



Whitehill F.P. Club Newsletter

Issue XXI, January 2021

A Happy New Year to All

We are all hopeful that 2021 will see the vaccine rolled out successfully with some return to normality by the summer. It has been a long hard year for many, but the horizon looks to be brighter.

George Parsonage, MBE and "Pride of Scotland".

You may have watched the "Pride of Scotland Awards" show on television at Hogmanay and will have seen our very own George Parsonage MBE, receiving a Special Recognition Award for his 40 years of humanitarian service saving lives and recovering those who have lost theirs in the River Clyde. George was introduced on the show by Bill Patterson, another FP, and the award was presented by Sanjeev Kohli. (Naveed of Still Game)



George with Rowing Club Guard of Honour.

Our congratulations to George on receiving the recognition for his long service on the Clyde and his ongoing efforts to increase awareness of river safety and his support to the emergency services.

The Great Spoon Mystery

In the last edition of the Newsletter we highlighted a mystery spoon which had surfaced in Australia bearing the school crest. We sought factual and humorous input from members to determine the provenance of said cutlery implement. Several replies were received.

Bob Hutcheson, who was head teacher at the time of the school centenary, remembers several events over the year of 1990, and that there were some gifts and mementoes issued to commemorate the 100 years of the school. We are confident that this spoon will be one of those.

On a lighter note and in the spirit of the last Newsletter, the following was received from Tom Forrester.

Dear Iain,

I have strained to bring you further information regarding the Whitehill Centenary teaspoon but without success. I took a leaf out of Earl Grey's notes to allow me to send you a stirring tale, infusing many new facts but to no avail and my friend has poured cold water on progressing any further. I must therefore admit defeat, there is no way of sugar coating this pill. I have failed and so must cast myself on your milk of human kindness in the hope of gaining your forgiveness on this occasion.

K.R. Tom Forrester.

History from DNA

John Minelly wrote with an interesting story. During lockdown(s) he spent his time researching the family tree of his wife, Margaret Rutherford Noble, who was a pupil 1949-52. The search has taken him from Roxburghshire in the borders, to the Strath of Kildonan in Sutherland and onward to Australia. John cited Tom Devine's recent volume "The Scottish Clearances" as one of the drivers in his research.

His wife was traced back to Gideon Rutherford (born 1778), of Hownam in Roxburghshire, who took advantage of the previously vacated land as a result of the clearances at Kildonan. This would have been very early in the 19th century. His sons also Gideon and Andrew, emigrated to Australia where with others from Scotland they were founders of the Australian sheep stations. They also introduced the Border Collie sheepdog which is credited as the ancestor of the Aussie sheepdog.



There is a record of a stock station being held up by "Mad Dan Morgan" in 1865. The station was Peechelba (near Wangaratta, Victoria), jointly owned by George Rutherford and Ewen MacPherson. During the hold up, the nursery maid, Alice Keenan, excused herself to attend to the crying child and escaped through a window with the child, raising the alarm with George. Mad Dan was shot dead but not before he had killed two troopers. The family survived as did the child, Christina Rutherford MacPherson, who was finally credited with writing the melody for Banjo Pattersons poem, Waltzing Matilda; the unofficial national anthem of Australia.

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