

# John Buchan Society Newsletter

Issue 85, July-August 2020



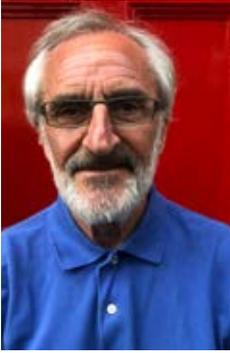
From Ken Hillier, Chairman

In the January Newsletter, I wrote: “This will be my last Report as Chairman, as I am stepping down at the March AGM”. In fact, it is half right; but it will be next March. We have had to cancel the **AGM/Annual weekend** twice and it will now be held between **Friday 12 and Sunday 14 March 2021**. Let us hope we are back to some semblance of normality by then.

The venue will be the same (Jurys Inn, Derby); the two speakers in Derby, Laura Buchan on the Friday evening and Steve Lord at the Saturday Dinner, have both confirmed they can attend. I will re-book the coach for Lichfield and the link-up with the Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum. Fingers crossed! I am also hoping to hold another **Durham Seminar in September 2021**, but will give more details in January. It would help, however, if those of you who are likely to attend could let me know soon ([nebuly@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nebuly@hotmail.co.uk)); I will then be able to book the required number of en suite rooms. The topic is likely to be “John Buchan: writer of Historical novels, thrillers, biographies and History books”. I am delighted that Neil Matthews has taken over as editor of the Newsletter and Ann Stonehouse as editor of the *Journal*. Please ensure they are warmly welcomed and send them articles and other pieces. It has been a privilege to work with Michael Redley and Andrena and Bill Telford over the last few years. The Society owes them a tremendous amount and thanks them for their hard work and skilful attention to maintaining the high standards of both publications.

Well – “we’ll meet again” in the January Newsletter. I am very pleased that Richard has introduced himself below to you all. He will make a fine Chairman, following in the quality footsteps of a previous holder of the office – his wife, Kate!

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Richard Love

## Prospective Chairman's note

I had hoped to introduce myself to many of you in Derby back in March. As we now know, the Covid-19 virus lockdown occurred just before our meeting, so there has been no chance for a formal election as yet. Meanwhile, I am most grateful that Ken continues to fulfil his Chairman's role and, as we are in regular contact, activity has been continuing behind the scenes (see later article). I have been a member of the society almost since its inception in 1979, largely thanks to my wife, Kate Love (nee Buchan) who will be known to most members, as she held office, including Chairman, for 30 years. Like many of you, I read and was thrilled by JB's shockers at an early age and continue to read his works for pleasure. However, I am neither a scholar of JB, his works and life, nor do I have a complete and intimate knowledge of the JB canon. I am neither a passionate and (in)discriminate collector of his works nor do I have Buchan blood flowing in my veins. Nevertheless I can identify with JB as an admirable human being and one whom I admire and feel an affinity with. Without wanting to make any vicarious claims or comparisons, I can say that we are both eldest sons, went to grand Scottish universities, love wandering and climbing hills and mountains wherever they be, had a first love of poetry and, above all, can listen to and see both sides of an argument, which makes it hard to settle comfortably into party politics. So, we all like to model ourselves on our heroes. What makes JB so memorable to me is how he managed to take on such a diverse range of activities, requiring a huge amount of attention and understanding - legal practice, administration, writing, editing and government service - and somehow maintained a family life. A truly multitasking powerhouse.

As a successor to far more worthy men and women, I hope to represent the ordinary, JB reading, member as well as the scholars, researchers and collectors around the JB world. I look forward to meeting some of you again once it is safe to convene in Derby. Meanwhile, please stay safe and sane. Keep reading John Buchan.

*Richard Love, Prospective Chairman*

## A trace of Buchan Snr

This photograph (*left*), taken in 1905, shows the United Free Church, Pathhead, of which JB's father was minister (before the family moved to Glasgow in 1888), and its congregation, involved in a protest over its interdiction from the occupancy of their place of worship. Source: Facebook, 12 April, Kirkcaldy and Dysart in Old Pictures and Postcards. [WR&AET]





## Obituary: Sir Edmund Fairfax-Lucy, Bt.

Sir Edmund Fairfax-Lucy, 6th Bt, was an Honorary Vice-President of the John Buchan Society from 1997. He died on 30 March following a heart attack. His father Brian married Alice Buchan, the daughter of John Buchan, and he inherited the title on his father's death in 1974. He was best known as a respected painter and exhibited regularly from 1971 until 2005. Although Charlecote, the family home near Stratford-upon-Avon, had been gifted to the National Trust at the end of the war, the family rooms were left unused until Sir Edmund, known as Ed, started to bring the house back to life. He worked with the NT on researching the collections in the house and reinstated the family rooms. He led a guided visit of Charlecote when the society had its AGM in Warwick in the 1990s. He is survived by his third wife Erica and two sons Patrick, who succeeds to the baronetcy, and Johnny. [RL]

## Obituary: George Shepperson

Dr Eileen Stewart reports that Professor George Shepperson, who chaired the John Buchan Day that inaugurated the Society, and gave some gravitas to the JB Society's first working committee, died on 2 April, aged 98, in Peterborough. A memorial service will be held later in the year. Obituaries appeared in the *Scotsman* for 9 April (see <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/scotsman-uk/obituary.aspx?n=george-albert-shepperson&pid=195920756>) and on the *Centre for Canadian Studies* website: [http://www.cst.ed.ac.uk/news/2020/g.a.\\_shepperson\\_cbe\\_1922-2020](http://www.cst.ed.ac.uk/news/2020/g.a._shepperson_cbe_1922-2020). [WR&AET]



## Secretary / social media

In the light of the current pandemic, the ongoing lockdown and expected second peak, Mike Edwards and Ken Hillier have managed to rearrange the AGM and weekend in Derby for Friday 12 and Saturday 13 March 2021. So hold those dates. A contract has yet to be signed but we are hopeful that the weekend will take place; the intention is that we will be following the same schedule as before. The Jurys Inn Hotel is currently closed and will not open until 2 October at the earliest. So you can imagine the fun that Mike and Ken have had sorting all this out with no staff there who had responsibility for dealing with this type of situation! A reminder that we operate social media sites on Twitter (@johnbuchansoc) and Facebook. Content should be sent to me.

*Clare Dodds, Secretary*  
ce1dodds@gmail.com



## Museum news

Sadly, the Buchan Museum in Peebles remains closed at the moment and we currently have no date for reopening. The Museum is small and run by volunteers, so presents various challenges for us in the near future. Last year we had 4,000 visitors through the door! It may be that we open restricted hours with only one or two visitors allowed in at a time. We might also extend our season into November. So no one is seeing our First Nations exhibition with the wonderful headdress and cloak, or our new temporary exhibition this year, featuring JB's holidays and connections to various books, entitled 'Buchan's Inspirational Holidays'.

But all is not lost – we are placing more on our website. Members of our Committee have converted the temporary exhibition into a video - see [www.johnbuchanstory.co.uk/events.htm](http://www.johnbuchanstory.co.uk/events.htm). When you have a spare moment and need some entertainment, click on the link. We are working on a 'First Nations' piece and other items too. During our period of closure we've taken the opportunity to digitise Buchan family photo albums from our archive collection and these will also be going on our website shortly. They feature some of JB's fishing and shooting holidays around Peeblesshire; a climbing holiday on Skye; William's life in India and a holiday visit by Anna and Mrs Helen Buchan's two trips to France to visit her son Alastair's grave and the First World War battle sites.

We hope that you will keep checking [www.johnbuchanstory.co.uk](http://www.johnbuchanstory.co.uk) for our latest news and items of interest and maybe we will be opening the real front door soon!

*Ian Buckingham*  
*Chairman, John Buchan Heritage Museum Trust*



## Membership matters

We are delighted to welcome the following new members: Mr Stephen Hodkin, Southwell; and Mr John Roberts, Jedburgh. We are sorry to say a sad goodbye to: Mr David Ward, Durham; and Dr Walter Williamson, Leyburn. Also, I have had mail to Professor Jonathan Gibson, of Knowle, Solihull, returned 'gone away': can anyone tell me more?

**Subscriptions for this year were due on 1 February 2020. If, for any reason, you have yet to renew, I hope you will do so as soon as possible, to retain the benefits of membership. You should shortly receive a letter detailing the different ways to pay.**

Of course, from the point of view of retaining your membership and simplifying administration it would be ideal if UK members (or those overseas with a UK bank account) would set up a standing order with your bank, after which you would receive no more reminders!

Finally, I shall be at the Derby meeting in March and look forward to meeting members as usual.

*Alison Gallico, Membership Secretary*

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## Finance matters

This is to remind you that 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 enable the JBS may benefit, and 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) – here is the link <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



## Website Manager vacancy

Council are currently discussing changes to the John Buchan Society website (<http://www.johnbuchansociety.co.uk/thesociety.htm>) following a report submitted to it by retiring editor of the newsletter, Dr William Telford. Following a questionnaire report submitted last year, quotations for the redesign and reconstruction of the website have been sought by Dr Telford and the Society's Social Media Sub-Committee, when it is convened, will be considering these. A web manager will be appointed from the Society to maintain the website on a regular basis thereafter, and a web content manager will supervise the content.

**If you have expertise in website management, and would like to volunteer to act as our website manager, or can suggest someone else suitable, we would be delighted to hear from you.** Please contact the Secretary, Clare Dodds ([ce1dodds@gmail.com](mailto:ce1dodds@gmail.com)).

## Buchan in the media

An adaptation of *The Courts of the Morning* was broadcast on BBC Radio 4 on Sunday 22 March. See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00ljk9j> [WR&AET]



## The Journal

As some of you already know, my time as editor is up. Eight years seems enough, and the journal will benefit from fresh eyes and input. My thanks to all contributors, and to readers, for your feedback through those indispensable 'Letters to the editor', and to Tom Acton, who designed and printed the *Journal* over my term. I hope you have enjoyed the variety of articles, up-to-date comments and photos. It has been a privilege to be editor over a period when, so it seems to me, there has been real progress - to quote from the Society's objectives - in promoting wider understanding and appreciation of the life and works of John Buchan.

My replacement is **Ann Stonehouse** (afstonehouse@talk21.com), whom some of you will already know. She edited the *Journal* between 1991 and 1996, and brings a great wealth of experience in the art of editing as well as a deep commitment to the purposes of the society. The next issue due out later this year is for her to shape. But I am handing on to her work-in-progress, including possible articles, on JB and the natural world, as the compiler of encycopaedias, and readying Canada for war as its Governor General, and a bit more on Willie Buchan in India and that guest house in Broadstairs which featured in the last issues. I wish her all the very best.

*Michael Redley*

**Back Issues** of most issues of the *Journal* (1-51) are available. However, we hold no spare copies of issues 5, 8, 9 or 13, and fewer than 10 spare copies of issues 12, 15-17, 26, 32, 38, 41, 43, 44 and 49. An index of the contents of the first 50 issues is sent out with orders. For Members, these are priced, including postage, at £4.00 UK and £6.50 Overseas per issue.

We do currently have excess copies of numbers 1, 2, 4, 11, 14, 18-25, 27, 29-31, 33-35, 42, 45-48 & 50, and all of these can be purchased by Members (on a 'first come first served' basis during the remainder of 2020) at the discounted rate, including postage, of £2.00 UK or £3.50 Overseas per issue.

**To order back issues, write to: Neil Tointon, Treasurer, The John Buchan Society, 11 Hazel Close, Alderholt, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 3DQ.** Please make cheques payable to The John Buchan Society.



## Oh, Canada!

Bill and Kate Galbraith hosted a small dinner party in February, to commemorate the 80th anniversary of JB's death in Canada, and also the 1939 Royal Tour to Canada. Guests were very familiar with Bill's interest in JB, and had supported him to varying degrees during the long period of research and writing of his book, by passing along leads they had come across about JB or reading and providing comment on draft chapters. In tribute to JB's Scottish roots, the menu included Scottish smoked salmon appetizers and, for dessert, Classic Scottish Topsy Laird Trifle. Despite much indulging in the dessert, no one left tipsy, but certainly happy!

In January and February, Bill gave two very successful illustrated presentations about JB's time in Canada, one to the Historical Society of Ottawa and another in Brockville, a small city an hour south of Ottawa along the St. Lawrence River. The latter was held, by coincidence, 80 years to the day of JB's death. The same day, 11 February, an op-ed piece Bill had written appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen*, *Montreal Gazette*, *Regina Leader-Post* and some other Ontario papers in the Post Media group: "What Lord Tweedsmuir's story teaches Canada about challenging times". [WR&AET]

## 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 your email address to the editor Neil Matthews: [BuchanSocNewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:BuchanSocNewsletter@gmail.com).

**Cover and below:** *Open Air Museum just outside Tórshavn, Faroe Islands - the archipelago on which John Buchan based the Norlands in **The Island of Sheep** (1936). Photo: Helen Matthews. Other photos this issue:* Vivien Lovell (Edmund Fairfax-Lucy photo, above) and Tracy le Blanc via Pexels, p3; Ian Buckingham (above) and Ovan via Pexels, p4; cottonbro via Pexels, p6; Bill Galbraith (above), p8. Thanks to Drs WR and AE Telford for their help and advice with this issue.

