email FOLK122@hotmail.com Website: <http://www.geocities.com/loudkirk/>



**Repaired Kirk Gable**

## **The Rainbow**

Soft glowing in uncertain birth  
'Twixt Nature's smiles and  
tears,  
The Bow, O Lord! which Thou  
hast bent,  
Bright in the cloud appears.  
The portal of thy dwelling-  
place  
That pure arch seems to be,  
And as I bless its mystic light,  
My spirit turns to Thee.

Thus, gleaming o'er a guilty  
world,  
We hail the ray of love;-  
Thus dawns upon the contrite soul  
Thy Mercy from above;  
And as Thy faithful promise  
speaks  
Repentant sin forgiven,  
In humble hope we bless the beam  
That points the way to Heaven.

*Lady Flora Hastings 1825*

## **Looking Into the Past**

With an upsurge of interest in genealogy, burial grounds are now being appreciated for the vast amount of information they hold and are being given a rightful place in the annals of history. Until 1855, there were no compulsory recording of birth, death or marriages, this information was recorded (if at all) in Old Parish Registers (OPR's) this together with the information from a gravestone can still provide a substantial amount of information on family history.

The gravestone, however, does not necessarily mark the burial place of a person, but serves as a memorial for i.e. family members etc. From the OPR burial records for Loudoun parish, it is noted that there was a certain amount of economical use of burial plots made. For example in 1846 Hugh Rankine was "interred in a grave along with the widow of the late William Muir" and in 1847 "Old Robert ???, shoemaker commonly called English Bob he is interred in the same grave with Hugh Rankin above".

The Friends of Loudoun Kirk have answered several family history queries over the past few years and we have been happy to help where we could. Not only have we been able to provide memorial inscriptions and photographs of gravestones, we have also been successful in linking family members.

*By Agnes Wilson*

### **Lady Barbara, Countess of Loudoun**

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death, on Friday 1 November 2002, of Lady Barbara, 13th Countess of Loudoun, at Ashby de la Zouche.

The eldest daughter of the six children of Edith Maud, 12th Countess, Lady Barbara was born on 3 July 1919 at Loudoun. She is survived by five of her six children, and by her grandchildren.

The funeral took place on Friday 8 November at Ashby de la Zouche.  
A full obituary will appear in the next newsletter.

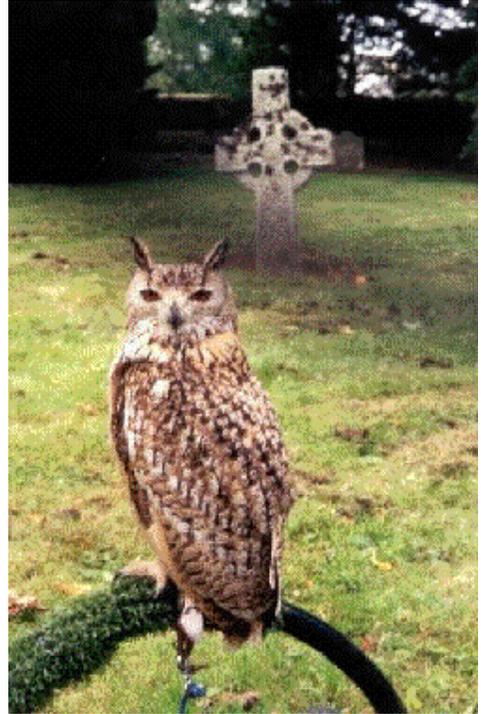
## Events

### *750 Years of Christianity in Galston*

Galston saw a union of the local churches to host a series of events to celebrate 750 years of Christian Worship in Galston. Friends of Loudoun Kirk were represented on the committee and provision of a water stall for a walk from Fail Monastery to Galston Parish Church and holding a stall at a Medieval Fayre. We wish to thank Mrs Matt Kerr and Mr John Alexander for all their efforts.

### *Newmilns Agricultural Show*

As part of a fundraiser – we provided a face painting Stall at the Newmilns Agricultural Show held at Loudoun Castle. It proved a very successful day.



**Bengal Eagle Owl at Doors open Day**

### *Paths Network*

At the beginning of the year there was an opening of the first of the public paths in the Paths Network. Loudoun Kirk is now a feature of the Grougar Walk running from Galston to Crookedholm.

### *History Fair*

A local and family History Fair was held at Troon Walker Halls in August. This gave us a chance to preview our forthcoming Grave Survey CD.

### *Doors Open Day*

Doors Open Day was held on 1<sup>st</sup> September this year as a sneak preview to the Kirk as a long-standing event in which we participate, all efforts were made to ensure the Kirk would be open to all. As an added attraction some birds of prey provided by World of Wings, were on display to supplement the usual tour & display.

## GRAVEYARD RECORDING – An introduction

With the Government's decision to topple unstable gravestones, due to safety reasons, local councils have various ways of dealing with the stones. Fortunately East Ayrshire Council are giving careful consideration to how this problem is to be dealt with and their planned treatment of the gravestones meets with the approval of Historic Scotland's Carved Stones Advisor, Dr Susan Buckham. This is also an issue being addressed by us and it is hoped that we will be able to find finances to stabilise the stones once the endangered ones have been identified.

It has also been suggested that we take part in the Carved Stones Grave Recording Project, possibly next Spring, to carry out a technical rather than genealogical survey of the grave stones in Loudoun Kirk. We will require volunteers to help record the information. Although it will involve taking some measurements, recording the information will be in the form of tick boxes. Dr Buckham has designed a standardised method of recording graveyards, and training will be given, so please let us know if you can help.

The following is an excerpt from the Carved Stones Advisor Project "An introduction to Graveyard Recording"

*"Within Scotland's burial grounds the Nation's history-makers lie side by side with ordinary Scots. Together their stones tell of the extraordinary events that shaped folks' lives and the small details of daily routines long since lost. The work of Betty Willsher, Dane Love and others has revealed that graveyards have an intriguing history in their own right beyond simply being important records of the past, or acting as places for burial.*

*Archaeological evidence can show that a site was used long before it became a burial ground. Examples include the prehistoric stone circle found at Midmar churchyard and the Iron Age broch within Warbeth churchyard, Orkney.*

*More surprising however, are the many roles a graveyard possessed within the community's social life. From the middle ages onward, many of Scotland's parish churchyards were used to host markets and fairs. These were a major event in community's calendar, and usually an excuse for revelry as well as trade. Successive Acts of Parliament from the sixteenth-century onwards gradually outlawed Sabbath markets and fairs in the graveyard. Yet in some quarters this tradition held fast and records show that a market was held in the graveyard at Dornoch at the turn of the nineteenth-century".*

Although this very information book has been produced and was intended for those taking part in recording, it is full of information, which could also be of interest to the genealogist. A copy can be obtained by sending a large S.A.E. (first class) envelope to the membership secretary.

## Grave Survey CD ROM

The CD-ROM of the Grave Survey is now available to buy for £10 (£5 to members) post-free. The disk contains an up to date photographic record of all the grave stone in Loudoun Kirk and the transcribed inscriptions. If interested please feel free to contact membership secretary – (details on front page).

## Future Events

### Party Plan night

*20<sup>th</sup> November 2002*

A fundraising Virgin Vie & Candle party will be held Wednesday November 20<sup>th</sup>, at Craighdu Gallery. This will be an ideal opportunity to get some Christmas gift ideas. Also on sale will be stained glass, woodcraft and jewellery. The main party will be at 7.30pm but if you would prefer a daytime visit there will be an afternoon party at 2pm. It would help organisation if we could get an idea of numbers wishing to attend either party and would appreciate a call on **01560 321831**, however you will still be welcome. Craighdu Gallery can be reached by turning along the road opposite Loudoun Castle Theme Park gates, continue for about ½ mile, past Loudoun Kirk and is the last entrance of the row of houses on the left. Ample parking. Daytime visitors get the added attraction of seeing Ingrid & Stephen's excellent collection of birds, including black swans, rheas and a wide selection of ducks and hens etc. Well worth a visit at any time.

*30th November 2002*

**St Andrews Night Ceilidh** to be held at the Galston Community Centre. 7.30 till late. Tickets priced £5. This

will be the farewell for Ian Thompson of the Caledonian Ceilidh Band as he has announced his retirement from the regular concerts. We would like to thank him for his many years of support shown to the Friends of Loudoun Kirk.

Spring 2003

**Rededication Ceremony.** With the removal and replacement of the Church Roof a rededication ceremony will be held. Details to be confirmed.

*Spring 2003 Cont.*

**Opening Ceremony.** To celebrate the completion of work at the Kirk an opening ceremony will be held at some point during the Spring months. Details to be confirmed.

**Members Night** where Alastair Hendry will reveal his findings on the History of Loudoun Kirk. Details to be confirmed.

*April 2003*

**Gravestone survey** for condition of stones.

*7<sup>th</sup> June 2003* (Provisionally Booked)

**Fundraising Bus Trip** to Mount Stuart House. Details to be confirmed.

## News

### *Awards for All*

Once more Friends of Loudoun Kirk have been the successful recipients of a grant from Awards for All. This grant may not be directly used with the restoration of the Kirk but can be used in order to provide a means to fundraise or hold events. This year we received £4,410 to help fund the trip to Mount Stuart House, opening ceremony, purchase a radio microphone for walks and talks, help produce an information leaflet and funding to provide a CD ROM for the Grave survey.

### *Honorary Chairman*

Jim Mair has recently retired as chairman from the committee of Friends of Loudoun Kirk. As a founder member, and chairman for many of these years, we have invited him to become an Honorary Chairman.

### *Belgian SAS*

Recently there has been the establishment of a website dedicated to the Belgian SAS who trained at Loudoun Castle. The site gives excellent details on the Belgian SAS and Col. Eddy Blondeel. It can be found at <http://www.belgiansas.com> or is linked through Friends of Loudoun Kirk Website.