



Lennox Heritage Society 2023 / 2024 Chairman's Report

I am happy to report that the Lennox Heritage Society has had a very successful 2023 / 2024 season with excellent attendances at all talks. It has been heartening to see our audience numbers steadily increase after the end of the Covid 19 pandemic and in fact, numbers appear to be greater than they were pre-pandemic. Additionally, I am extremely glad to see so many new faces especially from so many different age groups.

Here's a short summary of all our speakers and their topics from this season:

- **September 2023** – Our Vice Chairman, Jeremy Watson got the season off to a great start with his presentation “Mysteries of Dumbarton, the Vale of Leven and its Environs”. To a capacity audience, Jeremy delivered a very informative and entertaining talk on local myths and mysteries. Further information on this can be found on Jeremy's website: “Local Mysteries”.
- **October 2023** – Bruce Keith delivered his talk entitled “Are We Nearly There Yet?” Bruce had previously delivered a talk called “Bridgescapes” to the Society and his presentation this season was equally informative and entertaining. This time, Bruce covered the mapping, measuring and calculation of distances as it is done now and as it was done in olden times. Bruce is currently working on a new book and I'm sure we will be hearing from him again soon.
- **November 2023** – Kathy Galloway talked to us about her own personal experience of researching into her family history and entitled it “This is Who We Are”. In her talk, Kathy explained that it isn't only royalty and personalities who have interesting family histories and so she encouraged the members of the audience to carry out their own family research and to learn their own story.
- **December 2023** – The singer, musician, screenwriter, storyteller and photographer, Paul Murdoch spoke entertainingly, and enthusiastically about his love for and observation of nature in West Dunbartonshire. Paul urged us to get out and about and thereby lift our spirits by seeing and appreciating the rich beauty of nature on our very doorstep.
- **January 2024** – The New Year was welcomed in by the well-known Reverend Ian Johnson and his informative talk entitled “The Arrival of Christianity and the Church to Dumbarton”. Ian proposed a number of ways in which Christianity may have reached Dumbarton but conceded that there is a great deal of Dumbarton's history that we don't know. He acknowledged that more archaeological research could be done in the local area but finished by saying that in view of the amount of development carried out in the Dumbarton area, any archaeological evidence that was once there may now be long gone.

- **February 2024** – Committee Member Elspeth Crocket’s presentation “To Catch a Queen” certainly caught and held the attention of her audience. This followed on from Elspeth’s previous talk for the LHS about Mary Queen of Scots. This time, Elspeth delivered a presentation on the early years of the perennial favourite Mary and the “Rough Wooing” from both England and France. The partnership of Elspeth and Mary packed the hall.
- **March 2024** – Retired Head Teacher Alasdair Jamison delivered a talk on “The Battle of Mugdock and the survival of Alt Clut, the Kingdom of the Clyde”. Alasdair took his audience back to the 8th Century and to the site of the little known Battle of Mugdock. This battle between the Picts in the North and the Britons of Alt Clut was - as Alasdair acknowledged - difficult to recount accurately as the early Mediaeval period is shrouded in mystery. Nonetheless, Alasdair gave us an exciting story of this battle and the hard and often brutal times in which it took place.
- **April 2024** – Our final speaker for this season will be Trish Robins and The West Dunbartonshire Art Collection. With her background in the History of Art, Trish who is WDC Lead Officer Arts Development and Exhibitions, will surely bring the already fascinating collection to life through little known stories about the paintings and the artists who created them. We look forward to it.

Please note, for more extensive information on all our talks, please refer to the LHS website and navigate to the section entitled “Our Speakers”.

Financial Report:

In order to view our financial report, the financial spreadsheet prepared by our Treasurer, John Wright, will be shown on the screen at the AGM, and will be uploaded to the LHS website. Hard copies will be made available to view at the AGM, or can be provided on request. John has already secured our usual Concord second Wednesday in the month bookings for next season, 2024 / 2025 and that’s great news. Following the pandemic, a guaranteed future for the LHS was looking to be very much in doubt as our audience numbers were much diminished. Thankfully, as I have previously stated, these numbers have now recovered and are even increasing.

Going forward, our Treasurer has reported that increased hall hire costs have pushed up our outgoings. However, as long as we continue to receive the support through the great attendances we are currently enjoying, we should still be on an even keel into next season.

I would like to remind members that to get the best value from our talks, they should purchase a year’s membership in advance at the extremely competitive price of £10 for eight talks. Otherwise, the cost of each individual talk is £2 per session. Tea, coffee and biscuits can be enjoyed with a donation of 40p per person.

Thanks:

I would like to express gratitude to the following for their support and all that they do to facilitate and bring these talks to LHS members and other visitors:

- **Jeremy Watson.** In his capacity as Vice Chairman, Jeremy finds, books and liaises with our speakers. Jeremy also creates the informative and eye-catching publicity posters as well as the printed program of speakers. Also, he personally writes and delivers talks for our program and he organizes the West Dunbartonshire contribution to Doors Open Days. In addition to this, Jeremy works quietly behind the scenes doing so much more for the LHS.
- **Elizabeth Wynne.** Committee Member, Elizabeth ensures that our speakers' technical needs are met as regards their presentations and she edits and updates our website and Facebook pages. She writes reviews of many of our talks and posts them on the LHS website and on social media. She is also in charge of the refreshments for every meeting!
- **John Wright.** As Treasurer, John does a *sterling* job balancing the financial books, collecting fees and settling our bills. He is responsible for booking the Concord Centre and he ensures that we always have a venue for our meetings.
- **Elsbeth Crocket.** After a long absence, Elspeth returned to the LHS this season as a Committee Member and has brought back to us her great wealth of knowledge and experience. She has also provided us with her very interesting and informative talk in February this year.
- **Ines Watson.** Thanks are due to Ines for the professional job she has done in providing many of the reviews of our speakers' presentations.

Finally, I would just like to give a huge thanks to all our speakers, without whom we would have no program and to all those members and visitors who turn out faithfully throughout September to April (often through bad weather, and sometimes even the occasional good weather!)

Please look out for any Spring / Summer outings we might organise and of course, don't forget West Dunbartonshire's Doors Open Day on 14th September 2024!

With that, I will close and hope to see you all (and your friends) in September 2024.

Jim Crosthwaite

Chairman

The Lennox Heritage Society

LHS Attendances at Talks 2023/24

Dates	Members	Non members	Total
13/09/23	25	31	56
11/10/23	25	6	31
08/11/23	26	11	37
13/12/23	18	10	28
10/01/24	25	22	47
14/02/24	24	48	72
13/03/24	19	36	55
10/04/24	TBA	TBA	TBA

Total attendances as of 13/03/24 = 326