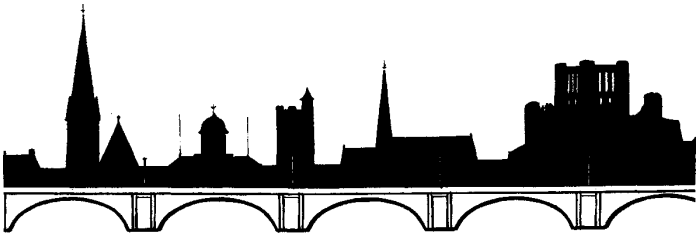
KELSO HERITAGE SOCIETY

PATRON: HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ROXBURGHE



Logo courtesy of A. Binnie

February 2022

NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the February 2022 issue of our Newsletter.

The monthly newsletter will continue to be produced until the spring with articles of local historical interest, information updates etc. We would welcome your feedback. Contributions to the Newsletter are also welcomed.

Speaker Events 2022

The speaker event took place in Kelso Rugby Club as planned, however the live zooming of this event had to be cancelled because the Trustee responsible for the film of the talk tested positive for Covid at the last minute and we had no time to arrange a replacement. We hope, with the agreement of the speaker, to organise a remote streaming of this event at a later date.
On Monday evening Graeme Watson presented a very clear and entertaining view of smuggling in the Borders over the last few centuries which was well received by the audience.

Our next event will take place in Kelso Rugby Club (and via Zoom) on Monday 21st March when John Home Robertson will present – The Discovery and Reinstatement of the Water Paxton Wheel.

Booking for this event is essential – Please email: info@kelsoheritagesociety.co.uk
We continue to hope that we will be able to present the talk in the Rugby Club but are dependent on the Covid restrictions at the time.

Duke unveils Kelso Abbey Orchard Community Stone

Kelso Sunday 6th February 2022:

On Sunday His Grace, Charles 11th Duke of Roxburghe in his first engagement as Honorary Patron of Kelso Heritage Society unveiled the Kelso Abbey Orchard Community Stone at a ceremony in the orchard.

His Grace noted:
"It is a privilege to be unveiling this Abbey Stone, a superb display of artisanal craft which will now be part of Kelso's living history, and in its rightful home"

The short ceremony was led by former Kelso Laddie and Heritage Society Trustee Colin Henderson. Current Chairman Neil Rawlins introduced the sculptor Finn McCallum and Past Chairman and former Trustee Dr Derek Robeson gave the vote of thanks.

Chairman of Kelso Heritage Society, Neil Rawlins stated:
"As a heritage society we are delighted today to unveil this stone which will assist in broadening awareness of this historically significant site. Visitors to the stone within today's abbey orchard can enjoy a small selection of old variety apple trees. We encourage visitors to close their eyes and imagine similar trees growing here nearly 900 years ago. Although medieval monks didn't have iPhones, they did have apples."

The stone, carved by local artist Finn McCallum depicts a monk gathering apples from a tree in the abbey garden on its south side and on its north you'll see the two kings David I and Malcolm IV enthroned within the capitalised letter M, this was borrowed from the Kelso Charter of 1159 which confirmed the surrounding lands of Kelso to the Abbey.

Commenting on his inspiration for the design on the stone Finn said:
"In the autumn of 2019 while taking part in the archaeological excavations, up to my eyes in a pit just over there, digging around, covered in mud and completely in my element I came up with the idea of donating a wee stone for the new orchard.

Initially, I had planned to create something fairly small scale, maybe donating a weeks' worth of carving at most whilst taking a back seat role on any design and

organisation. Then I decided that since this is my hometown, I was going to develop the idea further and create something I can be proud of.
I hope that as this orchard matures, the stone will tie it in with the abbey and remind future generations of the importance of green spaces and of our town's rich heritage."

The provision of this stone purchased from a well-known local quarry for the Kelso Abbey Community Orchard and the carving of the stone was made possible through generous sponsorship from Creative Scotland, Fallago Environment Fund and Roxburghe Estates.

Creative Scotland said:
"*Creative Scotland is pleased to support the creation of this new work in Kelso. This project represents the core of what we do, helping to sustain creativity and to develop artists' practice, and helping to contribute to the perpetuation of stone carving as a craft in the Scottish Borders. We were pleased to see that the project has a significant level of local support from The Kelso Heritage Society, Kelso and District Amenity Society, Visit Kelso, Kelso Community Council and Mayfield Garden Centre and were glad that the funding from Creative Scotland has helped this project happen."*



Provost K*elso Community Council, Chair Kelso Heritage Society, Duke of Roxburghe and Sculptor (Finn McCallum)*



Unveiling of Stone



Carving of Monk & Tree

<u>Kelso & District Amenity Society</u>

Kelso and District Amenity Society which was formed around 40-45 years ago with a membership of around 45-50 is in danger of folding due to the inability to recruit new members. The current membership is 10.

The objectives and activities of the Society are to promote and encourage

(a) Interest in and care for the beauty, history and character of the town of Kelso and its surrounding district;

(b) The preservation, development and improvement of features of public amenity or historic interest;

(c) High standards of architecture and town planning

(d) Preservation of the conservation area of the town

All planning applications for the conservation area are submitted by Scottish Borders Council for comment and approval.

It would be a travesty if the society folded as there is a clear need for a method to be in place of ensuring SBC maintain the conservation requirements of the town. Over the past year there has been a very clear deterioration in the quality of control by SBC.

One or two options have been explored to avoid the demise of the Society. The most obvious being an incorporation into Kelso Heritage Society as a fully independent subcommittee.

The Trustees and Committees of both organisation have agreed to progress this proposal and a formal application has been submitted to OSCR (the Charitable organisation to which both societies belong) for this action to be taken forward.

We will provide an update on the progress of this proposal as and when there is something to report.

Subscription Fees

The membership fees for Kelso Heritage Society are now £12.00 single and £20.00 joint membership.
The fees can be paid by BACS, Cheques (sent to the Treasurer) or in person at the Speaker event on 21st March 2022. For further information on how to pay please contact the Secretary on Tel. No. 01573 224 951.

Subscription renewal fees are due to be paid by 31st March 2022.

Membership cards will be available for collection at the Speaker Event on 21st March 2022

Online

National Museum of Scotland * https://www.nms.ac.uk/
Various exhibitions to view
National Library of Scotland – Map Library https://maps.nls.uk/
Well worth a visit!!

Contributions to the Newsletter are welcomed
Email info@kelsoheritagesociety.co.uk
Tel. 07766 781 555
Deadline for March issue 14th March 2022