

John Buchan Society Newsletter

Issue 86, January-February 2021

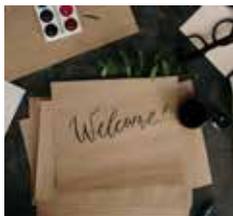


From Ken Hillier, Chairman

Well. Here we are again: a piece from the 'outgoing' Chairman! My hope that we would be back to some semblance of normality by this mid-March has proved very wide of the mark. We are having to cancel the AGM weekend for a third time. Mike Edwards and I are now looking at a date in October, when we

pray the vaccination programme will have done its job. Unfortunately, no Saturday that month is available at the Derby city Jury's Inn for the Annual Dinner. The company have another hotel next to the East Midlands Airport, which is only a few miles from Derby. I aim to visit it - to 'case the joint' - when lockdown rules permit. If it measures up, we will move there. I am hoping we can enjoy the same format we were planning eighteen months' previously: talks on aspects of John Buchan and the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion and a trip to Lichfield to the Samuel Johnson birthplace house and the striking cathedral. As soon as matters are settled, contact will be made with all those who had signed up to attend in March 2020 as well as the membership as a whole (probably via the July Newsletter.) My plans for a Durham seminar this Autumn will have to be cancelled. Maybe, we could re-arrange it for the autumn of 2022.

I think you would all agree with me that both our new editors - of the Newsletter and the Journal - have done splendid jobs with their first issues. We have been so lucky with the talent over the years that has ensured two excellent mouthpieces for John Buchan and this Society I am also appreciative of all the good work that Bill Galbraith is doing in Canada on JB's behalf (or, rather, Lord Tweedsmuir over there). I am grateful that Andrena and Bill Telford have agreed to stay on until the next AGM, when we can have a formal and proper farewell to their time on the Council. I very much want to hand over to the ever-patient Richard Love as my successor at a 'real' AGM. I wish you all a healthy year which, hopefully, will improve steadily as we move towards October.



Membership matters

I am sorry that I have not had the chance to renew acquaintance with members at the AGM and hope the opportunity will return in 2022. Meanwhile the membership has remained remarkably buoyant. **We are delighted to welcome the following new members who joined in 2020:-** Mrs Vicky Cole, Wellingborough; Mr Alan Durden, Mrs Cristina Durden, and Mr Philip Durden, all from Steyning; Mr Stephen Hodkin, Southwell; Dr Neil Matthews, Great Missenden; Mrs Helen Morrell, Nassington; Mr John Roberts, Jedburgh; and Mr Robert Watson, Lenzie. **We are sorry to say a sad farewell to these recently deceased members:-** Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Clackmannan; Revd Alan Cliff, Rhyl; Sir Edmund Fairfax-Lucy, Wellesbourne; Mrs Janet Horsley, Nottingham; Lord Maclennan, London; Mr J.G. Martin, Tiverton; Mr John A. Meldrum, Dunkeld; and Mr James A. Wardrop, Paisley

Every year a small number of members 'fade away' by not renewing their subscription but without letting me know, so if you are minded to leave, do please tell me, as it saves reminder letters and unwanted mailings. On the other hand, associate membership for the 'other half' of an ordinary member costs only another £6 if there is someone you would like to enroll.

Membership renewal

Subscriptions for 2021/22 are due on 1 February 2021 and reminders have been posted to those who do not have a standing order set up. The January Newsletter is the final mailing of the 2020/21 membership year.

To simplify administration and save on postage it would be ideal if UK members (or those overseas with a UK bank account) who have paid by cheque would set up a standing order with your bank for 1 February 2021, after which you would receive no more reminders. The subscription rate for a standing order is £18 (vs £20 for annual payment). Alternatively, pay by bank transfer (details can be found on the Standing Order or Membership Application forms on the JBS website).

Having members' email addresses makes communication far faster, especially with members outside the UK. If you are willing to do so, please send your email address when you make payment. The Society does of course have a full GDPR policy.

Alison Gallico, Membership Secretary

72 Ravensdowne, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1DQ, UK
akgallico@gmail.com Tel: 01289 302913



Finance matters

The John Buchan Society (JBS) is registered with **AmazonSmile**, which is a website operated by Amazon with the identical selection of products, prices, and shopping features that are available through Amazon's main site. However, when you shop at Amazon through AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.co.uk), and have first selected The John Buchan Society as your charity of choice, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products (excluding VAT, returns and shipping fees) to the JBS. You can even/still take advantage of your Prime membership benefits, sales and more. To be eligible, we are required to be of good standing and be registered with (in the JBS's case) the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) - the independent regulator and registrar of Scottish charities – which we are, on both counts!

If you use Amazon anyway, then we urge you to sign up for this arrangement in order to benefit the JBS from those purchases. Here is a link: <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/SC006071>. Note that only purchases made through smile.amazon.co.uk are eligible to generate donations to the JBS, rather than Amazon's main site. So please ensure that you make any such purchases through that website, to ensure that the JBS may benefit, and to enable us to continue our work in the furtherance of the JBS objectives, at no additional cost or administration to you.

Gift Aid is a scheme that enables charities, such as The John Buchan Society, to claim the basic rate of tax that their Members/donors have paid from HMRC. Gift Aid increases the value of donations by 25%, which means that the JBS can get an extra 25p for every £1 that you donate – and it won't cost you anything extra.

I really urge all eligible Members to take advantage of this for the benefit of the JBS. **For us to claim Gift Aid on your subscription/donation, you need to make a Gift Aid Declaration (GAD).** The GAD confirms that you are a UK tax payer and that Gift Aid may be claimed on your donation. The GAD form can be obtained via the JBS website (it is part of the Membership Application Form, but can be used as a standalone item for Gift Aid) – the link is <http://www.johnbuchansociety.co.uk/membership.htm>

We can only claim Gift Aid on monetary donations from your own funds, and if you've paid UK Income and/or Capital Gains Tax during the tax year. The tax you pay in the tax year must be at least equal to the value of Gift Aid that we will be claiming on your donation(s). If you stop paying enough tax, it is important to tell us. If you don't let us know, and you pay less tax in the tax year than the amount of Gift Aid we are claiming, then you will need to pay any difference back to HMRC.

Neil Tointon, Treasurer
ncht@globalnet.co.uk



The Journal

Back Issues of most issues of the Journal (1-52) are available. However, we do not hold spare copies of all issues and, if you can, it is worth checking with Neil Tointon first by email or telephone, as to which back issues we have in stock. An index of the contents of the first 50 issues is sent out with orders. For Members, these are currently priced, including postage, at £4.00 UK and £6.50 Overseas per issue.

To order back issues, write to, or email: Neil Tointon, Treasurer, The John Buchan Society, 11 Hazel Close, Alderholt, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 3DQ (Email: ncht@globalnet.co.uk Tel: 01425 654808). Cheques should be made payable to The John Buchan Society, but it would be preferable for payment to be made by bank transfer (details can be found on the Standing Order or Membership Application forms on the JBS website) with your name as the reference.



Temple tales

Ninety-eight years after JB carried out the first restoration, we have just completed the second restoration of the temple folly in the garden at Elmsfield which has been without a roof or pillars for over 30 years. This curious 'Cotswold romanesque' structure is all that remains of several miniature monuments - including a water cascade, a triumphal arch, an Egyptian pyramid, a Druid temple - put up in the mid-18th century by Francis Wise of Elmsfield Manor, an eccentric antiquarian, the first librarian of Oxford's Radcliffe Camera and friend of Samuel Johnson. The temple's first restoration was in 1922 by JB, using royalties given to him by the Earl of Rosebery, the ex-prime minister, for putting together a miscellany of Rosebery's writings. In a January 1922 letter thanking Rosebery for this generosity, JB says he will use part of the money for a war veterans charity and part to preserve "a little temple in my garden where Dr Johnson used to drink tea [and which] is falling into a sad disrepair". The 2020 restoration has been a bit of a challenge because of the need to be true to the original by using stone slates, largely recycled these days because rarely quarried any more, and because of the precise slate trimming needed to fit the circular part of the roof. We are thrilled with the final result, and would welcome any JB Society member who wants to see it.

David and Lisa Buchan



Help requested: Arthur Cuthbert Medd

'Cubby' Medd died from typhoid fever in 1902, aged only twenty-four. He was one of the brilliant group of, mainly Balliol, scholars who became friends with John Buchan. J.B. wrote to his sister Anna: "It seems such a stupid and senseless thing for a man so brilliant and courageous to die of a thing like fever in a place like London. He was one of my nearest friends, and though I have a great many so-called friends, I haven't many real ones - Cubby and Raymond, John Edgar and Boulter, Sandy [Gillon] and John Jameson about make up the list." I am researching for an article on Medd and would be grateful for any information about him. He was eminently successful whilst at Harrow School and became a Fellow of All Souls, Oxford.

Ken Hillier
nebul6@gmail.com

John Bridle legacy

I made a brief reference to John Bridle's passing in the January 2020 issue. The substantial legacy I mentioned then has now been received by our Treasurer. It will be used to purchase books or important ephemera for the Michael Ross Collection at the John Buchan Story Museum in Peebles.

John was highly regarded by his fellow collectors and a regular attender at AGM weekends. We all miss his gentleman's approach to life and again send his widow our very best wishes.

Ken Hillier

Save time, money and paper

This newsletter is now available as a PDF by email. Subscribing in this way means you receive it faster, saving print and postage costs. To receive future issues by email, please advise me of your email address.

Neil Matthews

BuchanSocNewsletter@gmail.com

Masthead and photos on pp7-8: Peebles (photos: Helen Matthews)
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Peeblesshire War Memorial





Above: the John Buchan Way. Below: a view of Peebles

