



**HAMILTON
NATURAL
HISTORY
SOCIETY @ 50**

Fiftieth Anniversary

1960 - 2010

SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

A programme of monthly winter meetings is held in: –
The Old Parish Church Halls, Leechlee Road, Hamilton on Friday evenings
at 7.30pm.

Visits to places of interest and local walks are arranged on Saturdays over
the summer months.

Annual Membership of the Society is £7 a year.

Further information may be obtained from:
The Secretary, 14 Almond Drive, East Kilbride G74 2HX

EDITOR'S NOTE

The editor would like to thank all those who contributed to this booklet and helped with its production.

Particular thanks to:

Audrey Wallace, Norman Tait, Michael Pink, Paul Harrison, Rosemary Harrison, Hamilton Library.

The society gratefully acknowledges the contribution towards the cost of this publication from Audrey Wallace on behalf of her late husband Bill.

Photo credits: Norman Tait, Michael Pink, Rosemary & Paul Harrison, Fiona Murdoch, South Lanarkshire Council.

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1960's illustration from the Shell Guide to Bird Sanctuaries: Cairngorms and Loch Garten. There was widespread interest at this time in the reintroduction of Ospreys to Scotland since the first pair nested at Loch Garten in 1954.

PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

Welcome to this booklet celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the re-forming of Hamilton Natural History Society. As you will read further on, the origins of a Natural History Society in Hamilton go back to the end of the 19th century but it was on 19th January 1960 that Audrey Wallace and a group of people with a similar interest, resurrected the Society in its present form.

To celebrate this anniversary, a dinner was held on 22nd January 2010 in the Alona Hotel in Hamilton, which about 60 of our members attended. We were pleased to welcome to this dinner Audrey Wallace and Norman Tait, both of whom had also attended the inaugural meeting of the Society.

There have been many advances in the knowledge of natural history over the past 50 years and we tend to take for granted that we can see pictures of exotic plants and creatures from around the world in our own living rooms. However 50 years ago such television programmes and an interest in the natural world were not so common, so it was a very bold step at that time to form the Society, and one for which we are very grateful today.

You will read in this booklet about the history and activities of the Society over the past 50 years and there are also details of some of the people who have played prominent roles within it. If we have missed out anybody I apologise.

A booklet like this needs a great deal of time and research to produce, most of which was done by Fiona Murdoch. So I would like give her and the others who helped, a big vote of thanks. I must also thank Audrey Wallace who provided us with a lot of information about the early days of the Society which we could not obtain from the minute books.

I hope you enjoy the finished product.

Michael Pink

President

HAMILTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Older Origins

The origins of Hamilton Natural History Society start in February 1891 when a group of gentlemen set up the Hamilton Field Club. This club was short-lived but in March 1904, the Hamilton and District Field Club was formed at a meeting in Hamilton Academy. It changed its name to Hamilton Natural History and Photographic Society in 1907 when it merged with the Hamilton Photographic Society.



Hamilton Field Club at Orchard (near Crossford) in May 1891.

Standing: Mr A.G. Miller, Mr E. Ferguson, Mr G. Ferguson, Mr Ramsay.
Sitting: Mr S. Forres, Mr John McCabe (President), Mr T. Scott, Mr D. Miller.
The ladies are the hostess and her two daughters.

In 1922, the society had 132 members. Hamilton Natural History Society retained the name when the Hamilton Photographic Society reformed separately in 1929. The society is noted in a book published in 1932 by Hamilton Civic Society but had ceased activities by the 1940's. Four minute books from 1904 to 1956 were noted as having been rebound for Hamilton Library in 1969.

Formation of the Society

Audrey Wallace had been a member of Belfast Naturalists' Field Club but on her move to Hamilton in 1953, found there was no similar society here and decided to start one.

The Hamilton club was revived and reformed as the Hamilton Natural History Group on 19th January 1960, meeting in Hamilton Library. The President was Edwin MacNaughton (Rector of Hamilton Academy), Vice-President was Jean Dean and Audrey Wallace was Secretary & Treasurer. Committee Members were: Mr Andrew Allan, Rev. Andrew Douglas (Minister of Cadzow Parish Church), Dr. Hamish Fraser (GP, practice in Cadzow Street), Mr J.F. Kerr, Marion Russell (Hamilton Library), William Stewart (Burgh Librarian) and Norman Tait. Councillor William Craig represented Hamilton Burgh Council (Vice Chairman of Library Committee). He was not a member but was a keen walker and attended some excursions.

The first talk was on 18th March 1960 – “Wings Over Hamilton” by Kenneth Richmond, followed by a film about Hen Harriers. On 29th April, Mr Stewart gave a talk on “The History of Hamilton” and on 11th September, the group were given permission to visit High Parks (then still the private estate of the Duke of Hamilton, now known as Chatelherault Country Park) and had a guided tour from Mr Greig, the Estate Manager.



Outing to Inchcailloch at Loch Lomond, June 1963.

The society affiliated with Hamilton Civic Society in 1960 and merged with Motherwell Natural History Society in 1962. The name was changed to the present form on 22nd October 1965 (on separation from Hamilton Civic Society).

The logo was designed in 1966 by Sid Birnage (President from 1965 to 1967). The figures on it represent Hamilton - in the shape of a Cadzow Oak and one of the Cadzow herd of wild white cattle. Birds are represented by the Jackdaw, plants by the Arum and insects by the Oak Eggar Moth.



About The Society

The society currently has about 90 members.

In 2010, the current committee comprises:

Michael Pink	– President
Norman Richardson	– Vice-President
Rosemary Harrison	– Secretary
Keith Brown	– Treasurer

Committee members: Ann Calder, Fiona Murdoch, Diana Richardson and Irene Russell

The society's stated aims are:

- To study, observe and record the natural history and archaeology of the Clyde Valley.
- To relate the study of natural history to environmental factors.
- To foster the conservation of areas of special interest.
- To work in collaboration with organisations having similar aims.

The society published a Journal every three years from 1969 to 2009. Over this time there were three editors: Audrey Wallace, Max Cocker and Fiona Murdoch. From 2011 the society will publish an annual newsletter rather than the triennial journal.

Society members have been keen recorders, collectors and illustrators/photographers of natural history. At various points of time, collections have been given to Hamilton Library, Hamilton Museum and the Council. The Society owns the Birnage Herbarium (recently restored and digitised by South Lanarkshire Council and due to be handed over to the new Sports, Culture and Libraries Trust). Although specimen collecting is not so common (and would now be illegal in some cases!), society

members continue to be active in recording local wildlife – we can now use digital photos and GPS instead of collecting specimens!

In addition to the summer outings and winter programmes enjoyed by members, there are always opportunities for practical tasks such as tree planting and wildlife surveying. Activities have moved with the times: e.g. from walking Rights of Way to keep them active, to commenting on the recent Scottish Access Laws and South Lanarkshire Core Path Plan.

For many years, members have monitored local planning proposals with regard to any environmental impacts (submitting objections if necessary) and attended Public Enquiries on the group's behalf. Some areas of interest have been: Cadzow Oaks (after eleven were felled in 1979), Cadzow Glen, Stonehouse new town, Blue Waters Quarry, Bardykes Colliery, Backmuir Woods, Palace Grounds development, Barncluith, Wellhall trees, Smithycroft trees, Blantyremuir opencast mining, Langlands Moss, Sydes Brae meadows, Allanton Bing, Cadzow Bing.

Over the years, we have taken part in the public consultation process (for example the formation of Strathclyde Regional Park and Chatelherault Country Park and the Scottish Executive's Nature Conservation Bill) and lobbied local government on relevant issues. Currently, the society is a "stakeholder" in the South Lanarkshire Local Plan and the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

We have had links past and present with Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling, Andersonians, Dunfermline and Paisley Natural History Societies and we are registered members of BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers). The society has always promoted the group's activities to a wider public, through walks, exhibitions or conferences and has sponsored students and donated to suitable nature projects.

It is a tribute to the enormous amount of knowledge and enthusiasm of the members over the last fifty years that the society has achieved so much and continues to do so, throughout social and legislative changes. From the coming of the car, television and internet to show us the world outside Hamilton; from film reels to slides to digital display to illustrate our talks; from private estates to Scottish Government; from heavy industry to Local Nature Reserves: we continue to reflect local concerns and community spirit.

Here's to the next fifty years being as interesting!

PAST PRESIDENTS

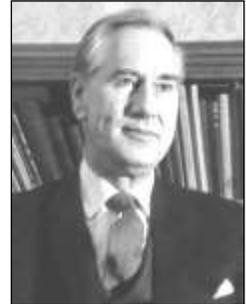
Edwin G. MacNaughton 1960 (Jan-Nov)

Rector of Hamilton Academy, he was very supportive of the idea of setting up a Natural History Society in Hamilton and gave practical help to the original committee and leadership in the initial stages; for example, organising the first lecture.



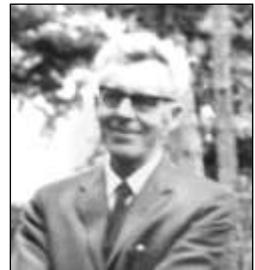
William Stewart 1960 – 1965

Burgh Librarian at the time the society started up in Hamilton, he provided a good deal of support to the fledgling society – providing the use of the library as a meeting place. He originally trained and worked at the Mitchell Library in Glasgow and became President of the Scottish Library Association. His other interests included music, particularly as a church organist, and local history – making a study of the Burgh archives. He was instrumental in the conservation of the Hamilton Arms Old Inn (dating from 1696) in Muir Street and its adaptation for use as a museum.



Sid Birnage 1965 – 1967

Born in Burton-on-Trent in 1911, he moved to Glasgow in 1924 and was an Architect by profession. Joining the society on the first outing in 1960, he had been a founder member of Motherwell NHS. He was a keen botanist and artist and provided many illustrations for the journals, becoming the first honorary member of the society in 1981. He studied the flora near his home in Stonehouse and contributed to BSBI mapping as well as providing a botanical report to the Third Statistical Account. His outstanding and beautiful herbarium collection was gifted to the society after his death in 1984.



Thomas Rankine 1967 – 1973

Having joined the original Hamilton Natural History and Photographic Society as a boy, he joined the “new” society in 1960. A native of Hamilton, he had an extensive knowledge of the area’s history and studied the wildlife in Hamilton Low Parks. He recorded the first appearance of magpies in the area and was a knowledgeable beekeeper. He was made honorary president in 1973 and died in Jan 1975.

Margaret Carter (née Moffat) 1973 – 1977

Margaret was introduced to the society c.1961 when she lived next door to Audrey Wallace. A zoologist by training, she taught biology. As a committee member of the society, she provided contributions to the annual reports, talks and excursions. She led the public guided walks round the Hamilton High Parks and Neilsland nature trails for the Hamilton Civic Week and Quincentenary events.

Jim Murdie 1977 – 1990

Jim joined the society in 1967 when he came to Hamilton from St Andrews. He was involved in many of the society's exhibitions and conferences and in submitting planning objections.

Well-known in horticultural circles and Hamilton District Council's Director of Leisure and Recreation until 1983, he was awarded the Queen Mother's Medal for Horticulture, the Scottish Horticulture medal and the Elizabeth Medal of the Institute of Parks and Recreation Administration. He was a rose judge and involved in the "Scotland in Bloom" campaign – one of the current awards is the Jim Murdie Trophy (for sustainable development).

He died in 1999, aged 76 and the society honoured his involvement and support by planting a tree at Chatelherault; also, in May 2005, a ceremony was held at Chatelherault to dedicate a Memorial Woodland in his name.



Paul Harrison 1990 – 2006

Paul was born in Derby and moved to East Kilbride in 1951, where he worked for the National Engineering Laboratory. He joined the Society in 1982 and was also a member of the Stirling Field and Archaeological Society. His interests include archaeology (especially Roman), geology, botany and birdwatching.

In July 2007, the society marked his retirement as president with a presentation at Chatelherault - gifting trees in his name to the Woodland Trust. In 2008, he was made an honorary member of the society.

Although now in frail health, he continues to take an interest in nature and birdwatching from home.



Michael Pink 2006 – to date

Michael joined the society in 1985 along with his wife Valerie, after they attended the exhibition celebrating the 25th Anniversary. He was appointed Secretary in 1995, a post he held for 11 years until he took over the position of President in 2006.

Michael's original wildlife interest was as a birdwatcher but he joined the Society at a time when this interest was expanding into other areas of natural history, particularly wild flowers.

Society members benefit from his great enthusiasm and knowledge and enjoy his talks illustrating the many fascinating wildlife-watching trips abroad which he and Valerie have taken in recent years.



OTHER NOTABLE SOCIETY MEMBERS

All of our Presidents and many of our other office bearers and committee members over the years have contributed hugely to the success of the society: providing talks, organising and leading excursions, assisting in their professional capacity, keeping the finances in order, attending planning enquiries and consultation exercises, taking photographs, recording wildlife or organising publicity and events. Many have served for lengthy periods of time.

Most of our members have a wide range of other interests outside the society – many also being active members of other organisations and bringing this expertise back into the society. Many also assist by helping with “housekeeping” duties: preparing venues and equipment or providing transport, tearoom or catering duties.

The society could not function without all this activity and thanks must go to all our volunteers over the years.

Some of our more longstanding members are:

Audrey Wallace

As well as being instrumental in founding the society, Audrey was Secretary for 29 years until 1989. In recognition of this outstanding service, a reception was held at Chatelherault in March 1990, involving a tree planting and presentation of engraved glass goblets by Provost Gibb to her and her husband Bill. Still taking an interest in society matters, we were delighted to welcome her to the 50th Anniversary dinner in January 2010.

Norman Tait

Another founder member of the society in 1960 and also a past President of Glasgow NHS and a member of Paisley NHS, he is currently still a member of all three societies. Norman worked as a photographer at the Botany department of Glasgow University. He continues to use his expertise for the benefit of the society, having contributed talks, photographs, and journal articles and he has copied the two HNH+PS magazines from 1914/1915 which are in Hamilton Library (these documents were presented to the Civic Society in 1939 by Mr Alfred G Miller of the Hamilton Photographic Society). Norman and his wife Pearl were made honorary members in 2008.



Audrey and Norman cutting the cake at the Society's 50th anniversary dinner, January 2010

Bill Wallace

Audrey's husband, Bill, was a similarly longstanding member of the society. He served on the committee for many years – Treasurer from 1969 to 1989 then Vice President for another 5 years. He died in 2008, age 92.

Audrey and Bill were made honorary members in 2005.



Bill planting a tree at Chatelherault for the society's Silver Jubilee in 1985.

Sheena Christie

Committee member for 18 years and Treasurer from 1991 – 2006, Sheena was made an honorary member in 2008 when she retired from the committee. She continues her interests in gardening and birdwatching in Hamilton.

Bill Paul

A committee member from 1984 and Secretary from 1989 to 1995, he brought in the use of the syllabus cards that still continues. Bill was originally from Bathgate and a microbiologist by profession. He was one of the first members of the Royal College of Pathologists to be appointed with a scientific rather than a medical qualification. He also had an interest in art and photography and was a member of Friends of Chatelherault. He died in 1999, age 71. A tree is planted in his memory at Chatelherault.

Jim Brockie

Hailing from Peebles, Jim is best known in Hamilton for his work in the restoration and development of Chatelherault, for which he received an MBE in 1988. He was the first manager of the new Country Park. He was a HNHS committee member for several years and kept the society involved and updated on the progress at Chatelherault. He also guided excursions and provided interesting talks on local subjects and his travels abroad. Other interests included photography and butterflies. He is still a member of the society.

Rosemary Harrison, our current Secretary, joined the society in 1982 and became a committee member in 1983. Among many other involvements, she was on the sub-committee which organised the Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1985. She took over the post of Secretary from Michael Pink in 2006.

Andrew Allan, a founder committee member, was made an honorary member of the society in 1985.

Mrs **Betty Crowson**, became a life member in 1970. An entomologist, she regularly gave talks and led outings. She died in 2006.

Mrs **June Paul**, Bill's wife, was an active society member. Although not on the committee, she played a very supportive role and in recognition of this, was made an honorary member.



Outing to Edinburgh Botanic Garden, May 1968.
L-R Sid Birnage, D. Somerville, Miss McGirr, James Nelson, Bill Wallace,

TIMELINE – HAMILTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

HNHS - 1960's

1960 First Meeting of the society (19th January) in Hamilton Library. The first AGM was held on the 11th November. Membership stood at 50.

1961 Recording Fungi in Hamilton High Parks, 1st October. The party was led by Miss M. Kertland of Queen's University, Belfast. Over 50 species were found and put on public display in Hamilton Library.

1962 Merged with Motherwell Natural History Society.

1963 National Nature Week 18th – 25th May. The society provided a Natural History display in the Burgh Library.



1965 Committee member Margaret Moffat led a public guided walk at Hamilton High Parks on 30th April and 1st May as part of 2nd National Nature Week.

1969 First Triennial Journal published.

1969 Consultation on the formation of Strathclyde Regional Park.

LOCAL TIMELINE – 1960's

1958 Hamilton Low Parks becomes an official bird sanctuary on 14th March. The area was already known to birdwatchers, as the town tip (near Hamilton College) flooded and attracted a variety of birds. There was also the heronry near Bothwell Bridge (later to be disturbed by the building of the East Kilbride Expressway).



1962 The Nature Conservancy (part of the National Environment Research Council, NERC) bought Inchcailloch Island and created the Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve. The reserve consisted of five islands and a piece of land at the mouth of the Endrick Water.

In 2002, Loch Lomond became Scotland's first National Park.

1964 Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT) formed.

1966 The M74 motorway opened in December (construction ran from June 1964 to Oct 1966). A five mile extension from Carmyle to join the M8 in Glasgow is due to open in 2011.

1965 Rivers (Prevention of Pollution) Act (Scotland) and the Firearms Act were passed, both measures protecting wildlife.

1967 Hamilton Burgh Museum opened at Muir Street by Mr Bruce Millan (Joint Under-Secretary of State for Scotland). HNHS was represented at the opening.



HNHS - 1970's



1970 Neilsland Park Nature Trail (Hamilton's first such trail) was opened by Provost Alex Reid on 21st May. The society was involved in consultation on the route and preparation of a guidebook. Thomas Rankine and Andrew Allan planted an Oak tree gifted by the society at the start of the trail.

1973 As part of Hamilton Civic Week in June, the society led guided walks round High Parks. Led by Jim Murdie, Margaret Carter and Mr Ross (estates forester), about 300 people took part. A further walk was held at Neilsland Park Trail and the society also provided a wild flower display in the Central Library and a photographic display in the museum.



First Day Cover 1973, from the society's archive.

1975 Backmuir Wood Walkway - Nature Trail opened on 20th Feb. The society was involved in the consultation and produced an information booklet (prepared by Mr Murdie, Mr Lilley and Mrs Carter).

1975 Hamilton Quincentenary celebrations. HNHS were represented on the Nature Trails & Historic Events Committee. Nature walks led by HNHS were held at Neil Island (19th April), Backmuir (20th April), Wellhall House Grounds (26th April) and High Parks (11th May). 480 people attended the latter.

1975 In June, two student members assisted in the emergency excavation of Bothwellhaugh Roman Bathhouse which was threatened with flooding by the creation of Strathclyde Loch. The Bathhouse was moved above its original foundations in 1980 to protect it from water damage (work finished 1982).

1976 A conference on Biological & Archaeological Record Keeping was organised by the society at Hamilton College of Education on 20th March, with Strathclyde Regional Council community education department.

1977 - 1978 Hamilton tree survey led by Jim Murdie and Jim Brockie. Members noted the high incidence of Dutch Elm Disease, which had spread all across the UK by this point.

1978 HNHS organised a 2-day biological recording conference with BRISC (Biological Recording in Scotland) in Stonehouse in September. Chaired by Jim Murdie and introduced by Dr Alastair Somerville (Chairman of BRISC), tutorials were given by David Mellor (Paisley NHS), Mrs Betty Crowson (Andersonian Naturalists, Glasgow) and Sid Birnage (HNHS). About 30 people attended. One aim for the future was to establish a recording centre for Lanarkshire.



Illustration by Sid Birnage in the Fourth Triennial Journal, 1978.

LOCAL TIMELINE - 1970's

1970 European Conservation Year – an exhibition opened in Hamilton Town Hall in June. Displays were provided by the Burgh Parks Department (recreating a woodland glade!), Burgh Library, Hamilton College of Education and Hamilton Natural History Society and photographs from SWT, Countryside Commission and Forestry Commission.

A guide leaflet is produced by SWT for Corehouse (at Lanark), their first Nature Reserve in Lanarkshire.

1973 “Plant a Tree in ‘73” National Campaign. Local tree planting events were held and the society planted an Oak tree at Woodhead on 2nd March.

1975 Burgh of Hamilton Quincentenary Year (1475 – 1975).

1975 Hamilton becomes part of Strathclyde Region / Hamilton District Council on 15th May.

1976 Strathclyde Country Park opens (the Watersports Centre had opened in April 1975).

1978 Hamilton High Parks purchased by the Government (Countryside Commission) and Hamilton District Council (also buying 40 acres of the woodland near Low Waters in 1980 under a compulsory purchase order).



Chatelherault hunting lodge at High Parks before conservation work started

1979 RSPB launches the Big Garden Birdwatch annual event. This event is still going strong – the next one is due in January 2011.

HNHS - 1980's

1981 Exhibition of medicinal plants mounted at Strathclyde Park in July.

1981 Jim Brockie, Audrey Wallace and Jonathan Warren (Countryside Ranger at Chatelherault) carried out a survey of colour variation in spiders in August as part of a national survey.

1982 Roadside verge vegetation survey carried out at Muttonhole Road over three visits and results sent to the Nature Conservancy Council.



Mr Craig, Bill Wallace, Jim Murdie and Jim Brockie on the hedgerow survey in July 1982



Herbarium specimen of Wood Cranesbill prepared by Sid Birnage 1980

1982 Visit to the fossil fish beds at Lesmahagow, 100 years after Dr J.R.S. Hunter set up study. Peter McNair (curator at Kelvingrove) had established “Camp Siluria” c.1900 to study these fossils. The site is now a SSSI.



Camp Siluria. Photo from an article by P. McNair in the HNH+PS Magazine 1914

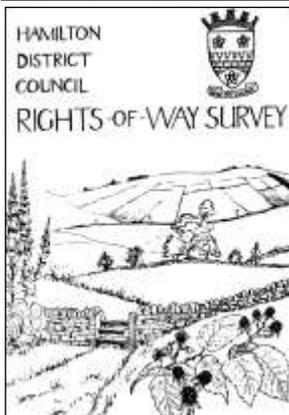


HNHS at Kip Burn in July 1986

1983 Member Mark Wallace assisted in the excavation of Cadzow Earthwork at High Parks and submitted a report to the 1984 HNHS Journal.

1985 Various events were held to mark the Silver Jubilee: floral display at Schools Spring Bulb Competition (Feb) in Hamilton Town Hall; “Rural Renewal” exhibition at St. Martin’s School 18th May; photography

competition/exhibition with Hamilton Advertiser (May); Ranger guided walks at Chatelherault (May); ceremony at Chatelherault on 19th April to hand over the Birnage Herbarium and a collection of books gifted from various members to Hamilton District Council. To mark this occasion, commemorative trees were planted by Provost Sam Casserly, Mrs Jean Birnage and Mr Andrew Allan.



Jim Murdie with a specimen (Oxlip) from the Birnage Herbarium, at Chatelherault, April 1985. The onlooker is Deputy Provost Senga Dallas.

1984 – 1985 Survey result

1987 Jim Brockie and Norman Tait made an audio-visual presentation on “The Changing Countryside” using three projectors linked by computer. Norman was about to visit Papua, New Guinea with a Glasgow University team to collect plants for the Glasgow Garden Festival (held in 1988).

1988 The society assisted the RSPB in planting 500 trees at Baron's Haugh Reserve.



Tree planting at Baron's Haugh 1988

Muddy at Mugdock – pond clearing 1989

LOCAL TIMELINE - 1980's

1981 80 conifer trees planted at Chatelherault in April to mark the Queen Mother's 80th birthday.

1982 Calderglen Country Park opened in East Kilbride.

1983 Salmon recorded in the Clyde for the first time in 120 years.

1983 RSPB and the Countryside Commission purchase 240 acres of parkland, woods and marsh near Motherwell for £60,000 to become Baron's Haugh Reserve.

1986 SWT obtain Cander Moss bog near Stonehouse from East Kilbride Development Corporation. The 60 acre site had been acquired in 1975 for Stonehouse New Town but was now to become a nature reserve.

1986 Tree planting started in December to recreate the Grand Avenue at Chatelherault - also marking European Year of the Environment/ National

Tree Week. HNHS were invited to one of the planting events. The avenue had originally been planted c.1708 and ran three miles from Chatelherault past Hamilton Palace. Plans were also afoot to bring some of the Cadzow herd of white cattle from Lennoxlove through to Chatelherault. A Biological Records Centre had also been set up.

1987 Opening of Chatelherault Country Park on 30th Sept by H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester. Audrey and Bill Wallace attended the event on behalf of HNHS.



HNHS visit to Chatelherault, June 1986

HNHS - 1990's



Outing to Muirsheil Country Park, May 1990
L-R June Paul, Bill Wallace, Edna Bell, Betty Cocker, Max Cocker, Bill Paul, Paul Harrison

1992 Members of the society contributed advice and information for a new woodland walk at the David Livingston Centre in Blantyre. The new Director of the Centre was to be David O'Neill, manager of Calderglen Country Park.

1993 Lanarkshire BRISC Group formed in September. HNHS were one of the original members.

1993 Conference on the Environment held on 21st March at Cadzow Parish Church, organised jointly with the Presbytery of Hamilton. The Chairman was HNHS member Rev. Loudon Melrose.

1995 Attended the Public Enquiry for the draft Local Plan (December).

1998 BRISC National Conference held at Chatelherault on 24th Jan. HNHS had a display stand at the event.

1999 Consultation with SWT on the designation of wildlife sites in South Lanarkshire led to Sandford Moor becoming the first site in SWT's South East Clyde area.



Visit to Soutra Aisle archaeological dig, 1996

LOCAL TIMELINE - 1990's

1992 Ravenscraig Steel Works closes in June. It had opened August 1957.

1992 Rio Earth Summit on sustainable development strategy and Convention on Biological Diversity. This led to the requirement for local authorities to create Biodiversity Action Plans.

1994 BTO starts the Garden Bird Survey.

1996 Langlands Moss Local Nature Reserve created in March.



1996 Hamilton becomes part of South Lanarkshire Council on 1st April.

1997 South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Partnership started (HNHS is a member).



1999 Scottish Government inaugurated.

1999 North Lanarkshire Council's Biodiversity Action Plan launched at Colzium House, Kilsyth on 19th November. Paul Harrison attended on behalf of the society.

HNHS - 2000's

2000 The Fortieth Anniversary dinner was held on 27th October. Guest speakers were Dr Sandy Kerr (SNH) and Ken Collins (SEPA and former MEP).

2002 Tree planting event for the Jim Murdie Memorial Woodland at Chatelherault. 200 trees of native species were planted, including an oak he had grown in his garden.

2003 The society sponsored a student research project on red squirrels at Falls of Clyde Reserve, Lanark. Evidence of red squirrel activity was found.

2004 Weeding trees at Langlands Moss LNR at East Kilbride in August. This work was continued in August 2007.

2004 Fumaria identification workshop in August at Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh.

2004 Seed sowing workshop in March for SLC's Biodiversity Banks project. In September, the resulting wildflowers were planted out near the car park pond at Chatelherault.



Seed sowing workshop 2004. L-R Fiona Murdoch, Rosie Harrison, Audrey Wallace, Michael Pink

2005. Ceremony at the Jim Murdie Woodland on 14th May to commemorate his 14 years as HNHS President. Members of his family attended and unveiled a plaque.

2005 Information Stand at “Tree in the Park” event, Chatelherault on 1st/2nd October.

2007 Information Stand at “B-in-the-Park” biodiversity event, Dalzell Park. The society attended this in May 2007 and again in August 2008.



HM15 President Paul Hanson addressing members and visitors prior to the unveiling of the Jim Murrie memorial plaque at Chatehervault, 15/5/2005.



Irene Russell and Diana Richardson at B in the Park,
Dalzell Park, Motherwell 2008

John Southern and Fiona
Murdoch working at Langlands
Moss Reserve, August 2007

LOCAL TIMELINE - 2000's

2001 New Lanark becomes a World Heritage Site.

2003 South Lanarkshire Council's Biodiversity Action Plan published.

2004 Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act passed.

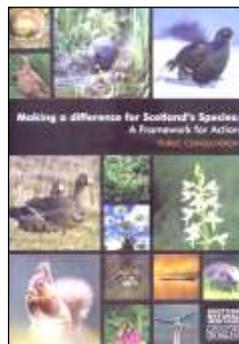
2005 BBC Springwatch launched. This is still going and now includes Autumnwatch as well.

2005 BRISC “Wildlife Counts” project starts.

2006 Improvements at Dalzell Estate and Baron’s Haugh.

2006 Scottish Biodiversity fortnight (June).

2007 Clyde Valley Woodlands National Nature Reserve launch event held at Chatelherault on 5th Sept.



2009 Morgan Glen near Larkhall is designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), the first one to be designated by South Lanarkshire Council.



Watching voles at Loch Katrine, May 2004

L-R Margaret Richardson, John Russell, Norman Richardson, Michael Pink, Valerie Pink, Max Cocker, Rosemary Harrison, Paul Harrison



Walk at Ayr Gorge, August 2008
L-R Margaret Richardson, Irene Russell, Geoff Morley, Rosemary Harrison, Norman Richardson, Michael Pink



Loch Ardinning SWT Reserve, August 2008

HNHS - 2010

2010 is designated International Year of Biodiversity by the United Nations. The year is set as a target for the UN to have significantly reduced global biodiversity loss and for the European Union to have stopped biodiversity decline.



Butterfly Conservation Scotland's 2010 postcard survey is for the Common Blue. Previous surveys have included Orange-tip, Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell.

22nd January – HNHS Fiftieth Anniversary dinner at the Alona Hotel in Strathclyde Park. About 60 members attended. The Speakers were Rev. John Thomson of Hamilton Old Parish Church, Malcolm Muir, SLC Countryside and Greenspace Manager at Chatelherault and President, Michael Pink.

23rd April – The society was represented at the “Celebrating International Year of Biodiversity in South Lanarkshire” conference held in Rutherglen Town Hall. The draft South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Action Plan was available for comment.

7th August – HNHS Backmuir Woods walk, re-recording to compare with the original plant list from the 1975 trail guide prepared by the society. The route is now part of Whitehill Heritage Trail set up by South Lanarkshire Council in 2007.



7th August – Community clean-up of Neilsland Park and Earnock Glen Nature Trails. Both are still in use since opening in 1970.

18th September – Visit to Abernethy, Elcho Castle and Kinross. The society had previously visited Elcho Castle on a trip to Perth and Kinnoull Hill on 13th May 1961.

8th October – The fifty first AGM was held in the Session Room of Hamilton Old Parish Church.

28th October – The draft South Lanarkshire Core Paths Plan becomes available for comment (consultation closes 28th January 2011).

10th December – HNHS 50th Anniversary souvenir booklet produced for members.



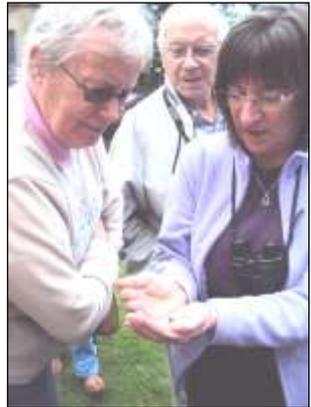
Craighead Bridge, Hamilton, August 2010



Duddingston Loch SWT Reserve, May 2010



Bracklinn Falls, Callander, August 2010



Cadder Church July 2010



Kelvin Walkway, Summerston, Sept 2010



Craigmillar Castle, May 2010

CONCLUSION

So there we have it – 50 years in a nutshell!

The society has now been around long enough to observe the gradual ebb and flow of nature in our part of the world and we have seen many changes – for good and bad – and noted that some things never seem to change.

From Thomas Rankine's sad observation of the last Corncrake in Hamilton in 1943 (shot in a field where Montrose Crescent now stands) to the decline of species such as House Sparrow and Red Squirrel and the relentless continuing pressure on habitats by development of housing, retail parks, industry and transport; we have also seen success stories such as the return of Salmon to the River Clyde; the comeback of Peregrine Falcon and Otter; the appearance of "new" species to the area such as Collared Dove, Nuthatch and Comma Butterfly and the creation/protection of new habitats such as the Central Scotland Forest and many new Nature Reserves.

The society continues to inform and protest, sometimes to no avail, but we keep building on what was started all those years ago by the dedication and enthusiasm of a small band of nature lovers who thought it was worth doing – it is still worth doing!

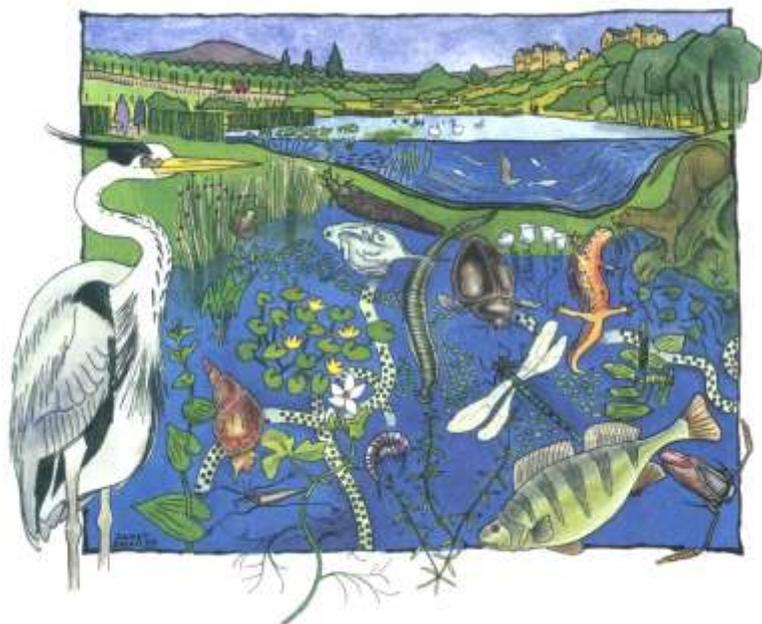


Illustration from the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2003-2008