

DALGARVEN MILL



THE LIVING PAST

THE MUSEUM OF AYRSHIRE COUNTRY LIFE AND COSTUME

NEWSLETTER 42

SPRING 2020

Scottish Charity

SC 022937



The Spring Exhibitions “ Silks and Shawls “



Brought from upstairs to replace the very successful Kimono exhibition it features fabulous “piano” shawls and other pieces of special value or which we have collected and greatly admire.



Sadly our much loved and greatly admired costume conservator Rachel Picard has retired after being here as a volunteer for five days a week over the last eight years. We will never expect such devotion again, but if anyone has sewing skills, loves costume and can work with others as a volunteer, or knows someone who might fill the gaping hole she has left, please speak to us.

In the meantime we, and Molly the dog, all wish Rachel the happy and fulfilling retirement she deserves.

Scottish Vernacular Furniture or chairs The Curator

It is still quite a shock to go onto the web and find one of your own photographs as an example of what you are looking for, it is a kind of compliment, I think.



The lovely Bible chair above is on display with other stunning pieces in the small Gallery above the Coffee Room. Many from the curator's own collection.

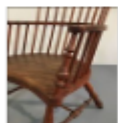
John Boa the local joiner used the Old Mill on the south side of the courtyard or the "close" as it was usually called, as his workshop. When the writer was a boy, they often still produced sets of chairs as well cartwheels, sash and casement windows, wheelbarrows and other sundry things as well as doing alterations and repairs.



So my fascination with hand made local furniture began early and has never left me.

When we first opened, we used furniture which we had collected from farms and local cottages in the Coffee room, and having been told to scrub the tops with salt to keep them hygienic, we did this every Sunday morning until we bought new furniture. These original lovely pieces are now shown in the kitchens and bothy on the top floor.

Miss Gillan of Kerse Farm invited us to remove some old furniture from the farm outbuildings, and through the joists I saw something that looked like a Windsor chair. Having been told I could have it, I grasped it by the legs and they turned into woodworm dust and crumpled in my hands. So upstairs you will see this rare Darvel chair displayed with temporary new legs.



Do please look in your attics, huts and garages, that old abandoned wooden chair or table may just be museum treasure!

TREASURE TROVE



It is still a thrill when a telephone call results in a rare invitation to a house or in this case a farm which had been in the same family since the eighteen forties. The photographs show only the costume pieces but there were tools, paintings, treen and outstanding scales and other pieces. Now safely here for generations more to enjoy. More than forty beautiful doilies all unused and boxes and of lace and crochet and many lovely pieces of embroidery.



ON WITH THE BATTLE



Having sorted out the aftermath of the fire, we have again come face to face with the other areas which need upgraded. The first is the external fire stair on the side of the building, and the space underneath it, both need cleaned, emptied, restored and painted. The storage space above the Studio is full of unloved and unwanted pieces and if fully insulated and ventilated would make either a new studio space or restoration workshop. Similarly the old steam engine shed needs emptied and put back to its use as a workshop. The old Mill could be a store or workshop until the Trust decide to restore it at very considerable cost into another commercial space

If we cannot raise income from some other source, we may have to hark back to an old plan for mobile home parking spaces with new toilet provision or glamping in the meadow behind the car park. Watch this space!

MR CLOCK MAN



As you go around the Mill you will hear eight clocks, grandfather, wall, mantel ticking and chiming. Their repair is the gift of a supporter who, not being able to stand silent timepieces has paid to have all of them taken one by one to Mr Raeburn, in Kilmarnock for research and restoration. They have brought pleasure to all. Thanks Ian.

My thanks to those of you who have donated to the cost of producing my book on Costume and Textiles: work continues, as my wife said "The last book took two years, how you thought this would be done in six months, I don't know" It looks as though she is right again, so very annoying...



As always my thanks to the many volunteers whose work and loyalty make the work of the Trust possible.

Some good news

The fire damaged White Byre and Barn have been wonderfully restored and are now ready, and looking for a new tenant.

The rent is sorely missed as it exactly matched our annual insurance premium. We think it would make a wonderful craft space or Gallery like either of the two illustrated.



The Dalgarven Mill Museum

ANNUAL MUSEUM
PASS 2019/20

Members name

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Of course if 500 of you bought a £10.00 Annual pass and Gift Aided it, WE COULD MAKE UP THE RENT and use building to show some of the wonderful treasures which at present we cannot display. Please help support our Charity, and ask for a form today.

Since the above was published four weeks ago forty seven of you have bought one.

Rock on !

