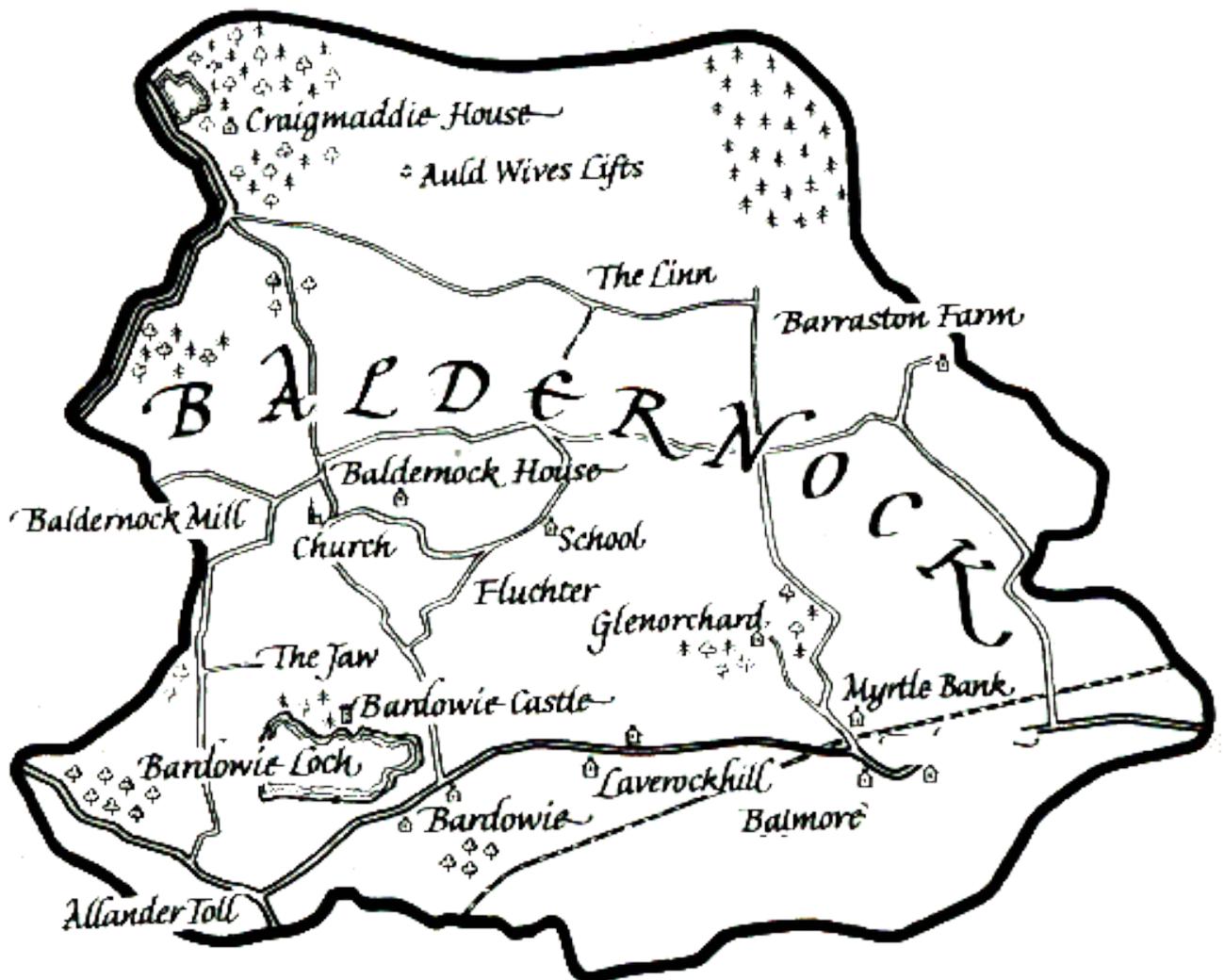


Baldernock:  
Recollections of a  
Rural School  
1873 - 1999

**Baldernock:  
Recollections of a  
Rural School  
1873–1999**

This book was compiled in 1999  
by Audrey Anderson, Sandra Wilson and Lesley Wiseman.  
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If you have material or photographs  
which could be included in any future editions of this book,  
please contact the compilers by writing to them  
c/o Baldernock Primary School, Balmore, Torrance, Glasgow G64 4AS



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The compilers have been unsuccessful in naming all those appearing in group photographs, and apologise if your name is one that has been omitted. If you can provide us with any of the missing names, or if names are incorrect, we should be very grateful if you would please contact us at the address given on page 2.



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Girls at Baldernock School letter-box, 1955



## Preface

The current school building dates from 1873 but there has been a school at Baldernock for over two hundred years, educating the children of Baldernock, Bardowie, Balmore, Barraston, and beyond. It has played a significant part in the history of Baldernock Parish and it continues to display all the qualities of a small country school while located only a few miles from the centre of a large city.

This book attempts to give a flavour of life at the school both now and in the past through personal reminiscences and accounts from the School Log Books. Entries in the Log Books were always made by the headteacher, or whoever was in charge of the school, mostly in the third person. The text of this book is composed of extracts taken directly from the Log Books along with the personal recollections of pupils and others associated with the school. The earliest recollections we have are those of Ernest Bowie, who started school in 1911.

In a time span such as this not everyone remembers everything in the same way and this may account for some inconsistencies in the text. We apologise if we have introduced any errors in names, dates or information, and should be grateful if you would send any corrections to us at the address given on page 2.

*Audrey Anderson*

*Christine Lyons*

*Sandra Wilson*

*Lesley Wiseman*



Baldernock Primary School, 25th April, 1978

**School Log Book opens September 16, 1873:**

## **Later that year...**

*November 7*

*All working faithfully. Thursday being the fast-day in this parish did not meet. Met to-day (Friday).*

*December 12*

*Monday being Quarter day some time was lost collecting fees. Attendance and attention good.*

*December 26*

*Dismissed this day for the New Year holidays – to meet again on 5th Jan. Scholars treated to an orange and sweets by three gentlemen-members of the School Board. A few ladies visited the school and assisted to distribute the oranges &c. Children sang very well.*

## **1874**

*January 9*

*Met on Monday. Attendance fair. Work fairly done. Half-holiday on Thursday being ploughing-match.*

*January 23*

*Weather wet and stormy... Commenced boy with Greek.*

*April 3*

*All working faithfully. Appointed James Logan as a Monitor at a salary of £5 per annum, on condition that he passes the examination as a pupil-teacher in 1875.*

*April 10*

*Boys' attendance very irregular, and interfering considerably with the working of the classes.*

*July 24*

*All working faithfully. Friday a holiday being the Free Church trip.*

*August 12*

*On Monday the examination for the Bible prize was conducted by Messrs Young and Roy. On Wednesday the public examination of the school was held... The school was thereafter dismissed for the holidays.*

*October 23*

*Attendance very irregular. Potato lifting going on.*

## 1875

*January 4*

*Resumed but as measles have again broken out in the parish only 15 were present.*

*February 5*

*... Poetry as usual on Wednesday.*

*March 5*

*Attendance improving but a large number have failed to make the 250 attendances to qualify for examination and the average for the year on account of the epidemic of measles is lower than was anticipated...*

*April 9*

*Commenced a Latin class. Attendance very small.*

*April 16*

*The alterations to be made on the school buildings having now been commenced, removed to the church which is to be used as a school during the repairs.*

*July 2*

*Order of classes as usual. Progress in music good. Some write with considerable correctness an easy tune when slowly played.*

*July 30*

*Holiday on Wednesday, being the week of the Highland Society's show in Glasgow.*

*September 27*

*Met to-day in the new school, of which the larger room is now finished.*

*October 4*

*The school was formally opened to-day by School Board in the presence of a large number of the parents and friends of the children. Addresses were delivered by C. J. Higginbotham Esq. of Craigmaddie, Chairman of the Board, and by the Rev. Messrs Roy, Assistant Minister of Baldernock; Bell, Milngavie; and Young, F. C. Minister, Baldernock.*

*October 29*

*Compulsory clause being now in force, the attendance has considerably increased.*

*December 29*

*Dismissed for the New Year holidays to meet again on Tuesday the 4th Jan.*



Pupils of Baldernock School with headmaster, Thomas McEwen, and another member of staff

## **1876**

*January 7*

*Attendance very small. Whooping cough prevalent.*

*August 11*

*Scarlatina having broken out in the parish it was thought advisable to dismiss the school for 4 weeks which was accordingly done.*

*September 11*

*Resumed this day with a very fair attendance considering that harvest is not nearly completed.*

*September 21*

*The public examination of the school was held this day. The examiners were the Rev. Messrs Roy and Young. A few of the parents and friends were present. Prizes were distributed to those who had passed the Inspector's examination in March last.*

*October 13*

*Commenced class in Special Subject – English Literature – text-book, Goldsmiths Deserted Village.*

*October 20*

*Attendance irregular on account of potato lifting.*

*December 21*

*Wet and stormy. Attendance small.*

## **1877**

*February 23*

*Commenced to revise English Literature. Seems to have a good effect in cultivating general intelligence.*

*March 15*

*Rearranged classes according to Standards. Commenced a Latin class of six boys.*

*April 6*

*Attendance getting more irregular. Work in the fields the cause.*

*May 4*

*Wednesday being the Glasgow Farmer's Society show was given as a holiday.*

June 8

*Commenced Religious Instruction according to the scheme of the Church of Scotland committee.*

June 22

*Attendance less regular than it has been for some weeks. Field work requires a number of the bigger boys.*

August 10

*Issued notices of quarter fees.*

August 17

*Dismissed for five weeks holidays.*

September 24

*... Attendance very small on account of the harvest being not much more than begun...*

October 19

*Harvest not yet completed. Class formed in Domestic economy...*

October 31

*Dismissed for the Sacramental holidays, during which according to arrangement the school is to be cleaned and the walls coloured.*

November 26

*Noisy in the afternoon. Kept in half-an-hour.*

## **1878**

January 25

*Attendance fair. Revised arithmetic according to Standards. Classes which at the beginning of the year corresponded with Standards having become mixed required to be separated. This was done by... naming the laggards.*

February 28

*Completed school year, closed registers and made out examination schedule. As the Inspection falls on Monday, delayed issuing accounts until it is over, as likely to interfere with the work of the school.*

April 12

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'This school maintains generally its creditable efficiency... J. Logan has passed fairly, but he should attend to composition and history.*

*'School staff:*

*Thos McEwen,*

*Certificated Teacher of the first class.*

*Jas. Logan, Pupil Teacher of the 4th year.*

*Mary Gibson, Sewing Mistress.'*

August 2

*This being the F.C. Sunday*

*School trip was a holiday.*

October 7

*Order and attention good.*

*Commenced geography of Palestine.*



Baldernock Free Church

October 28

*Potato digging has lowered the attendance...*

December 6

*Compulsory Officer having visited defaulters a few of these turned out in the beginning of the week.*

December 18

*Heavy fall of snow with excessive frost and only a very few from the immediate neighbourhood were present. After opening school dismissed for the day.*

## 1879

January 8

*Examinations according to Standards. Work well done, but the laggards were mostly absent.*

March 28

*Fever having broken out at Barraston, the children from that district were to-day sent home...*

May 22

*School Board Officer called to-day for list of defaulters. Fever having disappeared from Barraston, the children there were ordered to return to school with the exception of those who had had fever.*

September 26

*Introduced School Song Book which seems to take well. Good work done.*

October 3

*Result of Examination for Scholarship communicated. James Logan passed in 1st Class and also in Latin and mathematics. All the classes working faithfully.*

October 10

*Arrangements made for Bible Examination but postponed as harvest is not yet completed and a number have asked leave of absence.*

October 31

*Pupil-teacher left to-day for Glasgow University. Thursday was fast-day in Baldernock.*

November 7

*Time-table re-arranged so as to work the school with the aid of a Monitor.*

November 21

*Attendance irregular. By request commenced a drawing class. Seven have joined it...*

November 28

*Attendance better. Work well done. Place marking acting as a stimulus.*

## **1880**

February 14

*Met on Saturday to make up for holiday last week and had examination according to Standards...*

May 14

*Commenced French class. Attendance much better this week – the result of Officer's visiting defaulters.*

May 18

*The following report has been received from the Education Department.*

*'The school maintains its satisfactory efficiency both in the elementary and the upper work...'*

July 12

*Drawing twice last week in forenoon, Rev. M. Smith having offered a prize.*

October 15

*School Board Officer called on defaulters to-day and warned them. A few orders sent to flagrant cases of neglect.*

October 22

*A few absent being engaged in lifting potatoes.*

November 19

*Arranged for services of pupil-teacher to begin his apprenticeship after next exam.*

## **1881**

February 11

*Heavy fall of snow. Roads are almost impassable.*

March 7

*Roads entirely blocked with snow and excepting a few from the immediate neighbourhood scarcely any children were able to come to school. Revised some of pupil-teacher's work.*

April 8

*Commenced special subject – English Literature – with 4th and 5th Standards.*

May 16

*Commenced special subject – Domestic economy – in 4th and 5th Standards.*

July 29

*Irregular attendance a great hindrance to the work.*

August 4

*Issued accounts for quarter ending 12th Inst. Instructed those in arrears not to come without fees for last quarter.*

October 7

*Attendance still small, harvest not being nearly completed.*

November 11

*Pupil-teacher having gained an Orr–Ewing bursary left for the University of Glasgow.*

November 18

*Altered time table so as to overtake the work without assistance.*

December 30

*Dismissed for Xmas holidays.*

## 1882

*January 27*

*Class for dancing commenced in the afternoon at 3.30.*

*January 30*

*Miss Jane Bryce commenced duties as pupil-teacher.*

*February 28*

*School year completed and registers closed. New registers written out.*

*March 10*

*Had an examination on paper of Standard work yesterday. Spent half a day going over papers, pointing out errors, and working difficulties on Black-board.*

*June 9*

*Attendance irregular this week in consequence of the scarcity of outdoor workers.*

*July 7*

*Some boys in the 4th Standard having finished the Arithmetic for their year have been advanced into the 5th Standard.*

*September 19*

*Resumed after holidays. Harvest not nearly finished and attendance therefore small.*

*October 6*

*Roll increasing but a number having gone to the new primary school in Torrance the average will probably be lower than usual.*

## 1883

*January 26*

*Holiday for ploughing match but met on Saturday forenoon instead*

*March 30*

*Examined school. Present 32 boys, 39 girls.*

*Staff: Thos McEwen C. T., Jane S Bryce P. T. 1st year.*

*William Foley HMIS.*

August 6

*Bible Examination conducted...when a large number of parents and friends were present. After the Bible Examination the 1st class read some pieces, the sewing was examined and prizes were distributed to those who passed HM Inspector's examination in the order of merit shown by the place marks.*

September 18

*Met after the holidays. Attendance fair considering the state of the harvest which in some farms is just beginning.*

## **1884**

March 5

*New quarter commenced on Monday. Not more than half an attendance on account of the stormy morning. Dismissed at mid-day.*

March 19

*Revised Geography of British Colonies with 6th Standard.*

May 23

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'... In arithmetic no ball-frame has been provided and fingers are much used. Geography and History good in fifth and sixth, but only fair in fourth. In both a larger number should answer... Drawing and mending should be regularly taught, and every girl should show work.'*

July 5

*... Class of 8 boys in mensuration met on Saturday for practical work. Surveyed part of Glenorchard.*

## **1885**

February 13

*... Gave an exercise in writing music from dictation.*

May 15

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'This school has a pleasant air, but the pupils were somewhat given to talking at their exercises. The Standard instruction reached a fair average level; the grant for History and Geography was not more than earned; the specific subjects were satisfactory. The specimens of sewing were good, but might have been more numerous...'*

*June 4*

*Holiday for Campsie Show.*

*July 16*

*... Hay harvest commenced; attendance less regular. Latin class commenced Virgil Book II...*

*October 14*

*Attendance irregular. Potato lifting commenced.*

*November 13*

*All working faithfully. John Livingston, Beanscroft, has gained one of the Orr–Ewing Bursaries and has therefore gone to Glasgow University. The result is likely to have good influence in the upper classes.*

## **1886**

*January 7*

*... Commenced Geography of Stirlingshire.*

*March 4*

*Only 18 present. Roads blocked with snow. Heard lessons of those present and sent them home.*

*May 28*

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'... University subjects are studied with success by the Senior pupils. Music is carefully taught, but the parts were sometimes a little out of harmony... Lavatory accommodation of some kind should, if possible, be supplied...'*

*August 10*

*Classes now formed according to Standards: drafted those in 2nd class into 3rd, and 4th into 5th, thereby saving much time.*

## **1887**

*February 22*

*Outbreak of measles reported.*

*April 25*

*Cautioned pupil-teacher with reference to the conduct of her class.*

April 29

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'... The music was rather wanting in "spirit".'*

May 23

*A case of measles in family of pupil-teacher who was therefore absent.*

August 26

*Harvest work and potato lifting causing some irregularity. Introduced new song-book. Two boys commenced Greek.*

November 4

*... Some cases of diphtheria in the neighbourhood.*

## **1888**

March 16

*Severe storm,  
and roads blocked with snow.*

April 3

*School reopened after spring holidays.*

Wintry weather at Back O'Hill Farm      April 13

*Classes all arranged according to Standards for next year.*

May 8

*Holiday. Opening of Glasgow Exhibition by Prince of Wales.*

June 1

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'The condition of this school is highly satisfactory in respect of both the ordinary and advanced subjects. The Standard pass is very high and of good quality... Grammar is very sound and thoughtful. Very good work is done in Latin, Mathematics, Domestic Economy and Sewing. Singing is good, ear and time exercises fair. Discipline excellent. It is altogether a superior country school...'*

June 21

*Examination in Bible Knowledge... 'John Mann' prize in Bible awarded to Nellie Livingston. Dismissed for summer holidays.*

October 12

*On Wednesday W. Higginbotham entertained the children in the Exhibition (Glasgow).*

October 19

*Harvest work now over. Attendance better.*

November 30

*... Four boys commenced Euclid... Roads continue flooded by Friday's rain, and attendance consequently irregular.*

December 28

*Dismissed for Xmas holidays.*



## **1889**

January 25

*Holiday for Ploughing Match.*

Ploughing at Whitefauld Farm, Balmore

February 15

*... Half-holiday on Tuesday for the ice.*

April 1

*Annual Inspection. 68 scholars present.*

June 7

*History in all Standards daily except Wednesday when Poetry, 'The Deserted Village', is said.*

September 27

*Scarlet fever having broken out among the children some families absent.*

October 4

*Many absent with colds.*

November 11

*Closed on account of an outbreak of scarlet fever.*

December 2

*Re-opened with the sanction of Medical Officer. Small attendance.*

## 1890

January 31

*Pupil-teacher, Miss M. Livingston has left for the Normal School. Miss Clementina Harvey takes her place.*

April 4

*A number absent at field work.*

April 17

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'The children were bright and happy and manifested no little eagerness to do their best in the presence of the Inspector. Discipline is firm enough, and, on the whole, merits the excellent grant. The variety of subjects taught by the headmaster, and the degree of proficiency attained by the pupils, especially in the specific branches of instruction indicate the marked diligence, skill, and care with which he has responded to the demands made upon him during the year. One girl was presented in the first stage of French, and answered promptly and readily the questions put to her. The same girl with two others (one of them a pupil-teacher) made a creditable appearance in translating and parsing a simple passage from Caesar Book I. The work and the class subjects were, on the whole very satisfactory. More attention, perhaps, might be devoted to modulation of the voice and proper emphasis in reading and reciting, so as to bring out more fully and forcefully the drift of passages read and repeated. There is no appreciable weakness in the written work of any of the Standards, and penmanship is of good quality. Singing and sewing receive adequate attention.'*

April 18

[No entry was made for this date, and there were no entries for the rest of the year, possibly due to the headmaster falling ill.]

## 1891

January 9

*Mr McEwen took ill and was unable to attend to his duties during the week. The pupil-teacher and Miss Livingston in charge.*

January 16

*Mr McEwen died on 10th January. On account of his death the school has been closed during this week.*

January 26

*In consequence of Miss Livingstone's resumption of work in Training College, Mr Deas took charge of the school.*

March 13

... Sent home a boy for insubordination.

March 16

School was not opened today on account of the stormy weather, only about a dozen of the children venturing out and even they were not in a fit condition for school work.

March 24

The Rev. Mr Bryce acting on behalf of C. F. Higginbotham Esq., Chairman of School Board, visited the school this forenoon to introduce as Head Teacher Mr John Gibson, M. A., Certificated Teacher of the Second Class, lately Assistant Master in Rothesay Public School.

May 15

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'The death of the headmaster, the difficulties of the interregnum, and the fact that the school was closed at the beginning of winter on account of an epidemic render it necessary to take a lenient view of the attainments of the pupils...*

*'C. Harvey has passed well.*

*'School staff:*

*John Gibson, M.A., Certificated Teacher of Second Class*

*Clementina Harvey, Pupil-teacher of Third Year*

*Mary Gibson, Sewing Mistress'*

May 21

Today being a holiday in Glasgow, and a number of the children having friends out to see them, the dinner interval was shortened and the school dismissed earlier.

May 25

Two boys and two girls of the ex-VI Standard were started to-day in French.

June 5

The attendance this week has been very low. Some are absent with colds, others are required at home, and one boy, C— B— from the waterworks, has been playing truant all week although notice was sent to his parents on Wednesday.

June 26

In order to decide the prize-winners the pupils have had written and oral examinations throughout the week, and on this account the regular work has been somewhat interrupted and the timetable departed from.

September 10

Today the interval was shortened and ordinary work stopped at half-past-two, when Mr Lennox entertained the children with his Diagrams of the Arctic Regions, and with a Galvanic battery.

December 14

*Two boys of the ex-VI Standard were punished firmly to-day for throwing stones which struck the school door and for afterwards denying it.*

## 1892

January 26

*The school being required to-day for a funeral service at two o'clock, the interval was shortened and school dismissed early having completed two attendances.*

February 5

*... A half-holiday was given for the ploughing match.*

April 23

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'The school has risen perceptibly in efficiency, and is now in normal working order. The Junior classes make a satisfactory appearance. Mechanical expedients in arithmetic are still resorted to: probably more black-board practice would ensure their discontinuance. In the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth Standards there is not a single failure in Arithmetic, and Dictation in the same classes is uniformly good. Penmanship receives very careful attention. In the fifth and sixth answering in Class subjects is generally brisk and spirited. The Grammar of the third and fourth will improve. Mathematics and Domestic economy show very fair results. The pupils presented in Latin were somewhat bashful and unresponsive. The pupil-teacher shows commendable proficiency in this subject. Sewing is good, and singing very satisfactory...'*

May 19

*To-day the school was closed in honour of the Queen's Birthday.*

August 30

*Owing to the wet and stormy morning only 24 children were present to-day, and as a number of these had got their feet wet coming to school, the roads at some parts being flooded, the school was dismissed without the registers being marked.*

September 23

*Bad attendance this week – fully 31 per cent of absentees. Some are working at harvest, others keeping house while their mothers are at the harvest, while others are absent from colds, sore feet, etc.*

December 12

*A case of scarlet fever is reported at Allander Toll. The children from there are consequently kept at home.*

December 13

*Another case of scarlet fever at Glenorchard... The ice on the lochs and ponds being strong and in good condition a half-holiday was given today.*

## **1893**

February 24

*Arithmetic has been receiving a little extra time after the regular hour for dismissal...*

March 24

*The work of the new classes has been begun, except in French and Domestic Economy, the books for these two subjects not having come.*

May 8

*A case of measles at Laverockhill has been reported.*

June 12

*A case of whooping cough is reported from Allander Toll.*

August 25

*The attendance this week has been even worse than last, 36.5 per cent being absent. Harvesting is now general in the district and this accounts for the high per centage of absentees. It is on such occasions that the want of a School Board Officer is chiefly felt...*

October 5

*Fires have been resumed in School.*

November 17

*Fresh cases of whooping cough are still arising, and colds are numerous. The attendance is further reduced. To-day 50 per cent were absent.*

November 22

*The attendance being still further reduced, the school for the last three days has been held only in the forenoon, and to-day it has been temporarily closed on the recommendation of the Medical Officer of Health for the County.*

December 29

*Miss Clementina Harvey, being about to enter the F. C. Training College, Glasgow, having passed the Entrance Examination and taken 52nd place for Scotland in the First Class, was on the occasion of her leaving this school presented by the pupils and teachers with a walnut writing desk and a gold pearl brooch...*

## 1894

*January 8*

*The school re-opened to-day with small attendance. Miss Helen Livingston commenced as pupil-teacher.*

*February 28*

*School year ended to-day. There are 85 pupils on the Roll...*

*April 20*

*... All copybooks, slates, etc., required within the school are now supplied free to the children.*

*June 15*

*... Miss Livingston absent through illness on Tuesday and Wednesday, part of Thursday, and again on Friday.*

*July 11*

*Miss Nellie Livingston is not coming back to school. A female Ex-P. T. has been appointed to begin duties after the holidays.*

*September 3*

*... Miss Lizzie Boyd, from Annbank School, entered upon duties as Ex-P.T....*

*October 5*

*... The health of the parish is very good, although there are cases of scarlet fever on both sides of it.*

*December 28*

*School dismissed at mid-day for the New Year holidays. Miss Boyd left to go to Kilmacolm School.*

## 1895

*January 8*

*School re-opened. Miss Elsie Geddes, who had been appointed to the vacancy on the school staff, and who had agreed to begin duties to-day, did not appear, but wrote withdrawing from the appointment.*

*January 10*

*... A half-holiday was given to-day to let the school be washed out for a dance tomorrow night.*

*January 15*

*Mr Gibson was absent this afternoon at a funeral. Mrs Gibson was in charge...*

*January 31*

*... A half holiday was given to-day for the ice.*

*April 2*

*Holiday to-day, the school being needed for a Polling Station in the Parish Council Election.*

*April 26*

*... The boys of Standards V, VI and ex-VI now take Agriculture while the girls are at Domestic economy.*

*June 7*

*Bible is receiving extra time,  
from 3.15 to 4 o'clock.*

*June 21*

*Usual work somewhat disarrayed by competition for prizes.*

*June 28*

*Competition for prizes completed. Some time is being given to singing in preparation for the closing day. Mary Dawson, a pupil of this school has gained after competition a 'Marshall Trust' Bursary of the annual value of £10 for two years.*

*October 4*

*Fires have been resumed.*

*October 11*

*Attendance very low, several being absent gathering potatoes or keeping house.*

*October 31*

*Two boys punished for lifting nuts off table yesterday.*

*November 12*

*Boy sent home for insubordination.*

*November 22*

*... On dull days school is being dismissed a few minutes earlier, to enable children with long roads to get home before dark.*

*November 28*

*To-day the intervals were shortened and work finished at half-past-two. Afterwards an entertainment was given by 'Prof.' Montgomery.*

December 16

*A boy who returned to-day after being absent since the 12th of April last refused persistently to take up the Arithmetic of Standard V – his last year's Standard – although he failed to do a test set him in that year's work, and was sent home. He was evidently acting under instructions from home.*

## 1896

January 15

*Standards V and upwards are now taking their Reading lesson once a week from the school newspaper.*

January 24

*Five children of same family are kept from school owing to a younger sister having measles.*

March 13

*Standards III and upwards were examined on slates in History and Geography. The questions extended over the year's course. Out of 20 questions in each subject involving short answers fully 15 correct answers on the average were obtained. Standard IV showed worst in Geography of England.*

March 25

*Boys commenced drawing.*

April 8

*... Fires stopped in large room.*

April 17

*... Fires stopped to-day in Infant room.*

April 20

[Extracted from Report of H M Inspector]

*'... In the third, and upwards, reading, though frequently good, is somewhat marred by indistinctness of utterance. The pupils show an intelligent acquaintance with the subject-matter of the lessons, though a kind of rustic diffidence prevents them from doing justice to themselves... First Latin and first French are good... Very creditable sewing and singing.*

*'School staff:*

*John Gibson, M. A.      Certificated Teacher of the 1st Class*

*Kate Ferguson Miller    Ex-Pupil-teacher*

*Mary Gibson              Sewing Mistress'*

April 24

*... Most of the absentees are assisting at potato planting.*

*May 15*

*... The girls are attending much better than the boys.*

*May 21 and 22*

*Queen's Birthday holidays.*

*May 29*

*Some flitting causing absentees. Three families left parish not replaced – houses being uninhabitable. 71 on Roll.*

*June 26*

*Attendance not very good, a number of boys being employed at turnip-thinning.*

*July 3*

*Whole school taken together for Bible lesson this afternoon by Miss Miller, headmaster being away selecting prizes.*

*July 9*

*Half-holiday – headmaster at a marriage.*

*July 15*

*School examined in Bible by Rev. Morrison Bryce, Minister of Baldernock. Mrs Higginbotham, Craigmaddie; Mrs Ker, Dougalston; Mrs Middleton, Bardowie Castle; Mr and Mrs Johnstone, Barraston; and other parents and friends were also present. The prizes were afterwards distributed by Mrs Middleton, Mr Johnstone, Member of School Board, presiding. The school was then closed for the summer holidays.*

*September 1*

*School reopened with a very poor attendance, only 35 pupils being present. Harvest work accounts for most of the absentees...*

*November 11*

*With improved attendance the work and progress are more satisfactory.*

*December 18*

*... The school is now being dismissed at 3 o'clock, owing to the early darkness.*

*December 24*

*The school was dismissed to-day for Christmas holidays.*

## 1897

January 6

*Commenced Scale Drawing with boys of Standard V and upwards.*

February 5

*Snow on the ground has lowered the attendance this week, and otherwise interfered with the work.*

February 18

*The Drawing examination was conducted to-day by Mr Hood. Mr Watson was present by appointment of the School Board.*

April 1

*New classes formed, and list of new books required given to children...*

April 2

*Work irregular owing to want of books...*

April 9

*A fair start has been made with new work but some pupils are still unprovided with books.*

April 16

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'This school is conducted with much vigour and skill... The work of the younger children might be brightened by the introduction of some simple kindergarten occupations... In the first and second Standards elementary subjects have been carefully taught, and the rapid summation of figures deserves notice.*

*'The pupils presented in Latin, French, Domestic Economy and Agriculture all pass, and the two candidates for Merit Certificates do decidedly good work in all the subjects professed. Girls like Bessie Mitchell and Georgina Blackwood should not be lost sight of... Merit Certificates are enclosed for B. Mitchell and G. Blackwood.'*

May 14

*Miss Miller gave up duties in school to-day. Previous to her departure she was presented by the Teachers and Pupils with a cake-basket as a mark of respect.*

June 18

*Owing to heavy floods and impassable roads the school was not opened to-day. Those who did come were drenched, and requiring to be sent home.*

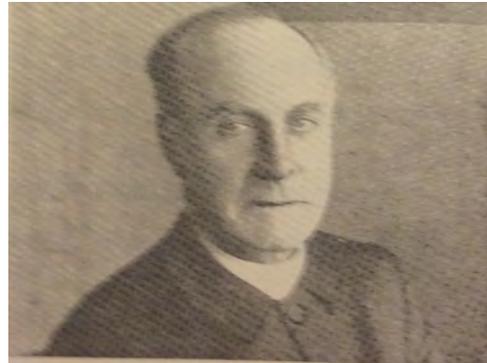
June 22

*Holiday in honour of the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen's reign. Previous to dismissal on 21st the*

*Queen's Anthem was sung, and the children were presented with medals commemorative of the event, and with a book giving a short account of the Queen's life and reign. These were the gifts of J. Ripley Ker, Esq., Dougalston, and of Mrs Higginbotham, Craigmaddie.*

*June 29*

*Today the children were examined in Bible by the Rev. Messrs Bryce and Young. A few ladies were also present. Mrs Higginbotham presented each child with a Jubilee mug which had come too late to be given with the medals and books on Jubilee day.*



William Young, minister of Baldernock Free Church

*July 9*

*One of the Senior girls is assisting with the lower classes during part of the day, but the work is a little irregular and not so satisfactory.*

*October 1*

*Bessie Mitchell, having won a County Bursary (£5 with train money) has gone to Girls' High School, Glasgow.*

*October 15*

*Owing to wet, stormy morning few pupils turned out and as most of these were drenched they were sent home and school closed. Some pupils absent at potato-lifting. Colds are prevalent, and whooping cough has appeared. The attendance is consequently suffering.*

*October 29*

*Some fresh cases of whooping cough. Some of the older pupils are now just returning having been working since the holidays.*

*November 22*

*To prevent the further spread of whooping cough the school has been closed for three weeks on the recommendation of the Medical Officer for the County.*

*December 13*

*School was reopened to-day with a small turn-out, only 37 out of 65 on the Roll being present.*

*December 29*

*... School dismissed at mid-day for New Year holidays.*

**1898**

*March 7*

*Standards V and VI examined in Geography of Europe on slates. Most of the pupils had 75 per cent of the answers correct.*

*March 31*

*Classes re-arranged and list of new books required given out...*

*May 6*

*One case of ringworm – child excluded from school.*

*May 16*

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'The school is conducted with intelligence and success. The small group of Infants made a good appearance in all their work. In the first and second Standards slate work is neat and accurate ... A good style of Writing and Figuring is cultivated in all the higher classes, and arithmetic is exceedingly good, being absolutely faultless in the fourth ... the highest grant for class subjects is recommended ... Sewing is neat and the children go through their Drill with spirit. The candidate for a Certificate of Merit does credit to his training...'*

*'A Merit Certificate is enclosed for R. Mitchell.'*

*May 17*

*Owing to the cold wet morning the attendance to-day was small... One of the fires which had been discontinued for a week was put on again.*

*September 2*

*Heavy rains and roads flooded and impassible. Only 15 children appeared, and as these were nearly all wet with feet soaked they were sent home again.*

*September 26*

*Annual autumn holiday.*

*October 12*

*Fires have been resumed in school.*

*November 9*

*This afternoon at 3 o'clock Mr Arthur and his daughter gave representations of Scenes from 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' to the children who paid one penny each.*

## 1899

March 1

*Commenced new daily register with new school year to-day. Three children – all of the same family – had full attendance last year.*

March 29

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'... A pleasant air of industry and intelligence prevails in all the classes, and the interest taken by the managers in the success of the school deserves recognition.'*

May 5

*Dry weather prevails, and the attendance keeps up...*

May 15

*... School dismissed at 3 o'clock to-day as a thunderstorm was evidently coming on.*

May 22

*The cold was so great to-day that the fires which had been discontinued for more than a week had to be put on again.*

July 13

*The distribution of prizes took place to-day. Rev. M. Bryce, Baldernock, presided and Mrs Johnstone, Barraston, handed out the prizes. The school was then closed for the summer holidays.*

October 12

*School closed this afternoon in respect to the memory of late Mrs Johnstone, Barraston, whose funeral was to-day. Deceased took a great interest in the school, and was the wife of Mr Johnstone, Member of the School Board. The headmaster was at the funeral.*

October 13

*Another case of scarlet fever has occurred, and a case of typhoid fever keeps the children of another family from school.*

October 27

*Attendance has improved this week. To-day work was stopped at 3 o'clock and 'a penny' entertainment given by Mr J. S. Kedford, Glasgow.*

November 3

*Heavy rainfall, small turn-out, wet clothes, roads becoming flooded, so school was closed at mid-day, one attendance being marked.*

## 1900

*April 25*

*First outside lesson in Nature Knowledge was given to-day to Senior Division.*

*May 25*

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'In specific subjects (which have, perhaps, been taken up in too great variety) the results are, over all, very fair. A beginners' class (of 5) in Latin has made very creditable progress. Of four pupils presented for the Merit Certificate one passes exceedingly well; the other three fail in one respect or another to reach the all round standard of attainment required... The performance of the Physical exercises is rather wanting in life and precision.'*

*May 28*

*A lot of flitting is taking place in the parish this term and consequently a good many changes in the school.*

*June 1*

*Attendance down – new-comers slow in turning out.*

*June 6*

*Today was a holiday in celebration of the Capture of Pretoria by Lord Roberts.*

*June 13*

*Sharp thunderstorm – children dismissed half-an-hour early during a lull in the storm.*

*July 12*

*The distribution of prizes took place to-day... A new feature was a competition for the prettiest bouquets of wild flowers, several prizes being given by Mrs Higginbotham and Mrs Ker, Dougalston, who also acted as judges. The school was afterwards closed for the summer holidays to re-open on Monday 3rd September.*

*October 19*

*Though weather improved the attendance has gone down further, as potato digging has begun.*

*December 21*

*Wet and stormy weather prevails. The footpath from Balmore to the school is very soft.*

*December 25*

*School dismissed at 3 o'clock.*

December 27

*Wet and stormy. The intervals were shortened to 15 minutes, and school dismissed for the New Year holidays at half-past two...*

## **1901**

January 23

*In consequence of the death of Her Majesty Queen Victoria which took place last night the school was closed to-day in sad respect to the departed.*

April 18

*Miss Morrison had charge of school to-day, the headmaster having to go to Stirling to hand over (as Registrar) the census papers to the Sheriff.*

April 26

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'Slate-writing is so good as to suggest the advisability of making an earlier start with pen or lead pencil... Drill suffers from lack of musical accompaniment... memory drawing should be attempted by all the pupils.*

*'Managers appear to have tested the register only three times, all the visits for this purpose being made within ten weeks towards the close of the school year. I am directed to point out that neglect of the "General Rules" on page 6 of the regulations relating to school registers is one of the defects for which a deduction from the grant may be made...'*

May 23 and 24

*School closed – Victoria day.*

June 19

*The candidates for Merit Certificates from this school are being examined to-day in Torrance School.*

September 3

*The two boys who gained Marshall Trust Bursaries have gone to Allan Glen's School, Glasgow, and another boy has gone to Glasgow High School.*

September 6

*... A new water supply and lavatories are now in use.*

September 13

*Nearly all the pupils who are coming back have now returned and the work is now in full swing.*

September 28

*The number of pupils at present on Roll is lower than it has been for the last ten years.*

October 9

*To-day commenced free-arm drawing on slates and large black-boards.*

November 29

*Attendance low yesterday and to-day, the children helping at home owing to servants changing at Term.*

December 24

*... The school was closed this afternoon for Christmas and New Year holidays.*

## **1902**

January 14

*The work was somewhat hindered yesterday and to-day by the excessive cold.*

February 10

*The Medical Officer of Health for the County has sent intimation of a case of diphtheria at Branziet Farm. The other children from that house are being kept from school.*

February 13

*Mr Wm. Buchanan from the Scottish Band of Hope Union visited the school this forenoon and gave a lesson of an hour's duration upon 'Leaves and their Lessons'.*

February 14

*A skating half-holiday was given this afternoon.*

April 4

*The attendance of the older boys is not so good. With sowing begun they are kept at home to work...*

May 5

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'... the heartiness with which the pupils enter into their work reveals a pleasing feature of the teaching... In all the classes the girls did invariably better than the boys.'*

May 22

*The school was closed this afternoon, because owing to it being 'Victoria' day in Glasgow there were many visitors to the parish.*

May 30

*Holiday in honour of the King's birthday.*

*June 2*

*Peace proclaimed in War with Transvaal and Orange States – school was closed in the afternoon to celebrate the event.*

*June 26 and 27*

*Coronation holidays. On the afternoon of 26th the pupils and teachers were entertained at Craigmaddie by Mr Higginbotham, Chairman of the School Board. Games and other amusements were provided in the grounds. Other members of the School Board provided prizes for the games, and presented each child with a souvenir mug and a book entitled 'Britain's King and Queen', while Mrs Higginbotham presented a Coronation Spoon to each of the teachers. The national anthem was sung.*

*September 26*

*A plague of wasps coming in at the open windows has made the children restless and hindered work somewhat.*

*October 17*

*This afternoon the school was closed for a week. This extra holiday was given in honour of the Coronation, but was postponed till potato-lifting time.*



James Bowie, holding horse on Balmore Road

**1903**

*January 9*

*Drifting snow-storm caused very small turn-out. Only 21 children were present and as many of them had got their feet wet in coming they were sent home without any work being done.*

*January 26*

*At time for marking Roll this forenoon 25 pupils were present but only 5 of these had dry feet, the roads being flooded by the heavy rainfall. The children were sent home.*

*January 30*

*Heavier rain and greater floods than ever – only 12 pupils out. School closed.*

*April 10*

*Today – Good Friday – the children were treated to hot cross buns, the gift of Mr Higginbotham, Chairman of School Board.*

*May 14 and 15*

*School closed in honour of the King's and Queen's visit to Scotland.*

*May 22*

*Attendance keeping good. One family left for New Brunswick.*

*May 29*

*... Some other children absent being needed at home to assist on account of changes at Term.*

*September 4*

*One of the pupils fell this morning in the playground and cut her brow badly, and the headmaster cycled to Milngavie for the doctor.*

*October 23*

*Only one dry morning this week for children coming to school, but they are standing their wettings well.*

*October 28*

*Heavy rainfall and floods... The work was greatly hindered by the drying of boots, stockings, etc....*

*November 27*

*... Number on Roll down to 66 through flitting of three families.*

*December 1*

*Drill and Nature Knowledge omitted in Senior Division to-day, the headmaster being hoarse.*

## **1904**

*January 15*

*Colds and influenza account for a number of absentees. One family has been absent for 6 weeks from what is suspected to be a case of scarlet fever.*

*January 28*

*Nature Knowledge lesson to Senior Division omitted to-day, headmaster having to leave at 2.30 to get to Milngavie before the bank closed.*

*February 3*

*Completed and sent off Results of Pigmentation Survey of children in school.*

*April 20*

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'The work is still too much founded on the obsolete minimum standards of old codes, and the Senior pupils are not properly provided for as they ought to be by the institution of a definite Supplementary course. The equipment is of the most meagre description, and the blank plaster of the walls is absolutely unrelieved by a single interesting and educational picture or object.*

*'School staff:*

*John Gibson, M. A., Certificated Teacher of 1st Class*

*Jessie Morrison, Ex-Pupil-teacher*

*Mary Gibson, Sewing Mistress'*

*December 16*

*Attendance not so good especially of the younger children, and coughing goes on in school incessantly.*

## **1905**

*January 9*

*School re-opened to-day with a very small attendance, the classroom being specially empty. The coughing referred to in previous entries has developed into whooping cough.*

*January 13*

*... There are 18 cases of whooping cough and a few doubtful cases.*

*January 20*

*Owing to the occurrence of three cases of diphtheria in the headmaster's family he caused the school to remain closed to-day.*

*January 21*

*Owing to the prevalence of whooping cough and to the occurrence of diphtheria referred to in a previous entry the School Board decided to close the school for a fortnight and to be guided by the Medical Officer of Health as to re-opening.*

*April 21*

*School closed for spring holidays.*

*June 7*

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'... It would be an improvement if provision were made for cookery lessons.'*

*September 15*

*Chicken pox still lingering about, and one case of mumps has appeared. The children affected are excluded from school.*

*December 6*

*Owing to the death of Mr C. J. Higginbotham, Craigmaddie, who had been Chairman of Baldernock School Board from the first, and as a mark of respect, the school upon assembly this morning was immediately dismissed for the day.*

## **1906**

*February 2*

*The attendance this week has fallen considerably. An infectious sickness with sore throat seems to be going through the school, and wet stormy weather prevails...*

*February 5*

*Only 15 pupils appeared to-day. After an informal meeting of School Board it was decided to close the school and intimate to the Medical Officer an outbreak of measles.*

*March 15*

*The attendance was gradually improving but a snowstorm has hurt it greatly. Many of the children got their feet wet coming to school this morning. Boots and stockings were taken off and put to the fire...*

*May 9*

*The fires have been taken off; but the temperature is very variable, some days being rather cold.*

*May 14*

*Miss Morrison left school to-day to get married. Previous to leaving she was presented with two cases of spoons from the pupils and teachers.*

May 15

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'... The pupils are fairly intelligent but slightly listless and indifferent in manners... The ballframe stands in need of repair.'*

*'A drain is required for the boys' offices.'*

*'Average attendance for year 59. Grant £87 - 2/-'*

May 16

*The weather is so cold that fires have had to be put on again.*

June 22

*Most of the children who came recently are slow in getting the necessary books and consequently their work is hindered.*

July 23

*Mary Gibson, a pupil of this school, has gained a County Bursary which is tenable for three or more years. The value is £5, £7 - 10/-, and £10 yearly, with railway fares to Glasgow.*

September 10

*A few more pupils have returned [after the summer holiday], but a number are retained to assist at the harvest or to watch the house and let their mothers out...*

## **1907**

January 10

*The Chairman and Messrs Dickson and Watson of the School Board visited the school this forenoon and heard a candidate for the vacant assistantship teach.*

January 18

*The school was closed to-day at half-past-three to allow, before the darkness set in, a 'shadowgraphy' entertainment being given to the children.*

January 25

*The weather this week has been very cold – frost and snow prevailing – and the work in the morning has been impeded by the necessity of allowing the children to get round the fire in turns. This applies more or less to all cold mornings in winter. Another drawback to the mornings' work at present is that Miss Pringle coming by train does not get in to school before 10.15, often 10.30, and*

*one morning having got into a wrong train not till 12 o'clock. Miss Pringle also though she does her best has not had the experience of carrying on so many classes at once.*

*February 11*

*Miss Pringle left to-day.*

*April 8*

*... Five pupils have been advanced to the Supplementary class.*

*May 6*

*The Sanitary Inspector called at the school to-day and examined the closets and ashpit.*

*May 10*

*The number on the Roll has now reached 80.*

*June 21*

*... After songs and recitations by the children, the prizes were given out by Mrs Ker, Dougalston. Mrs Ker, Easterton, and other ladies were present. The school was closed for summer holidays.*

*August 5*

*School re-opened to-day at 10 o'clock with an attendance of 40... A great improvement has been made in the sanitary arrangements of the school. Earth closets have been put in, and the ashpit has been removed from the back of the school.*

*October 23*

*The Roll has increased to 87, and the absentees are down to 22%.*

*December 26*

*Work was stopped to-day at 3 o'clock, after which came 'a penny show', consisting of conjuring, and sketches from 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and 'Handy Andy'.*

*December 27*

*The school was closed this afternoon for the New Year holidays. Previous to dismissal the children were presented with sweets and oranges.*

## **1908**

*January 6*

*... The water supply pipes in the lavatories have burst with the severe frost during the holidays.*

*January 14*

*A half-holiday was given to-day in honour of the marriage of Miss Helen Ripley Ker of Dougalston, which took place in Baldernock Church.*

*January 24*

*During the past week the headmaster has had to work the school alone. The work in consequence has been irregular and incomplete.*

*April 3*

*The attendance has greatly improved and also increased, a number of young pupils having come out.*

*July 3*

*Outbreak of diphtheria at Balmore. One boy from this school has been taken to hospital...*

*July 10*

*The attendance is decreasing. Some are kept away to pull strawberries, and some from Balmore from fear of getting diphtheria...*

*September 17*

*For the past four days Miss Mather was absent at an examination, and the headmaster had the work of both rooms.*

*October 29 and 30*

*School closed today to allow school to be fumigated and washed out. Attendance low owing to potato-lifting.*

*November 6*

*For the past fortnight a new system of heating the school by hot-water pipes has been in use. This is a great improvement as the rooms are now heated more uniformly and evenly.*

*December 4*

*Owing to the early darkness and the long roads home of many of the children, school at present is being closed at 3.30 or as soon as possible thereafter.*

## **1909**

*March 26*

*Sickness and sore throats are prevalent, and the attendance during the week has been much reduced, the absentees numbering fully 40%...*

*April 5*

*The headmaster was absent to-day ill.*

*May 7*

*There are now 91 on the Roll.*

*May 11*

*Miss Craig was half-an-hour late this morning owing to a break down of her bicycle on the way.*

*June 4*

*Fresh cases of mumps are still occurring, and are keeping the attendance down.*

*June 15*

*Mr Allan from the Scottish Band of Hope Union gave to all the classes together a lecture on Alcohol, a Friend and Foe. The lecture commenced at 2.30 and lasted till 3.30 when school was dismissed.*

*July 16*

*The distribution of prizes took place to-day. Mr Watson of the School Board presided and was supported by Mr Dickson a former member of the Board. There were also present Miss Bartholomew [Glenorchard House] who gave out the prizes, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Gibson, and a few parents and former pupils. The pupils gave an entertainment after which the prizes were distributed, and after the usual votes of thanks the school was closed for the summer vacation.*

*October 15*

*... Heating of school has been resumed.*

*November 16*

*Severe frosty weather. Temperature in Infant room at 40° when school opened, a fire had to be put on in the grate of that room.*

*December 6*

*At opening of school the temperature of Infant room was 37° and in Senior room 42°. Fire put on in Infant room.*

*December 24*

*School closed to-day for Christmas and New Year holidays.*

## 1910

*January 24*

*Deep snow – only 30 pupils present. These were only kept half day.*

*February 11*

*The attendance this week has been good. Drill of the upper classes has been resumed in the open air on fine days.*

*February 18*

*With the return of the snow, Drill in the open air has had to be discontinued.*

*March 9*

*The attendance is good, though are still a few irregulars absent with slight excuses.*

*April 4*

*... Miss Gibson has resumed the teaching of sewing, after having been absent six months through illness.*

*April 18*

*One boy fell in the playground this afternoon and dislocated his shoulder. He was sent home in company of another boy.*

*May 18*

*Miss Carson had charge of Senior classes for the last hour to-day. The headmaster was in Glasgow seeing samples of school desks.*

*May 20*

*School closed – Day of Mourning – Funeral of King Edward.*

*June 17*

*Attendance not very good for fine weather. Sore feet accounts for a few absentees.*

*August 23*

*School re-opened to-day with an attendance of 72 out of 95 on the Roll.*

*List of absentees sent to Compulsory Officer.*

*October 5*

*The children with their teachers were photographed to-day in four groups by Mr J. J. Forsyth, Kirkintilloch.*

*October 10*

*The school has been closed for the week for potato-gathering.*

*October 17*

*School re-opened to-day with only fair attendance, the potato lifting being not quite finished.*

*November 16*

*Attendance not so good owing to severe frosty weather with fog. Officer called.*

*November 25*

*Miss Carson left to-day at 2 o'clock to catch the afternoon train at Balmore.*

*December 30*

*School was closed to-day for New Year holidays. During the last hour Mr Thomas Dickson, Easter Fluchter, entertained the children with selections on the gramophone.*

### **ERNEST BOWIE**

Pupil 1911–1916

Mr Gibson was my first headmaster. He was a great teacher. He died in November 1915 after an illness lasting for several months, during which time he was sometimes to be seen lying in bed in the garden. Mr David Mackay came as an interim headmaster for a couple of months and was followed by Mr Thomas Baird, who had different ideas.

In addition to the three Rs there was geography, history, sewing for the girls and gardening for the boys. After a consultation with the local Horticultural Officer, Mr Baird and the Senior boys marked out ground for a school garden of 1,000 square yards. They then pegged out eight plots each measuring 30 feet x 9 feet with space for paths 18 inches wide between the plots. This meant that the sixteen pupils eligible paired up in twos to share a plot. 'Shunky' Ford, a big lad from Barnellan, came to school to teach the boys trenching and, later, seeds (all vegetables, no flowers) were sown and tended. My family made sure of harvesting the vegetables while some other families did not bother.

At this time there were several Roman Catholic families at school. The children from these families were excused morning prayers and did not have to arrive at school till 9.30 a.m.

In the summer holidays in 1913, as a result of a previous adverse Inspector's report, extensive repairs were made to the school buildings – cloakrooms, sheds, lavatories and a small rest room for the teachers.

My family wore wooden clogs in bad weather, wellington boots not yet being available.

We greatly enjoyed walking to school up the burn in all weathers. Games, too were great fun: Tee-taw-tee, a precursor of Relievers; Kick-the-can; Rounders; and of course sliding and sledging in winter when there was good ice.

**JEAN HARRISON** ( Told by her daughter, Myrtle Kylo)

Pupil 1911–1920

My mother, Jean, started at Baldernock School at four years old, and loved it. She remembered that her teacher had the class walk as quietly and straight as possible up to the front on Monday mornings and each was given a chocolate.

On one occasion, when she was older, she went exploring the Linn caves with friends at lunchtime, and got lost. They discovered an opening to the surface and helped each other through.

One day the class was assigned to learn some poetry of their own choice while the headmaster was out of the room. They started playing around noisily. The headmaster returned and started, from the end of the row, asking what each of them had learned. Of course they hadn't learned anything so were all getting the strap. Jean was near the end of the row so she whipped out her book and learned a piece which she never forgot. She didn't get the strap.

Girls learned to knit and read at the same time, and they knitted socks for the soldiers in the 1914–18 war. They were encouraged to write a letter to enclose with each pair of socks.

Mr Baird was the headmaster in later years but not for the final, Supplementary, year, before leaving at age fourteen. Jean had a kind and encouraging teacher who pinned Jean's essays up on the wall. They learned a little bit of every subject they were missing by not going to High School. Jean dearly wanted to go to High School but her family could not afford it.

Three of her six brothers also went to Baldernock. She remembered James running to school over the fields in bare feet, carrying his boots to keep them clean, after working with their mother, milking, at Dowan Farm.

## 1911

*March 10*

*Miss Helen D. Gibson, County School Nurse, visited the school this forenoon.*

*March 20*

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'... The Board's attention is drawn to the necessity of making provision for practical work to pupils over twelve years of age. It is further pointed out that unless such be done, it will be impossible to recommend the normal grant to the Supplementary class in future...'*

*May 12*

*Miss Carson has been absent all week being unable to walk to school with a sore knee.*

*May 12*

*Mr McCutcheon from the Glasgow Agricultural College visited the school to-day in connection with School Gardening.*

*June 19*

*The number on the Roll is now 100.*

*June 23 and 24*

*Coronation holidays. On the 23rd the children were entertained at Dougalston.*

*September 8*

*The number on Roll is now 105, but 5 of these have not yet returned. Owing to overcrowding in the lower room, class 5 has had to be transferred to the upper room. This makes 6 classes in the upper room.*

*November 10*

*On two occasions this week one of the youngest boys of the school fell in the burn at the foot of the girls' playground, and had to be sent home.*

*December 8*

*The number on the Roll has gone up again to 107...*

*December 25*

*Several other cases of measles have occurred. Out of 41 pupils in the lower room only 12 are present to-day.*

## **ROBERT McOUAT**

Pupil 1912–1921

My grandfather, John McOuat, was born in 1809 and died in 1894. He attended Baldernock School and lived at East Blairskaith Cottage. I started school in 1912. My sister had to force me very severely to go when I started school. I always felt shut in when at the school: it was a prison to me when I started. I left in the Supplementary class when I was 14. The headmaster, Mr Baird, pleaded with my parents to make me go on to higher education but I refused to go because my life and love were working horses on the farm. I have never regretted it. Farming was my life.

My teachers were Miss Smith, Miss Carson, Miss McOrist and Miss Brown. All very good teachers. The sewing teacher was Miss Gibson. My first headmaster was Mr John Gibson who is buried in Baldernock churchyard. The next headmaster was Mr Thomas Baird – very strict but good-natured and he also taught very well. Mr Baird's son was a good friend of mine and he often came to our house to play the piano and have a sing-song. Unfortunately he died in the Cairngorms. His memorial is a huge boulder in the corner of Baldernock churchyard.

Our main subjects were reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, grammar, music, drawing, gardening and drill.

There were two classrooms which we called 'the wee room' and 'the big room'. In 'the wee room' there were two-pupil desks with seats attached, facing the teacher. They had a slot in front to hold a slate with a slate pencil. The teacher's table faced the children and there were cupboards for books and a blackboard in front of the class. 'The big room' was divided in two with boys to one side and girls on the other. The boys were taught by the headmaster and girls by the lady teacher. Eventually boys and girls were mixed. The pupils' desks facing the teacher were long with forms holding six pupils. The two teachers' tables faced pupils, along with two blackboards and cupboards for books. Pictures of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, and King George V and Queen Mary, were on the wall. There was a cloakroom and an outside shed. The toilets were called 'dry shunkies'. In those days there was a box full of dry sand. When finished with our duty we pulled down a lever and released sand to cover it.

Our holidays were at Christmas, New Year, Easter and summer, and potato holidays were a fortnight in October. On closing day for the summer holidays Miss Bartholomew of Glenorchard presented the winning pupils with prizes.

On a typical school day our father and mother were out of bed at 3 o'clock in the morning to hand-milk the cows, and milk had to be taken by horse and spring-van to the dairy in Maryhill by 6 o'clock. So we were awakened and ready to have our porridge and toast quite

early for school. I had four brothers and three sisters, so we had company every morning going to school. Sometimes we had the company of children from Barraston Farm called Hannah, and other children from the cottages. We all carried our pieces of bread and butter, sometimes jam for dinnertime, and often we had them all eaten before dinnertime. For the last six months at school we were staying at Easterton Farm which meant a long walk. We walked down to Baldernock Church and on to Kettlehill Farm. Take the road to your left and go on to Baldernock School. I think it would be at least two and a half miles.

By nine o'clock the headmaster rang the bell and boys and girls lined up separately at the school door. We filed in and the headmaster stood at the door between the rooms and said the Lord's Prayer which we all repeated.

Playtimes were mid-morning and mid-afternoon, with one hour for dinnertime. We played games like Rounders, football, Hare-and-hounds and Tee-daw-tee. Also Kick-the-can and marbles. At dinnertime we often guddled in the burn for baggies, beardies and small trout – there were eels there too.

One day Mr Baird was giving us a lesson and I started to sharpen my pencil. He must have thought I wasn't listening so quietly came up to check me with the strap over his shoulder. I did not hear him coming so when he spoke I jumped up to my full height, looking down upon him. He never said another word and walked back to the table.

It was better fun going home from school and we were all hungry and ready for a big plate of soup.

## **1912**

*February 14*

*95 children are present to-day.*

*March 7*

*Dr Graham Skinner visited the school this forenoon and inspected children between 7 and 8 years. The classes of the Senior Division were taken in the boys' shed.*

*March 14*

*Outside garden work was commenced to-day by the older pupils.*

*March 18*

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'... A few illustrated pictures of fairy tales for use in oral composition should be provided.'*

*'The Board might now consider in view of the increase of pupils, the advisability of improving teaching facilities by providing more suitable accommodation. At present there are 110 pupils on the Roll, and according to modern requirements which exact ten square feet per child, the accommodation only stands for 92 pupils. Further, there are five classes in the main room under two teachers – an arrangement which is very trying to the teacher and which also militates against quiet and effective work on the part of the pupils.'*

*'It is also to be noted, as an objectionable feature, that the latrines adjoin the back wall of the building, and that the cloakroom accommodation is very meagre.'*

*'It is understood that "Gardening" for both boys and girls is to be started forthwith. This is so far satisfactory but the Board might consider in conjunction with their deliberations regarding more suitable accommodation the desirability of making provision for teaching Cookery, and thus give the girls at this school opportunities which are now almost universal in other schools.'*

March 22

*There are now 115 on the Roll.*

March 29

*Each of the pupils of this school received to-day a school bag, the gift of the late Mr James Coats Jun. of Ferguslie, Paisley. The Teachers, Cleaners, and Attendance Officer also received gifts. There were 104 children present out of 116 on the Roll.*

April 22

*The following are particulars of grant received:—*

16	@	18/-	=	£14 - 8 - 0
32	@	20/-	=	£30 - 0 - 0
30	@	22/-	=	£33 - 0 - 0
32	@	1/6	=	£2 - 8 - 0
30	@	1/9	=	£2 - 12 - 6
6	@	50/-	=	£15 - 0 - 0

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£99 - 8 - 6

Under Sec 17(a)                      £30 - 0 - 0

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£129 - 8 - 6

September 20

*The headmaster was called away to-day at 2.30 but his daughter assisted in the school.*

October 11

*The attendance for the week has been very poor, a great many being kept from school to help at the potato-digging. Next week the school will remain closed for the potato-digging.*

October 21

*School resumed to-day with a poor attendance, only 42 being present out of 87 on the Roll. Three families are still absent on account of whooping cough, but potato-lifting accounts for most of the absentees. The Attendance Officer called in the afternoon.*

October 25

*The attendance during the week has been bad. The Officer called to-day; and the Officer at Bearsden has been informed of the absence of children residing in New Kilpatrick Parish.*

November 4

*Children can now obtain in school at mid-day interval a hot cup of cocoa for a halfpenny.*

December 9

*The Medical Examiner called to-day and examined three boys B—, who were found to be verminous at his last visit, but he found no improvement. The School Board has the matter in hand.*

## **1913**

February 25

*A boy of this school died this morning in the Western Infirmary, he having undergone an operation for appendicitis a week ago.*

April 21

*Supplying hot cocoa to the children at mid-day has now been stopped.*

May 20

*The school was closed to-day in honour of the King's Birthday.*

July 1

*The distribution of prizes took place to-day in the presence of a large company of parents and friends... The school was then closed for the summer holidays.*

August 25

*After a week's extension of the holidays owing to repair and alterations not being completed, the school was re-opened to-day with an attendance of 54.*

September 24

*Mr Malcolm, Inspector of School Gardens in Stirlingshire, called to-day.*

*September 25*

*... A 'Penny Show' was given at mid-day interval to-day by Mr Hope. It consisted of conjuring and ventriloquism.*

*September 27*

*The repairs and alterations are now completed, and the workmen have gone. New cloakrooms, lavatories, closets and sheds have been provided, also a small retiring room for the teachers: but the classroom accommodation remains unaltered.*

*October 17*

*... Miss Brown has been promoted to Miss Stirling's place as Infants' Mistress, and from two candidates who appeared in school yesterday and taught classes in presence of the headmaster the Board has appointed Miss Betsy Charleton McOrist to take Miss Brown's place. Miss McOrist has just finished her course in Glasgow Training College.*

*October 31*

*The attendance for the week has been bad. Nearly 50 per cent were absent, most of them engaged in gathering potatoes.*

*November 21*

*Hot cocoa is again being supplied to the children at mid-day at 1/2d per mugful...*

*November 28*

*Several removals have taken place here this term and the number on Roll has dropped to 74.*

### **ANNE DINGWALL (LANG)**

**Pupil 1914–1921**

My mother was Mary Johnston who was one of the early pupils in Baldernock School. I went to Baldernock from 1914 to 1921, leaving at the age of twelve to go to Provanside Senior Secondary School in Montrose Street, Glasgow, travelling by train to Queen Street each day. I remained there until the age of fifteen then left to work in the family business (nursery gardening).

When I started at Baldernock there were just two classes and two teachers, Mr Tom Baird (the headmaster) and Miss Wilson. The big classroom had a partition drawn across the middle, the Seniors on one side with Mr Baird and the Juniors on the other with Miss Wilson. Mr Baird used to despair at Miss Wilson's strident voice when she was teaching 'music'. This consisted of sol, fah, etc. on a large sheet: Miss Wilson pointed to the notes and the children had to sing up and down the scale. This was the only music in her

classroom. Miss Wilson walked daily [from Milngavie] in all weathers, a little grey-haired woman wearing a long black cloak – like a wee black crow. In school she wore a long black apron with a large pocket into which she tucked a folded strap which she didn't hesitate to use when necessary. She was a splendid teacher and no one left her class without being able to read and write.

As well as the 3Rs taught to the Juniors, the Seniors, with Mr Baird, studied history (with great emphasis on Bonnie Prince Charlie) and geography, a little singing and gardening.

For the girls there was sewing and knitting wristbands in garter stitch. I received praise when I brought extra wool of a different colour from home and knitted on up the arm. The older girls joined the boys for gardening and at about the age of nine each child was given his or her own plot. The plots were situated in the ground between Beanscroft and the road. Only vegetables and potatoes were grown but as these rarely matured before the summer holidays they often went to waste as most families grew plenty at home and wouldn't bother to go up to school to harvest the vegetables.

The sewing teacher was Miss Mary Gibson who lived across the lane with her sister Lindsay, who kept house, and her brother Robert. They kept a cow. The schoolchildren could buy a glass of milk at dinner time. They also kept a pig in a sty. This pig was much visited and admired by the children.

Summer holidays started at the end of June for seven weeks and one day, so always the autumn term started on a Tuesday. At the end of the summer term there was a prize-giving day at which the School Board were present, and Miss Bartholomew of Glenorchard House presented the prizes. I was a frequent prize-winner and in my last year received a very handsome copy of Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales with navy blue binding.

There was a week's holiday in spring for potato planting and a fortnight in the autumn for the 'tattie howking'. Not all the children worked but those who did, many for Mr Marshall at Laverockhill Farm, were paid and enjoyed themselves into the bargain. The children were amused when many of the other farm workers turned up in their discarded army uniforms from World War I. I think we also had a one-day holiday at Christmas. There was also a half holiday on the day of the annual Sunday School party, a very big event for the children. Sunday School, presided over by the much-loved Mr Pairman, played a big part in the life of Baldernock children. For the party there was always a gift of crackers from Mrs Gibson in Bardowie. This annual gift continued right up to and during World War II. In 1918 there was a special holiday to celebrate the Armistice. On our way home that day the children all danced on what is now the seventeenth green on Balmore golf course.

There was no indoor sanitation. In the schoolrooms there were open fires in winter. These were festooned with wet clothes and boots, wellingtons being unknown among Balmore

children at that time. The Juniors shared desks for two and worked mostly with slates, squeaky slate pencils and a wee cloth to clean with. The Seniors had inkwells placed at intervals along desks for five with a common bench seat. The boys had the job of washing out the inkwells in the burn so the water ran blue. They then refilled them. There was also a big bookcase in the schoolroom full of books but they were never used. I and my friends were keen readers and much book-lending went on among the older girls.

Baltimore children left home shortly after 8 a.m. to walk to school, past the golf clubhouse, up the burn, through the Singing Gate (because it squeaked) and along the lane, having lots of fun on the way, especially in winter when there was often quite deep snow.

In the middle of the day we ate our 'pieces' in the sheds, that is if we hadn't devoured them on the way to school. During the dinner hour the school doors were locked. There was plenty of time for games: skipping, hopscotch, conkers in season, ball games against the wall and, further afield, guddling in the burn and tree-climbing. There was never a serious accident in all the time that I was at Baldernock. One winter Mr Baird let the boys have an old school bench to make a sledge. This they took up to the thirteenth hole of the golf course, a long slope with a safe run-out at the bottom, and great fun was had by all.

At the end of the day the children would wend their way home by the burn-side. In winter it was semi-dark but no one worried, even though there were no torches or other lights.

I wept bitterly on my last day because I had so much enjoyed my time in Baldernock School.

## **1914**

*January 28*

*Miss Brown was absent yesterday, being at a marriage, and to-day did not reach school till 11.30, having come by steamer and train.*

*February 20*

*The school is dirty to-day not having been swept and dusted for two nights as the cleaner removed from the parish without warning.*

*March 16*

*Temperature of classrooms low: no fire on stove as supply of anthracite has run down.*

*March 17*

*Still without fire, but sun bright and warm.*

March 18

*The open fires have been temporarily resumed.*

June 8

*A boy of this school in the Qualifying class died this morning in Ruchill Fever Hospital, Glasgow, having been operated on for appendicitis while also suffering from scarlet fever.*

June 12

*The headmaster has now been declared to be suffering from scarlet fever.*

June 15

*The Medical Officer for the County having recommended the closing of the school for a fortnight, and the summer holidays being so near, the School Board has decided to close the school till 11th August.*

August 11

*School re-opened to-day with an attendance of 43. The headmaster was still absent.*

August 20

*The headmaster was in school to-day for an hour.*

September 1

*The headmaster resumed duties to-day...*

October 28

*H. Arnold Wilson, Esq., of Craigmaddie, Chairman of the School Board, visited the school this afternoon and distributed the prizes, afterwards addressing the children.*

December 11

*The attendance has improved with the weather but a number are absent with colds caused by last week's drenching. Miss McOrist is of this number.*

## **1915**

February 20

*Miss McOrist having been promoted to Miss Brown's place commenced duty to-day as Infant Mistress.*

April 19

*As in former years pupils coming to school for the first time do not come at the 'Fixed Date', but at various dates. This delays the proper formation of a class.*

April 29

*Extract from remarks accompanying the grant of £80 - 9 - 0.*

*'In view of the failure of the Board to provide suitable instruction and training for the pupils in practical work, the grant in respect of the Supplementary Course pupils has been allowed with hesitation... The Board are warned that it may not be possible for the Department to continue payment of grant at this rate unless due provision is made for the instruction of the Senior scholars in some form of practical work.'*

May 6

*... The fire is off.*

June 2

*The Medical Officer visited school to-day, and examined certain children. There is a growing tendency among parents to withhold their children from medical inspection. As the Doctor required the use of the classroom the ordinary work was disorganised, but apart from the medical inspection another classroom is needed for the satisfactory working of the classes.*

June 11

*The pupils have intimated their desire to give up their prizes this year in aid of the Red Cross Fund for Wounded Soldiers.*

June 22

*The headmaster is absent ill.*

July 2

*The school was closed to-day for the summer vacation. The usual proceedings were gone through, but the prize-winners having given up their prizes for the benefit of sick and wounded soldiers received certificates instead... The headmaster, who was unable to be present, sent an intimation that by the self-denial of the children the Scottish Red Cross Society had benefited to the amount of £7- 3/-.*

August 17

*School re-opened to-day with small attendance. Miss Christina S. Johnstone entered on duties to-day as Certificated Assistant but the headmaster is still absent ill.*

November 1

*David Mackay, M.A., Certificated Teacher, entered on duties today, as interim headmaster.*

November 16

*Owing to the death of Mr Gibson, headmaster, the school is closed for the remainder of this week.*

*December 27*

*This was a very wet and stormy morning, and most of the pupils were quite wet on arriving; as there are not open fires in use there was no way of getting their clothes dried, hence the school was closed at 2 p.m. after marking two attendances.*

## **1916**

*February 1*

*Thomas Baird, headmaster in room of the late John Gibson M.A., took up office today.*

*February 14*

*Miss Johnstone and Miss McOrist arrived at one o'clock today. Accident at Partick – train dislocation...*

*March 17*

*Welcome change in the weather which has for some time remained cold with east winds.*

*With Supplementary and Qualifying classes measured the ground where the school garden is to be laid out. The area is approximately 1000 sq. yards.*

*March 21*

*Pegged off sufficient ground for eight plots 30' x 9' with space for paths 18 inches wide between the plots. 16 pupils will be available for gardening – two pupils to each plot. Commenced trenching.*

*March 24*

*Weather much improved. Attendance for week over 90%. Work proceeding satisfactorily. Trenching proceeding – pupils very enthusiastic.*

*March 28*

*Severe snowstorm over the weekend has slightly restricted garden work today...*

*March 31*

*Tested Qualifying class in Arithmetic. Work suffers from inaccuracy and want of self-dependence.*

*April 6*

*Mr Hosking, Supervisor of Horticulture for West of Scotland visited school and discussed plan of school garden.*

*April 14*

*School closed till 1st May for Easter holiday, which was extended to a full fortnight to allow of the children assisting with potato planting.*

*May 1*

*School reopened after Easter holiday. Attendance poor especially in the upper classes. Bad weather during the holiday prevented planting which is now going on...*

*June 9*

*Attendance for past five weeks has only now reached 88%.*

*Unsettled weather with want of sun hinders growth in school garden.*

*August 14*

*School reopened today after six weeks' vacation.*

*The number in attendance was so small that it was deemed inadvisable to mark the registers.*

*Comparison with former reopening dates at the same period points to the fact that this small attendance on the opening week is a regular occurrence.*

*James McOuat, Supplementary class has earned the Merit Certificate... The recent hot weather has favoured the garden crops which in some instances are ready for lifting. The weeds have flourished during the absence of the pupils.*

*August 21*

*Attendance slightly improved. Introduced Blackie's Systematic Reader to replace the 'Alexandra' reader.*

*September 12*

*At Board's meeting yesterday made report on attendance and drew Board's attention to case of G— N— who had made only 30 attendances out of 192 possible. The father has been repeatedly warned.*

*October 9*

*Completed figures for Second Quarter ended September 29th – 2766 attendances lost already. Drew Board's attention to this matter. Absence always one-fifth nearly.*

*December 20*

*Yesterday and today registers were not marked. Snowstorm prevented many pupils from getting to school.*

*December 26*

*School closed yesterday for Christmas Day. Mr Bartholomew, Chairman, called today and signed registers.*

## **1917**

*February 23*

*Work as usual. Attendance keeping up well. Trenching ground which was under potatoes last year.*

March 13

... Last year's Roll closed with 83 pupils. Admitted during past year, 32; Left during past year, 37; Roll for present year begins, 78. Supplementary, 5; Senior 4 & 5, 17; Junior 1, 2 & 3, 30; Infant, 26.

March 26

Miss Catherine R. Wilson entered on duty here today. She has been appointed in room of Miss Johnstone.

April 3

Mr Hosking from Agricultural College visited the school on Friday afternoon and examined the gardening pupils on their work.

April 20

Closed today till 7th May. Postponed Easter holiday to allow pupils to assist local farmers with potato planting.

May 7

Reopened today. Seven pupils still absent at farm work.

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'Under the recently appointed headmaster this school is doing extremely well... The pupils in all the classes show an earnest spirit of work and the results both oral and written reach a very satisfactory level... Penmanship, figuring and drawing are unusually neat.'*

*'It is hoped that when a favourable opportunity presents itself the Board will see their way clear to providing a more satisfactory room for the personal use of the lady teachers.'*

August 31

Officer's visits have done good. 91.3% of attendance this week.

October 12

Closed school this afternoon for two weeks to resume on October 29th. This will allow of pupils assisting with potato lifting in the district.

November 16

Miss McOrist leaves today.

Wrote Dr Adam, Medical Officer of Health for Wester Stirlingshire with regard to whooping cough. An average of six pupils present in Infant room this week.

November 19

Dr Adam in reply to above note writes that children over eight years of age who have had whooping cough may attend school. Have written to parents informing them of this.

November 30

*Only 30 pupils present today owing to excessive rainfall having flooded the roads. Miss Wilson absent for the same reason. Closed school at 12.30 without marking registers.*

## 1918

January 18

*Only one girl in Infant room this week. Inclement weather.*

February 22

*Severe rainfall and flooding affected the school attendance this week. Garden drains examined. Found to be badly choked in places. Proceeded to uncover whole of the drains. Work all done by the boys.*

February 28

*End of school year. Four pupils admitted. Roll now 92. The accommodation especially on Miss Wilson's side of the larger room is much restricted. This does not make for efficient work.*

*Our neighbour Mr Robert Gibson has very kindly offered assistance with the relaying of the drains...*



Some pupils and staff of Baldernock School *circa* 1917

*March 8*

*Drains have now been cleared and relaid... Mr Bartholomew kindly gave sufficient drain pipes to complete the work. The digging can now proceed. The girls have been employed during the Gardening periods at revisal work as the draining was more suitable for the boys.*

*March 22*

*Garden work is now well advanced owing to the recent spell of fine weather. The plots have now been marked off and levelled. Planted beans and peas on eight plots.*

*Have again given privilege to certain pupils in the Senior Division who are under 12 to work a plot although grant will not be claimed for these.*

*May 10*

*... War Savings Association commenced.*

*May 17*

*Classes rearranged this week. Miss Wilson takes Infants and two classes of Juniors. Headmaster the remainder...*

*August 13*

*Reopened today with excellent attendance. Best on opening day for some years.*

*August 24*

*Weather good – garden crops attracting children meantime.*

*September 6*

*Mr Grigor, Inspector of Drawing, called on Tuesday and inspected Drawing.*

*October 4*

*Attendance has fallen to 61.8%. Have drawn the Board's attention to the very decided drop in the attendance. Many children reported to be laid up with 'influenza'. While some cases are genuine, many others are simply colds.*

*October 8*

*Mr Bartholomew, Chairman of the Board, called today, signed the registers, and instructed the headmaster to close the school for a fortnight from Friday first.*

*October 11*

*Closed today for two weeks ... Many schools in other districts closed also owing to ravages of influenza. Our closing coincides with annual 'potato-lifting' vacation.*

November 12

*'Armistice signed yesterday.'*

*School closed early today and to be closed on Thursday and Friday to celebrate this historic occasion.*

*'The great European War has come to an end and Germany is defeated.'*

December 13

*Miss Sinclair left on the 10th. No one appointed to her place and no applicants meantime.*

December 20

*School once more rearranged to suit the smaller staff.*

## **1919**

February 7

*Attendance still keeping well up. Beginning to look forward to gardening operations again. Have made a start with digging.*

February 28

*School year closes today.*

*New registers will be commenced on Monday.*

*This Log Book begun September 16th 1873 covers a period of 45 years and 6 months – a period almost exactly identical to the beginning and end of School Board management in Scotland.*

*School staff at this date:*

*Thomas Baird, Headmaster*

*Catherine R. Wilson, Assistant.*

*On Roll 86.*

*signed:*

**New School Log opens March 3rd, 1919:**

*April 10*

*Planting with the exception of beet and swede. Turnips well forward. Waiting on cabbage plants.*

*Tomorrow being the Election for the new Education Authority the school will be used as a polling station.*

*May 12*

*School Board meets in the school tonight for the last time.*

*June 20*

*Work as usual. Two members of new Education Authority for the County of Stirling visited the school yesterday, and inspected the buildings. They authorised certain small repairs to be carried out immediately by local tradesmen and instructed the headmaster accordingly.*

*August 19*

*School reopened today after an extension of one week to commemorate the signing of Peace. Miss Agnes Ralston took up duty today in room of Miss Katie J. Sinclair who has resigned. Attendance very good for the opening day. Some pupils still on holiday.*

*September 5*

*Wrote Dr. Findlay, School Medical Officer about suspicious cases of scab affecting some children.*

*October 3*

*Portion of ceiling in the large classroom came down this week. Reported the matter to Mr Robb, Local Representative.*

*October 10*

*Received telegram for Mr Blane authorising holiday. School closed for two weeks till 27th October for Potato Harvest. Terms of telegram mentioned above:—'Authority agreed School Management Committees be empowered for this year only to grant in exceptional circumstances holidays or temporary exemption for potato lifting. Exemption application must be made by parent.'*

*December 26*

*Yesterday being Christmas Day the school closed early after marking two attendances. School closed today for a week's holiday.*

### **EDITH BOWIE**

Pupil 1920–1927

I started Baldernock School in 1920 at six years of age. I had home teaching from 1927 to 1928, then went to Hyndland Secondary. My teachers were Mr Baird, Miss Wilson and Miss Sinclair. I have particular memories of going for picnics with Mr Baird, usually in the field but sometimes to Baldernock Linn. We had all sorts of capers including throwing worms at one another during school gardening! We cooked Eccles cakes, and so on, to take home.

In the lunch break we sometimes went to the wee sweetie shop up the stairway on the gable-end of Barnellan, where we could buy four sweeties for 1d. Sometimes the lunch break could last for two hours or even longer depending on the mood of Mr Baird. Another venue for the lunch-hour was Watson's Wood.

## 1920

March 10

*Miss Ferguson Inspectress of Physical Instruction called today and examined Seniors and Infants. Recommended procuring of new Drill syllabus.*

May 14

*Attendance normal again. Dr Findlay visited the school on Wednesday and examined age groups 10 and 7. Having been offered free vaccination 29 pupils presented themselves today to Dr Findlay who made a special visit for that purpose.*

May 21

*A number of pupils absent sick due to vaccination.*

June 3

*Control Examination under the supervision of the Rev. Morrison Bryce, The Manse, Baldernock took place today. Nine Qualifying class pupils and four Supplementary pupils were presented. The test lasted from 10 a.m. till 3 p.m. with an interval of 45 minutes for dinner. One Qualifying pupil absent – ill.*

July 16

*Closed today for the summer holiday to resume on August 31st. No prizes this year. A departure from a long established custom but children taken for a picnic and games.*

September 24

*School visited this week (Wednesday) by Mr Rae, Kilsyth, who intimated that he had been sent by Mr Russell to take Physical Drill. No intimation of this arrangement received from the Authority as yet.*

### **JIM MORRISON**

Pupil 1921–1929

My father went to Baldernock School. I started school at six years old in 1921, and left aged 14 years in 1929. My teachers were Mr Thomas Baird, Miss Wilson and Miss Sinclair. Mr Baird was a well-liked and respected headmaster. Miss Wilson was very strict but fair, a good teacher. Her strap was always in evidence wrapped around her hand. I have no recollections of Miss Sinclair.

School started at 9.30 a.m., playtime was at 11 a.m., dinner time at 1 p.m. and home time at 4.30 p.m. We were taught reading, writing and arithmetic to start with. At a later stage

Bible study, geography, history, advanced maths, drawing, singing, composition, gardening, elementary science and cooking were taught. The boys were brought into the cooking class to make up the numbers since there weren't enough girls to make up a class.

Playground games were mainly football, cricket and other ball games such as Rounders. There were also seasonal games such as marbles and top spinning.

At night going home through Balmore golf course there was a burn which provided many happy hours of play in the summer time. Fishing for trout, and jumping the burn were popular sports.

## 1921

*March 7*

*Miss Wilson absent – ill. Miss Ralston had to suspend duty at 11 o'clock. Headmaster present but not actively teaching. Classes conducted by pupils themselves.*

*June 20*

*School(s) closed today on account of the Census. The headmaster being an Enumerator was away on Census duty. The holiday really took the place of Empire Day.*

*June 24*

*Collection taken for Alexandra Rose Day – to go to Strathblane Children's Hospital.*

*August 30*

*Tuesday – school reopened this morning after summer vacation. Eight pupils have left – two were over 14 and had gained the Merit Certificate. Two removed from the District and four have gone to Higher Grade schools in Glasgow. Nine pupils have been admitted.*

*Staff: Thomas Baird                      Headmaster  
          Catherine R. Wilson          Assistant  
          Agnes Ralston                    Assistant*

*November 4*

*Work proceeding as usual. Attendance good. Mr Malcolm, Master of Works, called today to inspect repairs executed on boys' shed and painter work at schoolhouse.*

*December 9*

*Seven new pupils have arrived – all from Torrance School. Five of the seven have already stated that they are leaving again...*

*December 30*

*School closed today for one week New Year holiday. The past three weeks have been for the most part very wet and stormy but the attendance has been good notwithstanding.*

## **1922**

*January 23*

*Visited the school, checked the registers, found them correct, saw Record of Work for Bible Instruction and was satisfied. Staff zealously engaged in work.*

*William Robb (Local Member of the Authority)*

*February 24*

*Dr Findlay's reply states that children over eight years of age who have had measles may attend school without danger of carrying infection to others.*

*March 1*

*School on holiday yesterday, 28th February, on the occasion of the Royal Marriage [Prince Albert to Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon].*

*March 31*

*Full Attendance in Senior section for the first time for many weeks. Seven pupils absent for 1 month – measles.*

*April 6*

*School closes for Election of new Education Authority which takes place tomorrow.*

*October 6*

*D. Wilson Bett called this week and examined the teeth of pupils from 6 to 8 years old... 14 Pupils received treatment.*

*November 17*

*School closed on Wednesday of this week – Parliamentary Election.*

*December 1*

*Eight pupils taken off the Roll at this time. No new scholars have yet appeared to take their places. One family reported to be still in the district: have reported to Compulsory Officer.*

## DUNCAN MORRISON

Pupil 1923–1932

I had all my schooling at Baldernock, refusing, in spite of being dux medallist in 1932, to go into Glasgow to complete my education. I just wanted to start work in the family tomato-growing business.

Mr Baird was the headmaster when I started. After the tragic death of his son, Tom, in a climbing accident, Mr Baird left and Mr McGregor came temporarily. The assistant was Miss Wilson, who was fond of the belt and made use of it fairly freely.

The usual basic subjects – arithmetic, writing, reading, history and geography – were taught. Also woodwork, gardening and, while I was at school, in 1925, a cooking stove was installed in what is now the dinner room, and cooking became part of the curriculum for both boys and girls. A Miss Daly came in to teach the cookery.

Playground games at lunchtime were Hunch-cuddy-hunch, Release, Rounders and ball games. Walking to and from school was fun in all weathers and there was always a big fire to dry wet boots, etc. For me and my friends it was a matter of pride to trudge through the deep snow, get wet clothes dried, be marked in the register and then almost always start back home to enjoy the rest of the day in the snow. In better weather a favourite game was racing old fence posts down the burn. Guddling was another burn pursuit, but unsuccessful. A more ingenious method of fishing was to peel the long white root of bindweed, make it into a noose to hang over the edge of the burn, snare the fish and flip it out.

## 1923

*February 8*

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'The Infant Division is taught with evident success and the attainments of the highest class are extremely creditable. The results of instruction in the Junior Division are likewise thoroughly satisfactory. Owing to the limited accommodation available the classes taught by the headmaster are less completely differentiated than would otherwise be the case but in spite of this disadvantage a creditable standard of proficiency is maintained.'*

*February 23*

*Severe snowstorm on Wednesday 21st. Attendance very poor. Marked double attendance and dismissed school at 1 p.m.*

*March 16*

*The weather has improved and the soil is drying nicely. The children are now pushing forward with the digging. Attendance in some cases unsatisfactory. Sent a list to the Officer.*

*July 6*

*Nothing of importance to report except that four pupils who entered after the May term have again left this week. About 30% of the pupils in the school change every year.*

*August 31*

*School reopened on Tuesday 28th inst after six weeks' summer vacation. Two pupils have left, being now over 14. Three have gone to other schools. One of the three, Isabella Young, has been granted a Bursary to enable her to attend North Kelvinside H.G. School, Glasgow. Eight new pupils have been admitted. The Roll on 11th July closed with 63 pupils and now stands at 66, the lowest number in this school for some years.*

*Staff: Thomas Baird, Headmaster*

*Catherine H. Wilson, Assistant (Juniors)*

*Mrs Ann Elizabeth Sinclair, Assistant (Infants)*

*Mary Gibson, Sewing Teacher – part time*

*September 24*

*The Slaters are now working on the roof and the classes are being carried on under difficulties.*

*September 27*

*A very wet day. Rain coming down through the roof and flooding the floor. Closed at 1.30 marking a double attendance. Later – Another portion of the ceiling has come down.*

*September 28*

*Visited the school and found the large room in a deplorably bad condition owing to repairing of roof which is being re-slatted. Advised closing of school for two weeks. William Robb*

*October 1*

*Have decided to carry on for a week as slating work is not sufficiently advanced to allow of inside repairs being completed in a fortnight from now.*

*October 5*

*Will require to keep open a further week because of wet weather retarding the slating. Progress difficult under all the circumstances.*

October 12

*Closed the school today for two weeks. Workmen are now ready to commence repairs to ceiling.*

October 29

*Reopened today. Attendance good. Have had to arrange the desks at the Senior end of the classroom in pairs 'face to face': several of the iron supports being loose the desks are too unsteady to be placed in proper position.*

November 30

*Removal term this week. This will make a considerable reduction on the Roll at this time. Twenty children are removing.*

## **1924**

January 18

*Another week of snow and rain. Progress much hindered by absentees.*

February 1

*Eight dual desks for Seniors and six dual desks for Juniors arrived on Monday 28th January. These will take the place of the old furniture which has been in use for a very long period (not less than 50 or 60 years). The change is much appreciated both by pupils and staff.*

February 11

*Mrs Sinclair absent from duty today. She was called to Wick by wire late on Friday because of the sudden and serious illness of a near relative.*

December 19

*Attendance Good. School has been granted by Local Committee to the Ladies' Committee of the Unionist Branch Baldernock for an At Home tomorrow evening.*

### **MARGARET LANG**

Pupil 1925–1934

My mother attended Baldernock School. I was there from 1925 to 1934. I left when I was 14 years old, from the Advanced Division.

The classes for five-year-olds to ten- or eleven-year-olds were housed in the room in the original building which faces towards the golf course. The beginners had little tables and chairs, others had desks. The older pupils' classroom faced towards the main road. The room adjacent to the schoolhouse garden was used for cooking lessons, etc. The Infant class was taught by Mrs Sinclair who was quite strict but a good teacher. She made good use of the belt. Sometimes we had Miss Ogilvie.

We were taught grammar, arithmetic, reading, writing, geography and history. Extras were gardening and music, and sewing for the girls. We had 'plots' for gardening and a gardening teacher, Mr Dick, who came once a week. As far as possible we were partnered and given a plot which was our responsibility. If I recall correctly we grew mostly root vegetables.

I must mention Miss Gibson who stayed with her brother and sister at Beanscroft. She was a dear soul with endless patience. The family sold glasses of milk to anyone who wanted it at lunchtime. We just stood around the farmhouse door and ate our sandwiches and drank our milk and the hens came running around to eat up the leftovers.

I think we had about four weeks' summer holidays. There were not so many public holidays as today – probably Easter, autumn, Christmas and New Year but, with the exception of New Year, it was one day only.

I think we would start off from home about 8 a.m. We walked by the path through the golf course. We would take with us sandwiches (we called them our 'pieces'). We got a break mid-morning but I can't recall one in the afternoon. We were not allowed to stay in school at lunchtime so we ate our pieces in the shed. Many times they could really be called 'chittering bites'. Most of the teachers seemed to believe that we were better out in the fresh air.

Going home from school took us longer – we played about a bit. There is a part of the burn below Temple Cottage where the water is deeper. In the summer we used to strip off and go into the burn and splash about.

## 1925

*January 30*

*Work on the new room proceeding apace. So far little interruption has been caused to school work.*

*February 6*

*Messrs. Malcolm, Architect, and J. Coutts Morrison, Education Officer, visited the school yesterday. Suggested that sink for cookery should be placed in the window of present Infant room instead of in main classroom, being nearer water supply and more convenient for drainage. Mr Malcolm and Mr Morrison agreed to adopt the suggestion.*

*February 20*

*Mr Robb called at the school this week to inspect progress of building.*

*Remaining portion of main wall cut away today to allow floor of new passage to be laid. Closed at three o'clock.*

*April 3*

*Work going on as usual. Whooping cough affects the attendance in the Infant department.*

*September 18*

*Gardening Inspector called today: inspected school garden and afterwards addressed the children.*

*November 13*

*A good deal of absence principally amongst the Infants. Colds the chief cause.*

*On Wednesday forenoon at 11 o'clock assembled pupils of all classes in main room. Two minutes silence observed in Remembrance of Armistice Day. Short address by headmaster on the meaning of the observance. Hymn by the children.*

*December 18*

*Mr Coutts Morrison, Education Officer, and Mr Robb called today. Cookery Stove having now arrived discussed with these gentlemen the position and building-in of the stove. Received instructions to arrange with local tradesmen.*

Ticket for Baldernock former pupils' annual dance

**EUNICE SIEDLE (PRIOR)**

Pupil 1926–1928

I came to Orchardlea in Balmore at the age of ten, with my Uncle Tom and Aunt Margaret Kennedy. I moved on from Baldernock at the age of twelve and went (by train of course) to Woodside Academy in Glasgow and then on to nursing training at Stobhill, and several other hospitals before the 1939–45 war.

The headmaster, Mr Baird, had left following the tragic death of his son, Tom, in a Cairngorm blizzard. The new headmaster was Mr Gardiner who, again, was very kind and a good teacher, and his assistant was a Miss Ogilvie. Miss Gibson was still living in Beanscroft and teaching sewing to the girls. The Junior class, still using slates, was in the small room. The rest were in the divided big classroom using blackboards, jotters and books.

We had quite a long list of playtime activities – Rounders, Hopscotch, marbles, skipping, conkers and a great variety of ball-against-the-wall games.

There was a long summer holiday and the potato planting and harvesting weeks. In addition there was a long weekend at Christmas but I can't remember any special extra days off during the school year.

I lived the farthest away to the east from school and left home about 8.15 a.m. On the way I was usually joined by Effie Stirrat (Krebs) from Castlehill Farm, then by Eliza Ralston (Gray). If they were early they used to leave a stone on the wall at Eliza's road-end so that I would know that they had already passed. We also met up with a girl called Janet Cowan from Easter Blairskaith and Lizzie Cameron who lived in Blairskaith Cottage (where the water pipeline exit now is). The walk was fun, especially in winter. We travelled home in the semi-dark in the winter months but by now it was the custom to carry small torches. Another luxury was the wearing of wellington boots so that we often arrived at school dry shod. In wet weather Mr and Mrs Gardiner were always waiting at the schoolhouse to greet the children and take any wet clothes into their own house to dry.

### **EFFIE HARRISON**

Pupil 1926–1933

My mother went to Baldernock in about 1899. Miss Gibson, the sewing teacher, taught Mother when she was at school. I left in 1933, in the Qualifying class. I lived at Fluchter Mill. We had to walk just a short distance to school and went home for lunch.

Mrs Sinclair was an excellent teacher – very strict and keen on elocution. We used to go to Falkirk to compete with other schools at recitations, etc. She also put on a show in Glasgow. She travelled by bus from Glasgow to Bardowie every day. Some other teachers I had were Miss Fife, Mr Baird, Mr McGregor, Mr Gardiner, Mr Cockburn, Mr Dick and Miss Gibson.

The main subjects taught were reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, cookery, gardening and sewing. In the Infant schoolroom were small tables and chairs. Miss Fife had a small hut built and a sand tray in the classroom. The other classroom had the usual desks. I think there were four classes in this room.

For holidays we had about eight weeks in summer, the Queen's birthday, and an autumn holiday. I can't remember any special days off (the Jubilee and Coronation came after I left).

If any member of the family was off school with an infectious disease, every other child in the family had to stay at home too.

We played skipping ropes, Peever, Leave-o and Hide-and-seek.

If we passed the Control exam Stirlingshire Education Department paid for our transfer fees, travelling expenses and books. One day we were given time off to study for the Control exam which was the following day. My sister Molly and I were both sitting the exam. However, instead of studying we decided to play with a friend, Connie Taylor, who lived in Bardowie Station House. While there Molly had her leg badly gashed by the pedal of a bicycle. The only person we knew with a telephone and a car available was Mr Cockburn, the headmaster. He very kindly came to Bardowie and took Molly to Dr Reid in Milngavie where she had her leg stitched. Good job we passed our exam. We went on to Hyndland School.

## 1926

*January 5*

*Re-opened school today. Good attendance. Cookery Stove placed in position and fitted during the holiday...*

*February 26*

*... Letter from Education Officer announcing that Miss Daly would be in attendance on Thursday 4th March to take charge of Cookery class. The utensils have not yet arrived...*

*March 5*

*Miss Daly arrived yesterday and proceeded to arrange for commencing work with Cookery class of 11 including 4 boys who will be taught Cookery with the girls.*

*March 19*

*Local Committee meeting Thursday evening 18th. Brought up the question of new press for Cookery class room and pulley laundry poles for drying cloths. Committee agreed to get new press decided not to get laundry poles as headmaster said he could provide a clothes horse.*

*May 21*

*Mr Robb called today and reported that his effort in the Staffing Committee's meeting on behalf of Miss Wilson's services being further retained had failed. Miss Wilson accordingly retired from teaching today. Miss Wilson has completed nine years as a teacher in Baldernock Primary School.*

*June 21*

*Work proceeding as usual. Garden work getting extra time this week so that the plots may be left as clean as possible for the period of the holiday.*

September 3

Two pupils left. Roll down to 46. Lowest for many years.

September 17

Weather improving after a very wet week. Attendance very good in spite of weather. Garden work. Transplanting of leeks.

November 26

Martinmas Term – usual upheaval. 11 pupils leaving.

### CATHERINE LANG

Pupil 1927–1936

I left Baldernock School from the Advanced Division and went to work in the family tomato growing business at Highcroft.

Mr Cockburn was headmaster, with Mrs Sinclair and Miss Ogilvie as assistants. The usual basic subjects were taught, with history, geography, sewing, cooking and gardening as extras. Playtime activities were Kick-the-can, Rounders, skipping ropes, Peevers, and Hopping-Charlie.

There was a special holiday for the King and Queen's Silver Jubilee.



Infants class with teacher, possibly Mrs Sinclair (*circa* 1929)

**Pupils** **Back row:** Alice Robertson, —, Catherine Lang. **Front row:** Archie Beattie, Bobby Connell, —, Jimmy Coffey, Stewart Kant.

## 1927

*January 28*

*Terrific wind storm. No dinner interval & dismissed at 1.40 p.m. to allow pupils to get safely home.*

*August 19*

*Extra time spent in clearing up garden which is very much overgrown with weeds due to close, sultry, wet weather.*

*December 16*

*Visited the school. Checked the registers and found them correctly marked. Attendance in the Infant department – low. The staff working under depressing conditions. William Robb*

## 1928

*March 16*

*Severe snowstorm on Monday and Tuesday of this week. Attendance of Infants and Juniors less than 50% owing to drifting.*

*Mach 31*

*Headmaster absent Monday & Tuesday of this week to attend the funeral of the late Hugh A. Baird interred in the Cairngorm Hills near Aviemore.*

*June 28*

*School closed today for summer vacation to reopen 21st August. A number of parents and friends were present today. Mr Robb, local member of Stirlingshire Education Authority in the name of pupils and friends presented Mr Baird, headmaster, with a gold watch on the occasion of his leaving Baldernock to take up duty in Bridge of Allan after the holidays. Mr W. S. Nelson, Bardowie, presided.*

*August 27*

*The school reopened today, and Mr William Robb, Torrance, was present to welcome the new headmaster, Mr A. C. McGregor, and introduce him to the pupils...*

*September 7*

*Weather has been very wet – Thursday afternoon, however, permitted children to tidy up garden plots. Today Mr Good of the West of Scotland Agricultural College visited the school gardens – questioned the children about the various operations in gardening, and the necessity for same – gave them a lecturette on weeds and the life-history of the cabbage-moth. Mr Stark, the County Librarian, also visited, took away a box of books and left three boxes.*

*September 24*

*Mr Shearman, School Dentist, was present all day and several children had extractions, fillings, etc.*

## **1929**

*January 8*

*School reopened today. Several inches of snow still lying and severe frost. Radiator in Senior room burst – marked double attendance and let children away at 2.*

*April 12*

*... Boys prepared a seed-bed in garden – girls weeded and tidied flower plots.*

*April 19*

*New time-table recommended by Authority was commenced on Monday 15th – Seniors and Juniors now commencing at 9 a.m.*

*June 17*

*William Roberts Gardiner M.A. began today.*

*June 28*

*Two pupils were enrolled today and one pupil left. The Roll this year at the close is 50.*

*October 31*

*Permission to begin Winter Hours was received from Mr Morrison today.*

*Commencing on Monday 4th November, the hours will be from 9.30 to 3.30 with a 45 minutes interval for dinner.*

*November 11*

*Rev. A. S. Kidston visited school today and conducted a short Armistice Service.*

## **1930**

*February 21*

*The attendance has improved very much. Report Cards are being sent home for signature.*

*April 4*

*Some pupils were at Falkirk Musical Festival and Mrs Sinclair accompanied them. Permission for these absences was obtained from the Education Officer.*

May 9

Work in school garden is well forward, all the seeds being now sowed. The eight candidates for the Control Examination tomorrow are well forward with their work.

September 5

Mr Good, Gardening Inspector, visited today, and examined the plots and pupils. The school holidays for the Session are as follows:—

King's Birthday :— 25th May 1931

Autumn holiday:— 29th Sept. 1930

Xmas & New Year holidays:— 20.12.30–4.1.31 inclusive

Easter holidays:— 3.4.31–13.4.31 inclusive

Summer holidays:— 27.6.31–23.8.31 inclusive

December 19

Two pupils enrolled here on Monday but did not return on Tuesday. These pupils are now enrolled in Milngavie School. The school closed today for Xmas holidays.



Seniors, with Mr Gardiner (circa 1931)

**Pupils** **Back row:** Donald Chisholm, Joseph Cameron, Ian Gilchrist, Donald Neilson, Ronald —, Lachlan Cameron. **Front row:** Effie Harrison, Nana Campbell, Nancy McCulloch, Jane Smith, Molly Harrison, Kathie Bell, Peggy Lang, 'Ria' Thomson, Gwendoline Bowman.

## 1931

*January 27*

*Miss Daly – Cookery Teacher – left today.*

*June 26*

*School closed for summer. Very satisfactory attendance over session – 93.75%.*

*September 7*

*Intimation of change in Cookery time-table has been received. Cookery will take place on Wednesdays instead of Tuesdays...*

*September 10*

*Mr J. Coutts Morrison, Director of Education, visited here this afternoon and informed Mrs Sinclair that she would begin work in Allan's School, Stirling on Monday 21st inst.*

*September 14*

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'The remarkable proficiency observed at all stages of the curriculum reflects the utmost credit on the two teachers concerned. Praise is due not only to the actual attainments of the pupils but also to the intelligence and resource they display under examination. The performance of the two candidates for the day school certificate (lower) represents a measure of success rarely attained in a school of this type.'*

*November 3*

*Seven pupils are away to Lennoxton this forenoon to visit School Oculist.*

*November 20*

*... Miss Fife has small house erected in Infant room.*

*December 8*

*Visited school this morning and heard Bible Lesson being taken; was much impressed with eager attention of children and their keen desire to answer. After a bad period, attendance now nearly back to normal – only two cases of measles now.*

*A. S. Kidston*

## 1932

*January 14*

*Lecture on 'A Century of Total Abstinence – Centenary of Total Abstinence Movement'.*

January 26

Mr Dick B.Sc. came today to take Rural Science & Gardening. As Cookery is also on Tuesday asked for rearrangement of days.

February 2

Read letter re. Disarmament Conference to all scholars.

February 26

Re-election of Captains. Mr Anderson agreed to give Medal to school.

March 7

Weather bad. Roads bad. Attendance Poor. Marked double attendance. Dismissed 1.30. (Advanced Division Remained to do Casket Scene from Merchant of Venice.)

April 15

... Part of roof of Infant cloakroom – plaster down.

June 27

Visited school after school hours found all in order. Headmaster reported an epidemic of whooping cough was affecting school attendance, disinfecting will be attended to during school holidays.

Thomas Lindsay

June 30

Margaret Lang passed Control Exam. All pupils presented for Qualifying Exam (12) passed with an over-all %age of 80%. The four pupils presented for Advanced Division Certificate (lower) passed. School closed today for summer vacation. Resumes 29th August. Closing ceremony took place in school. Rev. Kidston presiding – songs, recitations and sketches by the children. Prizes were given in each class. Dux Medallist Duncan Morrison, Advanced Division. Percentage absenteeism for year 12.13% (measles & whooping cough).

September 16

Have put back two scholars from Senior III... a poor lot this year.

September 21

School dismissed today at 12 o'clock. Centenary of death of Sir Walter Scott.

September 27

Read notices re. Shield (Sanitary Institute) also Animal Week Story Competition.

December 15

... Notes re. Broadcasting received...

## 1933

February 10

*The cleaner has been off all this week. Fires set & lit by self. Rooms attended to by aid of two girls.*

June 5

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'The Work of the Senior and Advanced Divisions of this school is distinctly meritorious. Praise is due not only to the success with which the pupils acquit themselves in oral and written tests, but to their engaging demeanour and evident interest in their lessons.'*

*'In the Infant and Junior Divisions a welcome departure from stereotyped methods was observed with approval. The performance of the pupils examined at the recent visit of inspection, was, doubtless, affected by the prolonged absence of the teacher in early spring. It was, however, impossible to resist the impression that the advantages of the new methods adopted will not be fully reaped until assignments of work are more carefully adapted to the age and capacities of the pupils and progress is estimated by what they have thoroughly mastered, rather than by what they have attempted.'*

*'The success of the school garden, in which the pupils acquire both practical skill and theoretical knowledge, deserves mention.'*

June 29

*School closed for summer vacation. A prize-giving ceremony took place in school, Rev. Mr Kidston presiding. Prizes were given in each class and Dux Medallist was Margaret Lang, Advanced Division. The Senior pupils presented a sketch. School resumes August 30th 1933.*

September 27

*Severe cases impetigo...*

November 6

*At request of Advanced Division pupils, leave given for collection for wreath for Mr Munro, late cleaner of school.*

November 10

*Rev. Mr Kidston conducted an Armistice Day Service 2.30 p.m. Children got poppies through Miss Mickel.*

## 1934

February 8

*Mr Sutherland from Band of Hope Union gave a lecture on Temperance.*

*February 26*

*Radiator in room 3 frozen. Classes put into Infant room. Temperature at 9.30 – 31 degrees.*

*March 19*

*Miss Elizabeth Forbes Ogilvie M.A. (b. 20.9.08)... started duty as permanent teacher in lieu of Miss Fife.*

*May 25*

*Received word three presentees for Control Certificate have all passed. 89% 88% 83%. Miss Ogilvie away to Kilsyth with permission – Broadcasting lecture.*

*June 21*

*Double attendance marked. (Sports afternoon.)*

*September 24*

*Advanced Division & Senior I listening in to launch of 534 [the 'Queen Mary'].*

*November 29*

*School closed. Marriage of Duke of Kent & Princess Marina.*

## **1935**

*January 18*

*The Scheme of Work for Senior I has been entirely covered.*

*February 15*

*Milk Scheme since 1st February.*

*March 1*

*Refused to admit boy of 4 years and 2 months.*

*May 6*

*Jubilee Day. School on holiday. Children 12 o'clock Church Service, 2-4 Sports, 4-5 Tea, 5-6 Cricket Match.  
Children also presented with souvenir gifts.*

*June 6*

*Heavy thunder plumps. Dismissed school 3.30. (No interval.)*

*June 7*

*Classes changed and work begun on new session's curriculum. Play being rehearsed for breaking-up ceremony.*

*June 24*

*Roads flooded. Only 5 present when I phoned Mr Morrison for instructions. Told to open school as we could not afford loss of openings. Ten pupils altogether appeared, before marking of registers. Marked double attendance & dismissed at 1.30 as rain & flooding were beginning again. Teachers took as many children home as possible by car.*

*June 28*

*School closed to-day for summer vacation. A prize-giving ceremony took place in the school, Rev. G. Turner, Chairman of the Education Committee, presiding. Prizes were given in each class. Recitations, Songs & a tabloid play 'Robin Hood' provided entertainment for the visitors, many of whom were parents. Dux Medalists Margaret Cowan & Chrissie Cameron (equal)...*

*August 28*

*Communicated with a boy's parent. The boy has impetigo. Sent him home, with instructions.*

*October 21*

*Headmaster out of school from 2.15–2.45. Funeral of Mr Nelson, leading elder in church & for many years Control & Qualifying Supervisor. Took lesson on Prevention of Cruelty to Animals – this week being Animal Week.*

*October 24*

*Milk returned (19). Sour.*

*November 6*

*School closed by Royal Command. Wedding of Duke of Gloucester and Lady Alice Scott.*

*November 11*

*Dr. Findlay examined some backward children.*

### **JOHN L. MORRISON**

Pupil 1936–1942

My best pal Miller Morrison and I must have set some sort of record by plunkin' the school on our first day. Doubtless we had been in the charge of the 'big yins' but somehow or other got detached. When the search party found us we were happily paddling in the golf course pool below the Temple and needless to say we had already consumed our lunch pieces.

Mr Cockburn was the 'heidie' at that time. He was soon succeeded by Mr Matthew Baird whom I remember for his straw hat. Miss Ogilvie was the Infant class teacher. She was my first love. I was fascinated by her plaited hair and the lovely walnut fascia in her car.

Although she was known to stamp her feet in frustration she was a natural teacher. She was very kind, a good disciplinarian and knew how to stimulate young minds.

One of the few memories I have of the early days at Baldernock is of the party held in the field down by the singing gate to commemorate the coronation in May 1937.

When we first attended Baldernock it was ruled by two or three gangs, each of which took its name from that of its leader. As five-year-olds were not involved in this although we were aware of tension in our elders and caught glimpses of some of the feuds. The gang system was soon to cease when all or most of the leaders left school at the same time. Competition and fights continued of course but the latter were between individuals rather than between groups. Fights were usually conducted outwith the vision of teachers. Fights interrupted by the 'birl' [the bell], if evenly matched, would be reconvened when the classroom next emptied. My friend, Miller, and I were well matched.

Our next experience of the real world arrived with the refugees from Clydebank. Some of these were tough, street-wise and innovative. Who would have thought to repair a puncture with a postage stamp stolen from the headmaster's desk? Because of the increase in numbers those from the south of the parish were relocated to the church hall in Balmore. The pupils were enlisted to help with the flit. Once settled in, each child contributed a penny a week in order to purchase a pencil sharpener. Our pencils were all short, tooth-marked stubs. Come the inauguration of the machine we were invited 'Who'll be first to sharpen their pencil?'. Up walks one bold lad clutching twelve brand-new full-length pencils still bound with elastic bands. Miss Barr and Miss McEwen, who had both accompanied the children from Clydebank, wisely made little of this affair. They were both excellent teachers.

Since I missed the lessons on fractions through illness my pal Miller taught me at home. No need for distractions like 'numerator' or 'denominator'. Miller would simply say in language I would understand 'the ane on the top and the ane under below'.

I remember more of school play than I do of instruction. It was certainly more fun. The playground would ring to cries of 'Come on, you're het!' which ought to be denied with 'No ah'm no, ah wis keys'. This call for truce demonstrated by the show of a two-handed thumbs up or by the response 'Naw, ye didne tig me'. Seasonal activity included guddlin' for trout, conkers, or fighting from snow fortresses built down the old stony road where the snow often drifted to three or four feet deep. Very occasionally the 'big yins' would lead a dinner-break walk out to explore the Linn Caves (previous generations spoke of two entrances). Invariably this resulted in a late return and fearful reaction by the teachers – punitive for the 'big yins'. The most exciting and energetic game was 'Auld Bull' which I believe was unique to Baldernock. It ended up with the last non-het individual dodging, weaving, climbing and 'louping' the burn to avoid being tiggged as he or she was chased by the rest of the school running hand-in-hand in groups of three.

After the Qualifying exam I suffered a culture shock by being separated from my school friends and sent to Glasgow. Miller, my best pal, and I, however, continued to climb, run, jump and fight together for many happy years.

## 1936

*January 21*

*Death of King George V. Lesson to combined classes. The King's Jubilee Message read again to the children.*

*January 25*

*Intimation from Director that school has to be closed on Tuesday, funeral day of George V, 28/1/36.*

*February 7*

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'... Where every subject in the curriculum cannot receive all the attention it requires, it is sound policy to concentrate on giving the classes a solid grasp of essentials, and it was obvious from the answering in English and arithmetic that this is being successfully accomplished. In the Advanced Division, which contains the comparatively large number of eight pupils, the study of a novel and, by the boys, of elementary mathematics has proved both interesting and profitable. The pupils are given occasional opportunities of listening to wireless lessons, and the broadcasting of important events from a set owned by the headmaster. Very good work is done in the school garden, which is well cultivated and produces excellent crops. The formation of an attractive rockery, and the laying out of flower beds have done much to increase the pupils' knowledge of plant life...'*

*March 20*

*By permission of Director of Education, sewing pupils take sewing in Miss Gibson's house.*

*March 26*

*Intimation from Director of Education that the school has granted an allowance of £6 - 6 - 0 towards a wireless set.*

*March 27*

*Attendance 5.7% absent. (Many children with 'colds' on day of 'Queen Mary's Sailing.)*

*April 27*

*Wireless set put into school. Vidor, £8 - 8 - 0.*

*May 22*

*Sports' Afternoon, held in Mr Gibson's field.*

*June 26*

*A prize-giving ceremony took place in the school. Besides other items the Trial Scene from 'Merchant of Venice' was staged and presented by the Senior pupils.*

*August 25*

*School re-opens. All rooms have been decorated with new colour schemes. New handwash basins have been installed and preparations are in hand for the flush system of latrines.*

*October 29*

*One child off, Eczema. Another, 'no boots'.*

*December 18*

*Very stormy weather all this week... Many pupils stopping milk (say too cold).*

### **BUNTY BERG (URQUHART)**

Pupil 1937–1944

I had my primary education at Baldernock, then moved to Lennoxton Secondary. Mr Baird was the headmaster but I can't remember any other teachers. I remember the school dentist's dreaded visits, but I did like the school nurse.

As well as basic subjects I enjoyed being taught P.T. and crafts. By this time the classrooms had brightened up and there were wall charts and pupils' pictures on the bare walls.

At first I walked to school but latterly cycled which saved a lot of energy, the walk being at least one and a half miles.

We enjoyed the usual playtime activities – Kick-the-can, Peevers, Tig, and Rounders.

One special event I remember is when a German plane came down at the Baker's Hole.

### **1937**

*March 8*

*Complaint from parent re. condition of playground and tank. Six children are being kept off school in this connection. Communicated with Master of Works Office in Stirling.*

*March 29*

*Informed by letter that I am to go as headmaster of Shieldhill School on 20th April. Mr Matthew Baird B.Sc., Balfron School, takes up duty here as headmaster on that date.*

*April 20*

*Mr M. M. Baird present as headmaster. Mr R. Cockburn, late headmaster, left yesterday to take up duties of headmaster of Shieldhill School.*

*May 12*

*Coronation of King George VI. School closed Wednesday (12th), Thursday (13th) and Friday (14th). On Wed (12th) children at school 11.30. Broadcast from Westminster Abbey. Lunch 1 o'clock. Sports 2–4.30. Tea & presentation of souvenirs and prizes. Children left for home 6.15.*

*May 20*

*School closed 1.30 (double attendance). Several scholars were competing in District County Sports. Two 1st prizes were obtained.*

*June 11*

*No water in school all day. Hot day and children suffered from thirst.*

*June 16*

*County (Education Authority) Sports at Stenhousemuir. 28 pupils and 2 teachers from this school. School closed early – double attendance.*

*June 30*

*School closed today for summer vacation. A prize-giving ceremony took place in the school, Mr Bartholomew, School Convener, presiding. The Junior pupils presented a play entitled Old Mother Hubbard while the Seniors presented one depicting a scene in the time of the quarrel between Cavalier and Roundhead. It was entitled Cecilie.*

*Dux medallist of Primary School, Janet Whiteford. Perfect Attendance for 4 years Douglas Macfarlane. Four pupils sat Qualifying Examination and all passed. One, Douglas Macfarlane, sat the Day School Certificate (Lower) Examination. He passed with distinction in Gardening, 80% and Arithmetic 94%. School reopens 25th August...*

*August 25*

*School reopens. Door on East side of school has been built up and press made inside.*

*Roofs of school sheds beside the lavatories which were to be remade during holidays are not yet completed.*

*October 7*

*Water connected between burn and pond in garden.*

October 20

*G. Coffey cut his finger rather badly while at play during interval. I bandaged it up and he seemed to suffer no ill effects.*

October 28

*Isabel Cowan hurt her knee very badly in the playground. (Playground is very uneven due to recent repairing of drain.)*

### **MOLLY JOHNSTONE (BAIRD)**

Daughter of Mr Baird, headmaster of Baldernock 1937–1946

I was the headmaster's daughter, but never a pupil at Baldernock. I lived at Fluchter Schoolhouse during the period Mr Baird was headmaster – April 1937 to September 1946.

One afternoon my father came in to say there was a rat in his classroom and could we help to catch it. I was afraid the animal would run up my legs under my skirt so I got on my corduroy slacks, and into gumboots. Then, wearing a pair of leather gloves and armed with a shovel (I am a very bad shot), I set off for the classroom, along with Ian, our evacuee, and our Cairn terrier. I don't know where the desks had gone but the floor seemed to be very clear. The poor beast dashed about the room with three of us yelling and screaming and waving sticks and my shovel till it was eventually caught and killed. A short time later someone said there was a rat in the small shed, opposite the back door, where we kept the hen food. I got into my rat-hunting gear and began gingerly shifting bags of grain and mash. I caught the rat in my gloves but can't remember what I did with it – probably gave it to the terrier, or drowned it!

One night during an air raid over Milngavie direction, suddenly there was the noise of a plane screaming towards Fluchter. I was lying in bed and it flashed through my mind that I should get out of bed and dash down under the stairs. I thought I was going to die anyway so I might as well be comfortable in bed. The plane crashed on the moor above Mealie Brae. The crew were killed and my father, as registrar of births, marriages and deaths, had to register the deaths a few days later. The morning after the crash the Home Guard were out and I was stopped at Allander Toll as I drove in to University. Ian Whiteford in full Home Guard uniform asked to see my Identity Card and solemnly searched my car. It was uncertain how many were in the crew and it was thought someone had bailed out. I don't remember if that was the night a piece of shrapnel rattled off my father's tin hat when he was patrolling as the local air raid warden.

The winter of 1939–40 was a particularly severe one and ice was forming on Bardowie Loch in December. It lasted till March and I enjoyed some skating on a few occasions. There was

a very heavy snowfall at the end of January when the road between Barnellan and Braeside was blocked solid and it was two weeks before it was dug out. My 21st birthday was on 1st February and my party was cancelled for two weeks. The morning after the snowfall, I set off from home walking to Balmore to get the train. The Balmore children were plodding to school across the golf course. We were joined by others as we approached Balmore Station. As we crossed the bridge, the train was pulling out. We yelled and screamed and the guard stopped the train and it came back to the platform. I slept the next few nights with my cousin Muriel Fyfe in Balmore. I don't think the school was closed because the local children could walk to school. My father was out every night putting oil heaters and lamps in the toilets to keep the lavatories from freezing. Ian Whiteford brought in milk for us and the school on horseback. It was two weeks before the roads were back to normal.

A little red-headed boy came to Baldernock school from Edinburgh. He was teaching himself conjuring tricks, and was allowed to give his show to the class. He persevered and eventually became a member of the Magic Circle. In later life Robert Cowan became Chairman of the Highlands and Islands Development Board and was knighted.

At one stage the school organised a Bring and Buy sale for funds for the troops. I made two little dolls out of hanks of white wool, tying the strands to make head, arms and legs. I knitted a clown's romper out of rainbow wool (off ration) for one and a pink dress from a remnant for the other. Toys were very scarce and expensive and I think Mrs Watson of the Hill bought them for her two little girls.

Georges Zech of Temple was driving home in the blackout when he hit a cock pheasant. It was an expensive bird for it burst the radiator of his Ford Anglia.

## 1938

*March 14*

*Mr Wm. Good at school today and inspected 'lily' pond.*

*March 25*

*Intelligence Test.*

*June 6*

*Whole school with some parents and guardians took buses to Bridge Wharf, Glasgow where they got steamer Eagle III for Kilcreggan. Then bus to Roseneath Home Farm where Miss Mickel entertained them to lunch. Then return via Kilcreggan and steamer to Glasgow and bus to school. School*

*9.00 a.m., Steamer 10.00, Kilcreggan 12.10, Kilcreggan 3.30, Glasgow (Bridge Wharf) 5.45.*

*52 pupils present.*

*June 22*

*Miss Mary Gibson, sewing teacher, sent her resignation to Mr J. Coutts Morrison – resignation to take effect on 28th August.*

*August 29*

*School reopened after summer vacation. The part of playground to north side of school is being asphalted.*

*September 6*

*Miss Mary Gibson, Sewing Teacher here for 65 years and who retired on 28/8/38, died this morning.*

*September 13*

*Miss Ogilvie operated on for appendicitis last night. Doctor reported that she will not resume duties for six weeks. I telephoned to Education Offices reporting Miss Ogilvie's illness and asked for a substitute.*

*October 10*

*Miss Brodie, Lady Inspector, Trinidad, visited school today and addressed the scholars on Trinidad.*

## **1939**

*January 10*

*Electricians have been working in school since 26th December. Electric power was turned on to school today for lighting ...*

*January 31*

*School given double attendance, on instruction of Director of Education, so that teachers may do work in connection with Government Evacuation Scheme, Survey of Accommodation ...*

*March 20*

*Three pupils absent owing to brother having diphtheria.*

*April 17*

*One boy absent till house declared free of scarlet fever.*

*April 21*

*Miss Ogilvie given permission by Director of Education to absent herself from school on 28.4.39 in order to protest against Dog Racing Track being opened at Birdston.*

April 25

Children permitted by Mr Thomson and Miss Gibson to play in Miss Gibson's field at dinner-hour on two days of the week.

June 6

Mr J. Struthers of the West of Scotland Agricultural College visited the school at 3.10 today and gave classes Advanced Division 2 & 1 and Seniors 2 & 3 a lesson about bees and showed them the inside of a hive in the schoolhouse garden.

June 29

[Extracted from Report of HM Inspector]

*'The Roll of this school, which is situated in a purely agricultural area, has increased by 10 since 1937. Much has been done in recent years to improve the premises. In 1935 an additional classroom, now used for practical work, was built; the school was redecorated; and a new heating system was introduced. Since then electric lighting has been installed; some new desks have been provided; the dry closets have been replaced by modern ones; and the playground has been resurfaced.'*

*'The Infant and Junior classes are under the charge of a single teacher. The youngest children were found to have made a satisfactory beginning with school work and, while great variations in ability were noted in the higher Infant and in the Junior classes, inspection made it clear that the children had all been efficiently instructed and were making progress in all branches of their work at a rate suited to their capacity...'*

*'The Senior and Advanced Division classes receive their instruction from a teacher whose experience up to 1937 had been almost wholly in teaching secondary school pupils. He has developed a real interest in primary school work and is maintaining a satisfactory rate of progress in most of the subjects of instruction... the general condition of the classes revealed the effects of careful instruction and the impression conveyed by the inspection was favourable.'*

*'The older girls receive competent instruction from visiting teachers of cookery and dressmaking, the latter being in temporary abeyance at the time of the inspection pending the appointment of a new teacher. The work done by boys and girls in the school garden and the knowledge they displayed of the elementary principles underlying their work have been favourably commented on by the visiting inspector from the West of Scotland Agricultural College who visited the school in the autumn term of the current session.'*

August 31

School was closed this afternoon until further notice owing to the danger of war, with Germany.

September 2

There were 20 pre-school children, 51 school children, 16 mothers, 2 helpers and 2 teachers evacuated to this parish today. They came from Whiteinch (School) Glasgow.

*September 4*

*Owing to war with Germany having commenced yesterday the school is closed meantime.*

*September 11*

*School reopened today but Infants are meantime excluded. Fifty-five children mostly evacuees official and private were enrolled today.*

*October 3*

*Balmore Hall: desks &c put into the Hall preparatory to the Hall being used as an overflow school of Baldernock School.*

*October 10*

*The Hall, Balmore, was today opened as a school for pupils up to 9 years of age. From now on all the pupils attend school from 9.30 till 3.30 (Infants 3.00).*

*October 16*

*Mr Fleck came to school this forenoon and gave a cinema show from 10 o'clock to 12 o'clock. This show is in connection with evacuees from Glasgow being here.*

*October 23*

*Three cases of scabies have occurred among the Glasgow evacuee scholars. They were taken to Shawburn House, Kilsyth.*

*October 30*

*School now working normally with three teachers at Baldernock and one at the Hall, Balmore.*

*November 16*

*Nurse Murdoch examined all pupils present at the Hall, Balmore. In both schools there was a total of 31 cases, chiefly nits in hair.*

*December 22*

*Whole school met at Balmore Hall. Rev. A. S. Kidston conducted the Bible Examination and thereafter the Xmas Party was held. Each child, including the evacuees, received a present from Santa Claus.*

## **1940**

*January 4*

*Lavatories frozen. It took all day to thaw them.*

*February 7*

*First motor to get through snowdrifts brought anthracite coal to school today.*

*March 13*

*The Parents' and Former Pupils' Association of the school held a concert in Balmore Hall this evening in aid of local organisations making comforts for the Forces.*

*May 6*

*A— H—, Advanced Division 1, was struck on the back of the head and received a lacerated wound. The cause was a stone thrown (accidentally) by I— T— (P. 5).*

*June 14*

*Still no water in school. Dismissed school at 1.30 and marked double attendance. Weather very hot and lavatories unhealthy due to lack of water.*

*September 26*

*Miss Newlands completed giving out sugar for fruit (scheme under Food Controller)...*

*October 2*

*John L. Morrison tripped on the root of a tree on boundary between Miss Gibson's field and Mr Thomson's and broke and dislocated his right humerus. Time about 10 o'clock.*

*October 11*

*Gave permits to three boys over thirteen years of age to say that they might be employed on potato lifting.*

*November 20*

*Owing to continuation of Summer Time the Director of Education has given instructions that the school open at 9.30 instead of 9 o'clock.*

## **1941**

*January 17*

*Mr G. Yeaman, woodwork teacher, will not now attend school as he has joined the Royal Air Force.*

*February 18*

*Dr Burnett and a nurse were here from Stirling and gave a first injection of anti-diphtheria serum to 39 pupils.*

*March 14*

*Serious Air Raid on Glasgow 9 o'clock 13/3/41 till 5.40 a.m. 14/3/41. Only 26 children came to school today.*

*March 24*

*Nine evacuees enrolled this week.*

*May 6*

*Serious Air Raid 12 midnight till 4 a.m. Many children absent today.*

*May 7*

*Serious Air Raid. 12.30 a.m. till 4 a.m. 35 pupils absent.*

*June 23*

*War Weapons Week closed. Amount collected in school was £619 - 3 - 0.*

*June 27*

*School closed for session. Prize-giving. Owing to the absence of Mr Jas. Bartholomew, School Convener, the Rev. R. E. Lee, M.C., B.D., occupied the chair. Miss Bartholomew presented the prizes. Owing to the war the number of prizes was very much reduced and no medal was presented.*

*July 1*

*The school is to be open during July and August for organised games for the children. The headmaster and the visiting teachers, Mrs Manzie and Miss Newlands, are to attend on their respective days to organise the games.*

*September 18*

*Larger quantity of produce from school garden.*

**NANCY McDONALD (BRYAN)**

Evacuee pupil    March–November 1941

We lived in Clydebank and had visited Hillend Farm regularly where my Aunt Peggy and Uncle Billy Williamson lived with their seven children, but our status as visitors changed to that of evacuees a few days after Clydebank was bombed. It was decided that it would be safer for my brother and sister and I to go and live on the farm with my mother while my father and the rest of the older members of the family stayed at home. It was quite an adventure for my sister and I but it must have been rather daunting for the Williamsons to have three more children join them. As always of course we were made extremely welcome by everyone in the family. Making meals for that number of people must have presented quite a few problems but I can only remember enjoying excellent food which seemed to appear effortlessly on the table whenever required – in spite of rationing.

While going to Hillend as visitors we had often played with friends of my cousins but somehow when we became evacuees I think we became some kind of threat to these friends – evacuees became another word for ‘intruders’. We were, however, very soon accepted into the community due entirely to support from my cousins.

I remember the contrasts we came up against. We had been used to simply walking across the street and into school and were now faced with what seemed to us an extremely long walk to school. This was compensated by having wonderful play areas of entire fields instead of a square of concrete at the back of our tenement building.

I remember, one sunny day, sitting on top of a haystack along with several other local children and knitting squares for the Red Cross. I never quite knew what was going to happen to these squares but since my eldest brother was in the army I decided to form a group to ‘help the war effort’. This included making and selling inedible tablet and writing illegible letters to various soldiers and airmen.

Our education at home in Clydebank had been on a half-time basis, with large numbers in the class at the school from which we had come. This resulted in our reading ability being below average. The classes at Baldernock were made up of a wide range of ages and it was the practice for older children to assist the younger ones and we soon made up lost ground.

We were not ‘serious’ evacuees as, after being at Hillend for a few weeks, we would go home each week-end to go to the local cinema. I presume we thought the Germans would be taking the week-end off. I believe we were at Hillend for about three months before returning to our own home but we gained experience in getting along with children whose schooling and environment were very different from our own.

**BETTY CADELL (BRYAN)**

Evacuee pupil    March–November 1941

I remember one night the bombing was really bad and Uncle Billy came down to Wilton Street and took us one by one on his motorbike over the Switchback to Hillend Farm. I remember the aircraft guns going off but I was more scared of riding pillion on the motorbike.

Of Baldernock School I seem to remember a very large room with light green walls, lots of tall windows, and children of all ages. I remember the teacher reading for what seemed ages, lots of poetry. That was probably one way of handling so many different age groups. I do think that my sister, Nancy, and I were treated better than the other ‘city children’ because our cousins were Baldernock pupils.

## MAMIE WATSON

Pupil 1942–1949

My father, the late Robert Watson, spent his school-days at Baldernock. I was there from 1942 to 1949. Miss Ogilvie was my first teacher. She arrived in her car, had light brown hair worn in a bun, and smoked. I liked her. Mrs C. Morrison from Balmore taught knitting and sewing to the girls while the boys did gardening with Mr Dick. We were also taught reading, spelling, arithmetic, English grammar, history and geography. The drill man came what felt like twice a year and gas masks were tested on a regular basis. Mr Baird was headmaster. When his daughter was married we saw her leaving with her father in his car.

Miss Stewart took over on her own with all classes in the room with windows facing the golf course. There was a narrow shelf along two walls, and a fireplace between two doors. The floor was uneven with big knots in the wood. There were cupboards at the windows. Miss Stewart did not have good health. Mrs Bowman from Torrance filled in during Miss Stewart's absence. Mrs Bowman had lived in India and was easily side-tracked to this subject. Miss Annie Reid arrived during the autumn of my final year.

The toilets were outside, partly covered, situated at the far end of two back-to-back sheds which stood where the car park now is.

We had Christmas, Easter and summer holidays, and maybe one for the Queen's Birthday. I remember the school was used for the Election. There was a holiday for the end of the Second World War. Mr Baird hung large flags across the playground for this occasion.

We walked to school. The day started with the Lord's Prayer and we sang a hymn. Milk was available at morning break: during frosty weather the ice in the bottle made it much more attractive.

We played Kick-the-can, Beds (using a Peever), skipping (using a long rope), Jumping-over-the-moon and other ball games in the shed where the wall had smooth bricks, Hide-and-seek, and playing in the burn. The float to uplift sheep from the golf course parked at the letter box and this was also good entertainment.

## 1942

*January 13*

*Mr Mercer called at school to get information with view of commencing hot lunches in school. Mr Forgan of Stirling tuned the piano and reported that it was in fair condition.*

*January 15*

*The anthracite used in the central heating boiler is very poor. It is almost impossible to get sufficient heat in the school without using the electric heater.*

*January 22*

*Heavy snowstorm. Only 2 pupils. Miss Ogilvie also stormbound.*

*March 2*

*Headmaster at headmasters' meeting in Stirling to consider raising company of 'Cadets'.*

*March 23*

*50% of children absent because of mumps.*

*May 28*

*The amount allocated to this school for requisitions for year 15th May 1942–15th May 1943 is £10 - 6 - 6.*

*September 24*

*Poisonous plant, Solanum dulcamara, found in school garden and destroyed.*

*November 10*

*Still no water in school. Boys carried water from Fluchter Mill. Difficulty in getting on with regular school work.*

*December 18*

*Toys made by children were sold at an entertainment given by them in school this afternoon. £16 -10 - 0 was raised for Red Cross.*

**ANNE EASTAUGH (WILLIAMSON)**

Pupil 1943–1950

We walked to and from school all year round. My teachers were Miss Stewart and Miss Reid. I remember the teachers being strict and fair. We were taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. Extra subjects were knitting and sewing.

I was always, if my memory is correct, in the main classroom. There was an open coal fire at one end of the classroom and the blackboard at the opposite end. Each pupil sat at his or her own desk. Desks for older children had storage space under the desk-top lid, a special slot for ink wells and ridges for holding pencils. Reading lessons were carried out standing next to the teacher's desk.

The standard holidays were, as far as I can remember, Easter, summer and Christmas. I don't remember days off for special occasions.

Playtime activities were Peever, skipping ropes, Rounders and ball games with tennis balls. We played with two tennis balls and bounced them off the ground then off a wall. Boys and girls had separate playgrounds. The girls' playground was at the front of the building and the boys' playground at the back. There was a milk allowance every day which we drank from the small bottles.

### **FAY MORRISON (CALDWELL)**

Pupil 1943–1950

I attended Baldernock Primary School from P1 to P7. On my first day at school my coat was washed by a 'bad girl'.

My teachers were Miss Ogilvie, who was strict, Mrs Morrison (sewing), who was very strict, and Miss Helen Stewart, who kept ill health. Mrs Bowman came temporarily. She was the Mother of Professor Bowman of Torrance. She was eccentric, Montessori-trained: in her classes there was no discipline, great fun. Miss Reid came next. She told me later that the first day she entered the school a wee boy with apple cheeks ran over the wall shouting 'She's got rid hair!' (It was David Dingwall.) Miss Reid was excellent. Ahead of her time in educational ideas. Fiery, artistic and fond of drama. She was also kind and generous.

We were taught the 3Rs, gardening and sewing. I don't remember much about lessons except learning things for the summer and Christmas concerts which were then held in the school. Mrs Penman, Miss Reid's sister from Larbert, used to bake for the concerts. I think she once stayed with Mr Penman and their son, Franz, in the schoolhouse.

I can only really remember being in the large classroom – the small room was the Public Library. A fire blazed in winter time with a large fire guard around it. I remember having stories round the fire while our shoes and socks dried out. We had wooden double desks. There was an old fashioned teacher's desk and one blackboard.

We played at ball, Peever, skipping and hockey – there were girls only in the back playground.

I can remember 'snow' holidays but nothing else. During the bad winter of 1947 we arrived at school and were sent home. The snowdrifts were over the hedges at Barnellan. Icicles hung everywhere.

While at Baldernock School I lived at Barnellan. I walked to school, dashing past 'Duncans' goose and goat [at Fluchter Mill]. The goose got my brother Peter by the trousers once. Other memories are of chatting to the Postie as he passed on his bike, choosing a pair of wellies from the wellington pile – we each got a pair – and being given an orange when we sat the 'Qualy'.

I cried all the way home on my last day at Baldernock.

## 1943

*February 4*

*Twelve pairs of Plimsoll shoes for the use of the pupils at Drill came today.*

*February 15*

*Wild day. Chimney can blew off boiler chimney on to classroom roof.*

*March 24*

*Robert Cowan while at play during the lunch period caught his thigh on barbed wire at the ruins opposite the school (in Mr Watson's field). Dr Macdonald put twelve stitches in the wound.*

*July 2*

*School closed for summer vacation. Rev. R. E. Lee conducted a religious service and Miss Bartholomew presented the prizes gained for work during the session. The prizes consisted of National Savings Certificate Stamps.*

*August 25*

*Workmen from Messrs McCulloch & Young, Stirling, put up 'Black Out' curtains in the three rooms, the boys' cloakroom and the girls' cloakroom.*

*September 1*

*All teachers were called to a mass meeting at Kilsyth by the Director of Education. Business: Gathering of potato harvest in October. Marked a double attendance and dismissed school at noon.*

*September 14*

*Senior pupils gathered brambles to make jelly for their puddings served at lunch. Senior girls made the jelly.*

## 1944

February 9

*Mrs Connell and Mrs McNeil of the W.V.S. attended at school today and distributed wellington boots to children.*

March 2

*Only 20 pupils present because of deep snow. This attendance is much better than was expected – the recent gift of wellington boots has been a great blessing...*

May 1

*Mr Shaw 'the Bird Man' attended the school and gave the children a talk about birds.*

June 22

*'Salute the soldier week' (June 3rd–10th). The amount collected during this week by this school was £1195.*

October 13

*Only one child at potato lifting.*

December 11

*Mr J. McKinlay, architect, at school this afternoon and instructed Mr Smillie, plumber, to cut off hot water supply in cookery room as it was fed from hot water central heating system of school. Snow and sleet have made the roads very bad. No Infants at school and only eight others.*

### **ROBERT LANG DINGWALL**

Pupil 1945–1951

I left Baldernock Primary School in 1951 (from Primary 5) and attended the High School of Glasgow 1951–58. Both of my parents, David (deceased) and Anne (née Lang) attended Baldernock Primary School *circa* 1915.

Miss Ogilvie was my first teacher. She lived in Kirkintilloch and came to school by car. She was not a strict disciplinarian and showed kindness to those attending school for the first time. There were two classrooms – one large and one small – plus a dining hall/ library. Each classroom contained desks, blackboards and cupboards, and the large classroom also had a fireplace. The smaller classroom housed the piano. Mr Baird lived in the schoolhouse during the time of Miss Ogilvie. He was the headmaster and taught the Senior class in the smaller of the two classrooms.

Miss Stewart followed Mr Baird. She shared the schoolhouse with her married sister and nephew. She came to Baldernock from the Falkirk/Camelon area. She was strict and could be short tempered at times. Sadly she died while in post at Baldernock. She was followed by Miss Reid, who lived alone. She was a good teacher – strict but fair.

We were taught reading, writing and arithmetic. We occasionally had some music – mainly singing around the piano. There were no organised games. School activities during playtime included Hide-and-seek, ropes (skipping), Peevers (Hopscotch) and football in the playground. We also spent much of our playtime, especially during the lunch break, playing in the burn that ran through the golf course.

The standard holidays consisted of one week at Christmas and at Easter plus a seven-week break during July and August, together with public holidays. We had extra days off on polling days during General Elections.

Travel from Balmore village to Baldernock School was by foot through Balmore golf course in all weathers. On the odd occasion, especially during inclement weather, the Balmore children were brought home in the luxury of a car or ex-army jeep by the relatives of a farmer's daughter (Mabel Bowie of Whitefauld Farm).

## 1945

*January 16*

*T.T. [Tuberculin tested] milk now supplied to the school.*

*January 26*

*Water supply tank on the hill empty. No water coming into water cistern in school.*

*May 8 and 9*

*School closed V.E. Day + 1. Holidays.*

*June 13*

*Six workmen came this morning to remove anti-splinter netting and wire from windows and two came to put in electric geyser in cookery room. Owing to great disturbance dismissed pupils for the day after they had lunch.*

*August 15 & 16*

*School closed for two days in celebration of ending of war with Japan.*

*August 13*

*No electricity in school for lighting or heating due to thunderstorm last night.*

October 10

*Violent storm of rain. Road flooded and dangerous at 'Singing Gate'. Marked two attendances and dismissed school at 1.30 p.m.*

November 11

*N – H – accidentally hit on forehead when J – W – was working in the garden.*

### **MABEL RONALD (BOWIE)**

Pupil 1946–1953

I lived at Whitefauld Farm, Balmore. I attended Baldernock School from 1946 to 1953. I continued to Glasgow High School for Girls then Glasgow University. My father, James Bowie, born 5th April 1895, attended 'Fluchters' and left after Primary 7. At that time there was only one teacher.

Miss Ogilvie is a name I vaguely remember – kind and gentle is my memory. Mr Baird taught in the other room – who or what I do not know. I have one clear memory of him. I was trying to walk on top of the dyke one day, when playtime was over, just as I had found my balance. Panic gripped me to see Mr Baird approaching (I'd heard he had a belt). He kindly took my hand and helped me walk the full length of the wall. Not an ogre after all.

Miss Helen Stewart was a dear, lovely person who taught me for the next two years of my life; a farmer's daughter from Fintry who shared the schoolhouse with her sister whom we called Nana Stewart. She was like a mother to us all. To this day the word 'Nana' still conjures up her picture in my mind – a caring soul. Miss Stewart I believe died of cancer during the summer holidays in 1948. I was shattered to hear that her place was to be taken by Miss Annie Reid, reputed to have red hair and a temper to match. This was a true description, but she was a real country schoolteacher and devoted her life to Baldernock. She allowed us to do all sorts of things that would be considered outrageous nowadays. I can remember during a lunch break every child in the school had climbed into a tree we called the 'Beechie'. Miss Reid came looking for us ringing the school bell: there were no reprimands. When sheep on the golf course for wintering were being loaded or unloaded from the lorry we were all allowed outside to watch and help – a wonderful diversion!

We walked to school. We took a playpiece (bread and jam) in a bag and walked up past the golf clubhouse, down what seemed a very steep ash path, through an ingenious type of gate through which you swung your legs and sheep could not pass. Mind you the kind of sheep I know nowadays wouldn't hesitate to jump it! Over the burn, skirt the golf course, turn right towards the Temple and so on. The 'singing gate' was another ingenious gate (the singing was pretty squeaky). On the way home there was a lot of dilly-dallying, finding lost golf balls, racing little bits of wood (boats) down the burn, guddling for 'baggy minnins' (minnows).

Each morning, after the prayer, lessons started with reciting the times tables and doing mental arithmetic in which all ages joined. Squares of scrap paper were given to classes who were not able to start work on their own, until the teacher had time to get everyone employed – quite a feat. Pencils were given out in the morning and collected at night. We learned the three Rs, singing, sewing and knitting. Occasionally we had P.T. outside, and drawing.

The main big classroom had a blackboard on the wall at one end and a fire at the other. This fire was kept going by the teacher in between trying to spread herself among all the different classes. One class at a time stood round the fire for reading and spelling. Desks were of various types, arranged in little groups to keep each class separate. There were cupboards along the wall under the windows. Apart from the fire there was a central heating system fired by a coal boiler in a shed at the back. The pipes and radiators seemed to be enormous things. The other classroom had a piano and we had singing lessons in there. I can remember blackout curtains and blinds being drawn in that room but don't know why, as the war was over before I started school.

The dinner room had the walls lined with bookshelves and served as the local library. Dinners were brought from somewhere else, in the dinner van. I can still smell the awful steamed-to-bits smell when the lids were opened. The teacher served up the meal, and then a washing-up lady did the dishes. The first time we were served cooked gammon it was a new experience for all of us but one boy was so excited he shouted aloud 'Look! Clean beef!'

There were two cloakrooms with hooks and wash hand basins. The toilets were in two buildings outside, where there were the two play sheds.

Milk was given out at playtime – one third of a pint. A straw was pushed through the hole in the waxed tops which were later washed and kept for making pom-poms. A short playtime was filled with the games of the season, no time wasted. Skipping ropes, both individual and big ropes, had their times. The boys sometimes joined in the big rope games when they got tired of their own games – usually football. No real-sized footballs though, just a small rubber ball. Peever was good, with several different types of 'beds' to draw. Chalk was a bit of a problem, and was usually a good soft type of stone – don't ask me what as I never thought of it till now. Tig, High tig, Low tig, Hide-and-seek and Sardines usually involved the whole school. A lot of time was spent in the play sheds on wet days. (These were buildings open on one side with a bench seat along the back wall and a broad, round metal pole supporting the front edge of the roof.) 'Join on' was a frequent shout when someone would start walking slowly round the pole holding tightly by one arm. Others joined on, and if you landed on the outer 'wheel' your wee legs were a blur! Rose Cottage was a name that my class of girls gave to a small disused building in which we played secretly (we thought). I was amazed to hear my niece many years later talk about it. Another 'house' was a holly tree. I seem to think that this was at the edge of a former school garden. Secret societies, passwords and coded letters were also in vogue.

We had eight weeks' holiday in summer, one week at Christmas and Easter and I think tattie holidays in the early years. Some children seemed often to be going to see a ship being launched on the Clyde. I was never one of them, and did not envy them one bit as it would have curtailed my precious school time.

An intake of pupils at Easter made it too difficult for Miss Reid to cope and we six were sent off to Campsie School for the rest of that term. There were more pupils in Primary 7 at Campsie School than in the whole of Baldernock School! It was quite daunting.

## 1946

*May 2*

*Headmaster and Miss Ogilvie at meeting in Falkirk called by Director of Education in connection with forthcoming school camp at Dounans, Aberfoyle. Mr Dick, Gardening teacher and Mrs W. W. Morrison, Sewing teacher, took charge of the school.*

*June 20*

*Circular letter from Director of Education asking for applications from lady teachers for headteachership of this school.*

*September 27*

*School Convener called at school. Headmaster's last day at school. School dismissed early.*

*October 4*

*Holiday Monday 30th September. Helen Stewart took up duty as headteacher on 1st October. One pupil admitted. Roll 26. Mr Mackinlay, County Architect, visited school and schoolhouse regarding repairs on 2nd Oct. Rep. from Avery called to check and clean weighing machine on 3rd Oct. Rev. Mr Kidston visited school on 4th Oct. to tell children about Sunday School resuming...*

*November 8*

*District Nurse visited today and examined the heads of those children who had been marked 'V' on former visit. On 6th November carrier from Stirling called and took away surplus furniture (3 cupboards, 19 desks single and dual, 4 woodwork benches).*

*On 7th November Mr Dick, gardening teacher, returned to school after three weeks' potato harvesting. Miss Ogilvie's presentation took place same day, leaving for a school in Kirkintilloch after 12 years 8 months at Baldernock School.*

*Plumbers fitting new sink and tub in schoolhouse...*

*December 24*

*...reported to Mr J. Coutts Morrison, Director of Education, accident in playground. P— M—, enrolled that day, was knocked down by dinner van, bumped his brow and grazed his nose...*

## 1947

*January 17*

*On 13th January clothes received via S. M. C. from American Red Cross and distributed among girls (3 dresses and 5 skirts)...*

*February 7*

*Very stormy week. Few pupils at school. On 4th Feb. six children at school. Snow showers – dismissed children at midday. On 5th Feb. snowstorm, seven children at school...*

*February 26*

*Worst snowstorm for years, drifted badly, no children at school, nor dinners or milk. Registers not marked. Still no water.*

*March 7*

*.. No county intelligence test taken as there were no children from Balmore at school. Still no water in lavatories nor school.*

*April 22*

*Nurse Davidson from Milngavie visited school and examined all heads for vermin, to report on worst cases.*

*June 27*

*On 25th June visit from HMI Mr Forsyth who tested all pupils in all work – looked at garden. On 26th myself distributed 'presents' (books) to all pupils who had 'tried hard' throughout the year. On 27th all pupils walked to church where Mr Kidston conducted service. Mrs Kidston presided at organ. School dismissed for summer vacation – after mid-day meal – to 25th August 1947.*

*September 15*

*... Plates, mugs, knives, forks, 2 tables and 4 forms delivered today for school meals...*

*October 10*

*Called parents' meeting to discuss function to re-introduce School Fund. Resolved on Whist Drive in Balmore on 13th Nov.*

*November 21*

*Teacher taken suddenly ill on 15th and taken to Western Infirmary Glasgow at 6.15 p.m. on 16th . On 17th phone call to Mr Goldie, Director Of Education, who advised sending children home. On 18th Mrs Bowman, Torrance, commenced duty in school. On 19th lavatory pipes frozen. On 20th phone call to plumber. Children had a holiday from school on 20th. Royal wedding of Princess Elizabeth to Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten.*

*December 26*

*On 24th Mr Bayne, Deputy Director, phoned to ask if Mrs Bowman would continue after the Christmas holiday as teacher was not yet fit to resume duty. Children had party and Christmas tree with gift for each kindly given by temporary teacher Mrs Bowman. School closed till 6th January 1948 for Christmas holiday.*

## **1948**

*January 30*

*Headteacher had 26th January off school to attend Western Infirmary. Mrs Bowman – temporary teacher – took all classes...*

*Mrs Bowman left on 28th January and headteacher took over herself as from 29th January.*

*February 27*

*Monday 23rd was a school mid-term holiday. On 24th school nurse visited school and examined heads of all children on 'V' list. On 25th Mr Bain, Assistant Director of Education, and Mr Dick, former gardening teacher, visited school to arrange for removal of tools, implements, etc., since gardening is discontinued.*

*March 19*

*On 14th March Inspector Wilson, in charge of Traffic Dept. at Stirling Police Headquarters, visited school and spoke to children on Road Safety etc.*

*April 30*

*Monday 26th April school was given a half holiday from 12.30 p.m. as ordered by the King in celebration of the Silver Wedding Anniversary of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth... Headteacher attended Western Infirmary... Rev. Mr Kidston 'took' school in her absence.*

*June 11*

*On 8th June Ministry of Information Film Unit visited school and showed 4 films. Edinburgh Music Festival, Silkworm, Prairie Grasslands, Water fowl of Western Canada. On 8th Barnellan Club held a meeting from 8–9 p.m. in school.*

*August 27*

*School reopened on the 23rd. There was a good attendance of pupils. It was a sad reopening as during the holidays their beloved teacher Miss Stewart had died...*

*Workmen were busy in the lavatories which were not in use all week...*

*A notice was sent to the parents informing them of a rise in the price of school meals: 4d for Infants and 5d for others per meal. Seven children withdrew their names and are bringing their own lunch.*

*August 30*

*Mrs Hodge, Bardowie brought her two girls but I had to ask her not to leave them as there is no room at present. There are 33 children on the Roll...*

*September 17*

*Wednesday 15th was a day of unprecedented floods. Half the children were unable to come to school. The rain went off however and the afternoon was so lovely and clear that I took the children for a nature walk. Miss Macfarlane came this morning and gave a talk on Health and Alcohol. The children listened very politely and attentively...*

*October 4 1948*

*Started today [Miss Reid]. Roll 31.*

*November 11*

*Mr Bain visited today. Pointed out the distance Balmore children have to come. Asked if anything could be done to provide a conveyance.*

*December 6*

*Man came to measure glass for window broken presumably by passing boys on Sunday morning.*

## **1949**

*February 14*

*Assistant from Lizars arrived with Bell & Howell Projector. He gave a demonstration.*

*August 29*

*... The back playground has been tar-macadamed...*

*September 16*

*Roll now 29: 13 boys, 16 girls.*

*November 28*

*Visit from Mr Thom, Assistant Director of Education. He removed the Bell & Howell Projector, since I made it plain that it was lying dormant, there being no time to use it meantime.*

*December 24*

*Christmas Service held on December 23rd. A few of the mothers came to hear the children sing, which they did well.*

Pupils of Baldernock School with headteacher, Miss Reid (*circa* 1949)

**Pupils** **Back row:** Elizabeth Kay, Margaret Mitchell, Mabel Bowie, Margaret Caldwell, Mary Still, Molly Williamson, Ann Watson. **Third row:** Anne Williamson, Douglas Kilpatrick, Robert Dingwall, Fay Caldwell, Isobel Morrison, Gordon Jack. **Second row:** Elaine Nicholson, Mary Kay, Sandy Robson, Colin Craig, Irene Williamson, Margaret Robertson, Ann Hood. **Front row:** Desmond Landon, David Dingwall, John Williamson, Stuart Marshall, Peter Caldwell, Alex Kay.

## 1950

March 24

[Extracted from report of HM Inspector]

*'Four years ago, the secondary pupils were transferred to another school. At the date of inspection the Roll was 29, a figure which is about the average for the past few years. The present Headmistress was appointed at the beginning of session 1948–49.'*

*'The premises have been maintained in a generally satisfactory condition. The building, however, is large and rather gloomy and should be repainted in brighter colours. The dual desks used by the pupils of the primary classes should be replaced, when possible, by others of a more modern type. A mid-day meal, which most of the pupils take, is served in a spare classroom.'*

*'The tone of the school is good, the pupils were frank and responsive, and the teacher deserves credit for the way in which she had trained them to work by themselves. The progress made*

*by the various classes in reading, spelling and composition was satisfactory, except that the boys of class I of the Primary Division were not as far advanced in reading as might have been expected.'*

**This extract is the last one taken from the Log Book of 1919–1950. Mrs Clark, the present headteacher of Baldernock School, kindly extracted for us the log entries which follow and give a flavour of events at the school over more recent years.**

*October 24*

*Piano was tuned today by Mr Forgan. Mr Mercer, Drill Supervisor accompanied him. Mr Mercer took Drill in playground.*

*November 30*

*Moray House Picture Intelligence Test given today to 3 children.*

*December 15*

*A Whist Drive was held in the school on the night of the 15th December; the object being school funds. Amount realised was £320.*

## **1951**

*February 23*

*Attendance this week is 76. One case of fever. An Intelligence Test (M.H.T. 43) given on Thursday 22nd Feb. Five children had this test, one being absent. This weekend a Broadcasting Conference is taking place. The place of the meeting is Tarbert High School. Headteachers of rural schools have been asked to attend.*

*August 27*

*School reopened today. No change in Roll. During the holiday the three classrooms have been repainted and the old range in the dining room removed.*

## **1952**

*February 6*

*King George VI died today.*

*Balmore golf course flooded, owing to melting of recent snows. Impossible for children to cross. Had to phone Director and get permission to arrange transport: Rigby's bus.*

*May 2*

*Mr Goldie, Director of Education, visited this afternoon to make arrangements for Pr. VII girls to be sent to Lennoxton in order to reduce the pressure here, no teacher being available.*

*May 10*

*Pr. VII – six girls – started in Lennoxton today. This reduces Roll to 28, comprising 7 groups.*

## JOHN McOUAT

Pupil 1952–1959

I lived at Dowan Farm, Baldernock. I started school in 1952. I left in Primary 7 and went on to Balfron High School. My father, Robert McOuat, went to Baldernock School. I remember him telling a story about a girl called Sarah Hannah who always said 'black' if you said 'white'. If she was a bit late for school the headmaster would go out and shout to her to stand still, so she would start running, and when in the class they were all told to sit down she would keep standing. Mr Baird would then say to her to keep standing so she would sit down. He knew exactly how to handle her. I remember her brother, Andrew Hannah, who was the roadman on the Dowan Road.

Teachers I remember were Miss Reid and Miss Manson. I think I had Miss Reid in Primaries 1, 2 and 3 and also in the 'big room'. She was a very good teacher and sometimes had a hard time with certain pupils. She always had a concert at the end of the school year with plays and singing. My mother always enjoyed it. Our main subjects were arithmetic, writing, reading and English, with music and drawing, drill, history, geography and handcrafts (I made a raffia mat).

The 'wee room' was added to the old school: it was nice and bright with a number of windows. Desks faced the teacher at her table, with cupboards for books and blackboard. The 'big room' was not so bright, with the usual desks, cupboards and blackboard. The other room was the dinner room with a library.

Our standard holidays were Easter, summer, Christmas and potato holidays.

When I got up in the morning I always had to brush my shoes. When I was ready to go to school my father would come in from the byre to see that the shed (parting) in my hair was straight, and he used some water to flatten it. When I started school there was a big tall girl called Margaret Mitchell who lived at Hillend, who said she would accompany me. She took great big strides, so I can say I ran to school for a year. After my sister Janet and brother Robert started school we could take our own time. I think the journey to school would be at least a mile and a half. We took the right of way from Baldernock Mill to Kettlehill Farm, crossed the road and kept going on past the back lodge of Baldernock House, down Fiddler's Brae, past the Baker's Hole, past the end of the road to North Bardowie Farm and on to school. It was always an interesting nature trail – summer and winter. We looked for birds' nests, black granny snails to spit on, and hairy caterpillars which we took home in a matchbox to see what kinds of moths they would turn out.

When we arrived at the school (usually about half past eight because we always left the Dowan at eight o'clock on the dot) Miss Reid was not out of bed, so she must have been annoyed at us playing. We had the usual lessons, with playtime at mid-morning then

dinnertime. We carried our own pieces because we did not like the school meals nor the way the dinner lady, Mrs Legrix, made you eat the things you did not like – like sago.

We usually guddled in the Bally Burn for small trout and beardies. We had to watch for rats that lived in holes in the bank. I remember one boy being bitten by one. Other games we played were High tig, Low tig, Poisoned tig, chases, Tee-daw-tee, Buckety-buck and Rounders. We also took walks down past Mrs Duncan's house. She had two geese that used to chase us with necks stretched out to the full. We tried to get past them. It was fun.

On going home we looked forward to our mashed potatoes and butter whenever we got in the door. Then we changed into our old clothes. Janet and I used to listen to the wireless quite a lot before we got our tea. In summer we walked home in our bare feet, sometimes tramping on the soft tar on the road.



Pupils of Baldernock Primary School with Miss Reid, headteacher, and Miss McDonald (1958)

**Pupils** **Back row:** Ian Crosbie, David Russell, Robert McOuat, Colin Cameron, Raymond Morrison. **Third row:** Jill Caldwell, Brian Williamson, Andrew Russell, Ian McNicol, Ian Robson, Tommy Mair, John McOuat, John Hood, Jean Crosbie. **Second row:** Sandra Hood, Altabelle Brown, Irene Morrison, Hazel Barker, Maureen Barker, Morag Fairweather, Janet McOuat, Ann Morrison, Emily Brown. **Front row:** George Crosbie, James Crosbie, James McOuat.

## **ANDREW RUSSELL**

Pupil 1952–1959

I lived at East Blairskaith Farm – then and now. We walked to school or were given a lift by a quarry lorry. We didn't take a playpiece.

Our day was spent sitting at a desk being taught reading, writing, arithmetic, history and geography, and music. The rooms seemed large. Desks were in rows with inkwells set into the desks. There were hinged seats attached to the desks. The teacher sat in front of a large roller blackboard. Miss Annie Reid was unpredictable and a heavy smoker. When not in class we played at Rounders, Kick-the-can, and Hide-and-seek, and went for walks to the Linn Caves.

We had summer, Christmas and Easter holidays, and days off for the threshing mill at the farm.

### **1953**

*January 23*

*Head inspection today.*

*May 11*

*Miss Brown HMI called this morning to inspect sewing and knitting.*

*May 27*

*Service for Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II took place today. Children from Pr. I–IV were given mugs and those in Pr. V–VII were given a book written by Richard Dimbleby. The school convener, Mr Craig, presented the souvenirs. The School Chaplain was also present.*

### **1956**

*September 11, 1956*

*Mr Mercer, Drill Supervisor, came today with piano tuner.*

## **JANET MITCHELL (McOUAT)**

Pupil 1954–1961

I lived at Dowan Farm. My father, Robert McOuat, was at Baldernock School. I was at Baldernock School from Primary 1 to Primary 7, 1954 to 1961. There were about 33 pupils

in school at that time and in my year there were just two of us. After Baldernock I went on to Balfron High.

My teacher was Miss Annie Reid. I had her in the 'wee room', in Primaries 1–3, and also in the 'big room', in Primaries 4–7. She was a great teacher. I learnt a lot from her. I remember if it was your birthday, she gave you a sixpence. She also made tablet sometimes and we loved it when she brought a tray over and we all got a piece. She tried to be strict, but she was really quite soft. She taught me a lot of Scottish history and she seemed fond of poetry. I learnt a lot of poems off by heart and made up quite a lot myself. I remember when Uri Gagarin went into space we had all to make up a poem about it. Miss Reid had a big garden and sometimes in the summer she would take some of the older children out to help to weed the beds – we thought it a great 'skive'. She used the strap quite a lot on the boys, which never seemed to do them any harm! Someone broke one of the big windows once and no-one would own up. My brother Robert got the blame because he laughed and he was belted for it, about which he was most indignant.

When I was in the 'big room', Fay Caldwell, now Mrs Morrison, came as the Infant teacher. Her young sister Jill was in my brother Robert's class at the time.

Mrs Legrix was the dinner-lady-cum-janitor. She stoked the boiler, gritted the playground when we had made slides, and generally tidied up. I was terrified of her! If you had misbehaved you were sent to her in the dinner room and if a boy had used a swear word he got a spoonful of red medicine with which to wash out his mouth. The dinners came in a van from Lennoxton Junior Secondary, and were horrible! My family all took pieces which we had to eat in the dinner room.

I would set off for school at 8.00 a.m. to walk one and a half miles to school. I took a shortcut along the right of way from halfway up the 'mill brae', through Kettlehill fields and out just above Kettlehill Farm. I enjoyed the walk in all weathers – there were such a lot of things to see. I used to stop at the well just before Baldernock Lodge and make a wish – then it was on down the 'Fiddlers' Brae' and round by the 'Baker's Hole'. This was a coup which we were warned not to go near as it used to burn for days. Sometimes we went into Mr Watson's field at the bottom of the 'Fiddlers' Brae' to see the hole where a plane had crashed during the war. We usually arrived at school early and had time to play before Miss Reid came out and rang the bell at 9.00 a.m.

The day began with the Lord's Prayer. We all stood with hands clasped in prayer and recited it. Then we had our lessons. The main subjects taught were reading, writing, spelling, sums, history and geography. We used to practise writing with pen and ink. Some of the nibs were crossed and I hated getting one like that as it just made a mess. We got sheets with a proverb at the top and about six lines underneath on which to copy the phrase, which was done in copperplate writing. We also had drill, art, music and handwork. I loved music. Miss Reid would get the tonic sol-fa out which she pinned to the blackboard, and she then pointed to notes up and down the scale which we had to sing.

Drill we got occasionally. We had rubber mats and used to throw bean bags about and we had forms which we had to walk along. These forms were also used as seating benches for our annual concerts. I remember sewing a lap bag (which I still have) with my initials embroidered on the front and a Dutch girl and boy dancing. We were also taught how to knit plain and purl and how to cast on and off. We used to weave mats with raffia and sometimes made things with papier maché.

There were two classrooms – the ‘wee room’ for Primaries 1–3 and the ‘big room’ for Primaries 4–7. The dinner room was our library and could be used for general purposes. There were two bookcases: one on the right as you entered the door with the Infant books, and one on the opposite wall with the books for older children. The second door in the dinner room led out to the cloakrooms and a toilet for the teachers. One cloakroom was for the girls and the other, downstairs, was for the boys. The sinks in there were always full of fish which had been caught at playtime. The big classroom had three rows of desks with Miss Reid’s desk at the top right hand side. The blackboard was in the middle and there was a big store cupboard on the left. Just inside the door, to the right, was a radio which we used to listen to sometimes. The walls usually had our paintings on them. The radiators were big sturdy ones which in winter dried our gloves and hats especially when it snowed. The desks were the old style with the seats and desks attached. The lids were sloped and there were inkwells at the top. Some desks were single and some double, and you could keep your books under the lids.

We had a mid-morning break when we ate our playpiece, usually a piece with jam, and a bottle of milk which was provided free. Dinner-time I think was from 12.00 to 1.30 p.m. Pupils had school dinners at 5/- a week, or more jam pieces for dinner. The highlight of the day was this long playtime. We played at What’s-the-time-Mr-Wolf, chases, Poison tig, Tig, skipping, ball games against the wall, Kick-the-can, and many others. The girls loved to play ‘housies’ in the old garden across from the school. There was a small tree just inside the gate and between it and the wall was our ‘house’. We also played shops round at Rose Cottage at the back of the boys’ toilets. We set out our plates of docken leaves and used stones and grasses and flower heads for the goods.

Sometimes we climbed onto the shed roofs, which were flat, and then ‘dreeped’ down or slid down the pole in the middle. The girls’ toilets were outside at the back of the school, nearest the schoolhouse garden, and the boys’ were on the other side next to Miss Craig’s at Beanscroft. We also climbed onto the roof above the cloakrooms at the back, which was also flat. I remember the boys doing this when they were let out to the toilets and they used to look in the classroom window and make faces while Miss Reid was teaching. Another favourite ploy was to go up the Linn Caves exploring and playing in the bracken – no thought of danger. We also guddled for beardies and baggie minnows up the burn there, and also in the ‘Bally’ burn, as we called the one at the golf course. In winter we sledged at the golf course from the ‘roundel’ [the round wood above Temple Cottage] down to the burn.

Miss Craig, at Beanscroft, had an apple orchard and the boys were quite daring and used to pinch some fruit. Every year she came over with a big basket of apples and we all got one. We sometimes walked up to Barnellan past Mrs Duncan's house. She had two big geese which used to terrify us. We tried to sneak by, but they usually heard us and came running and hissing at us. We were free to play anywhere, not like today where children are confined to the playground.

After dinner we had more lessons, then an afternoon break. After the break Miss Reid sometimes told us a story. We listened enthralled to the escapades of 'Tammy Troot' and his pals. The little ones went home at three o'clock and the big ones at four. About 3.50 p.m. we would line up in a semi-circle and sometimes we would get mental arithmetic questions or history dates or spelling. If you answered correctly you could go. Agony for me when it was arithmetic as my mind would go blank and I was left standing.

Before we left school at night we sang an evening hymn, usually 'Now the day is over, night is drawing nigh'. Everybody walked to and from school in those days. It was great fun. You could play on the way home. I remember only twice my father collected me from school by car. There was a bad thunderstorm and Miss Reid would not let us walk home and she phoned my father. We sat listening to the wireless till he came. Miss Reid eventually learned to drive and she bought a mini car. She had to take me home once, after I nearly fainted when the nurse came to give us our polio jag and I made the mistake of watching the needle go in.

Holidays were summer – about eight weeks – Christmas and Easter, and Tattie holidays in October. At the end of June I remember the whole school walking to Baldernock Church for an end-of-term service. The thing that sticks in my mind is the dog roses blooming at the roadside on our way to the church. The minister came to the school every so often and we used to learn our hymns to sing for him. At Christmas time the older boys got the job of carrying the Christmas tree from the school up to the church. My brother John remembers doing this.

The Christmas party was a highlight of the year. The mummies arrived at dinner-time with our party dresses and we got changed in the 'wee room'. We played all the usual games – pin the tail on the donkey, blind man's buff, pass the parcel, etc. The school concert at the end of the summer term was another great event. The mums, and a few dads, came up in the afternoon and were seated right round the classroom ready to watch the 'show'. We all sat on the benches in the bottom corner and we performed little sketches, songs and poems. Miss Reid herself could play the piano with right hand only. Her sister, Mrs Penman, used to come for the concert and play the piano properly for us. Miss Reid and her sister baked all the cakes and made sandwiches which were served to the mums and dads. I think they had all to bring a cup for their tea.

I have had great fun recalling such happy days. I certainly enjoyed my time at Baldernock School and am pleased that it is still going strong, as so many rural schools have been closed. My family has had a very long connection with Baldernock and I recall with great affection Miss Reid and all my school mates – wonderful times!

**COLIN CAMERON**

Pupil 1956–1961

I lived at 4 Allander Ave, Station Road, Bardowie. I was at Baldernock (or Fluchter Academy as it was called for some reason) from 1956 to 1961, leaving in the equivalent of P5.

The headteacher was Miss Reid, who was small, plump and fierce, with an impressive bosom which kept us all riveted during the morning 'Music & Movement' fitness sessions from the BBC Home Service. The movement was more memorable than the music. There was a greater throughput of teachers in the Infant class, but the only one I remember was Miss Caldwell (sister of my classmate Jill) with whom I was in love. The other influence of the day was Miss Legree, the dinner lady. I have no idea how to spell her name, or where she came from, but she was an important constant in our lives, and always there when needed.

Unsurprisingly given my subsequent academic record, I have little recollection of what actually happened in class. I have absolutely no recollection of what was taught, and certainly none of any extras. I do remember doing a Christmas play once, and I have a feeling that there was quite a bit of singing of a community sort, and there was definitely homework, but of what nature I have no idea.

There were two classrooms, both with rows of desks. I feel that in the Infant room the chairs were integral to the desks, while in the 'big' room they were separate. The big room had a large roller blackboard at one end, and large high windows down one side. These could be reached from the outside by climbing on the roof of some sheds, and someone got pushed through one of them one day.

Playground games included Kick-the-can, Bang – ye'r deid, and Rounders. The latter left a permanent impression on me when an enthusiastic batter, swiping away my inelegant ball, flung rather than dropped the bat. The indentations on my forehead are still to be found. We also went in for 'dreeping' competitions off the back school wall, dangling by our arms and dropping to the ground. Occasionally we would nip down the lane past the orchard to the golf course, watching the tattie-howkers in the field, guddling for minnows in the burn, or nicking errant golf balls from the rough and trying to sell them back to the golfers.

I remember standing at Bardowie crossroads waving to the Queen (or rather, her car) as it passed through – I guess we might have got a day off for that. Other than that, holidays were welcomed whenever they came.

This was before the days of school buses, so we either walked the mile or so to school, or hitched lifts with the 'quarry lorries' – notably Hughie – not something which would go down well these days. Hallowe'en was a good time for pinching neeps from the fields on the way home, cutting off chunks with a penknife and eating them raw.

**ISABEL McNEIL (McDONALD)**

Teacher 1957–1959

I went to teach at Baldernock School straight from college in August 1957, and I left in June 1959. I spent two years at Baldernock and have strong nostalgic feelings about my time there. The headteacher at that time was Miss Anne Reid. She lived in the schoolhouse with her little black dog, Jetta. Jetta had not had the operation and when she was in heat all the farm dogs in the area used to come and howl outside the house. If she managed to get out I was usually sent out to bring her back, followed by all the dogs in the district.

Miss Reid took Primaries 4, 5, 6 and 7, and I had Primaries 1, 2 and 3. Mrs Legrix was the dinner lady and she was also the school cleaner. All the children stayed for dinner as they all lived considerable distances from the school. There was no school bus and so most children had to walk to and from school. The Balmore children took a short cut through the golf course, and it was a common occurrence for someone to fall in the burn. The pipes in the classroom were often covered with various articles of clothing in the hope that they would be dry by the time their owners went home. We kept a box of socks in school especially for this eventuality.

As I said, the children had no transport laid on and as I lived in Torrance I had to travel by bicycle. I found that at most times of the year cycling was an enjoyable experience. However, in the depths of winter it could be rather hazardous and I fell off my bike on a number of occasions and ended up having to walk a good bit of the way. Needless to say, Miss McDonald was quite often late for school in wintertime.

In the summer term Miss Reid liked to put on a concert for the parents, so we were kept busy making costumes and practising our songs. I remember that Miss Reid's sister, Mrs Penman, came from Falkirk to help out. She was a lovely pianist and she baked cakes and scones for the tea afterwards.

At the time I started at Baldernock I had fourteen in my class. I can still remember them, although I have now retired and have forgotten the names of children I have had, in bigger classes, in other schools. In Primary 1 were Anne Morrison, Hazel Barker, Jamie McOuat and George Crosbie. Primary 2 had Altabelle Brown, James Crosbie, Sandra Hood, Raymond Morrison and Irene Morrison, and in Primary 3 were Colin Cameron, Emily Brown, Morag Fairweather, Robert McOuat and Jill Caldwell.

## **AGNES CLARK (McOUAT)**

Pupil 1958–1965

I lived at Dowan Farm, Baldernock. My father, Robert McOuat, attended Baldernock Primary from 1912–1921. I began school in August 1958 and stayed until leaving to go to Balfron Secondary School.

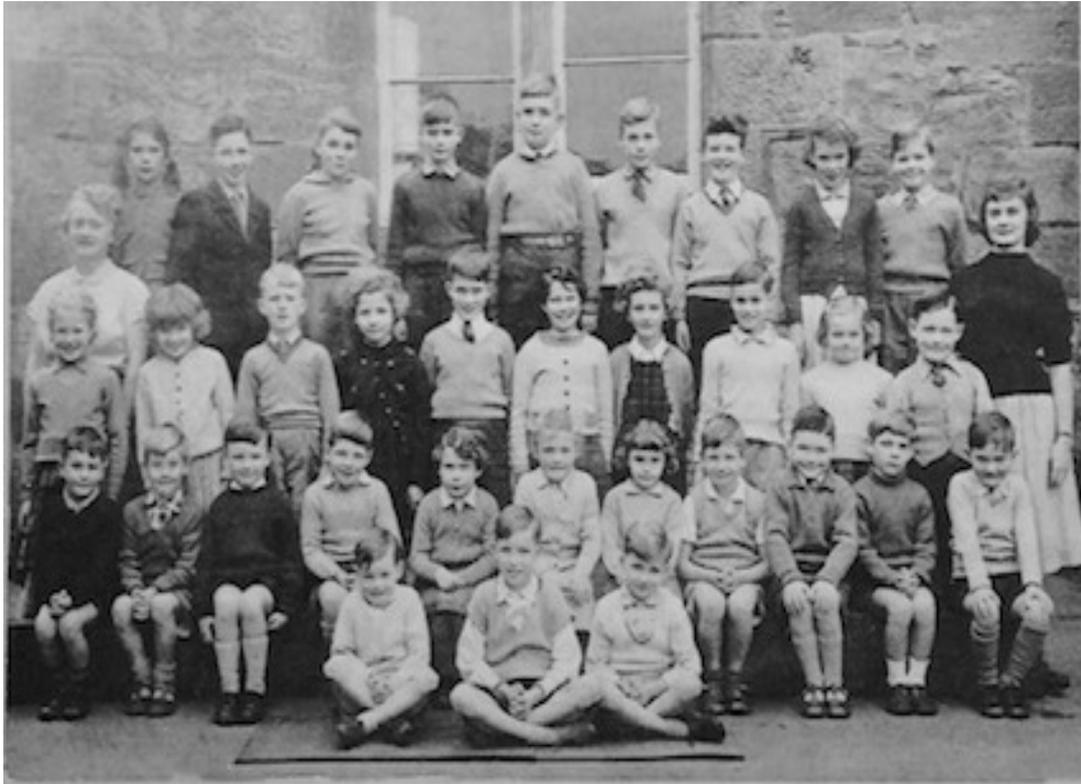
Mrs Fotheringham was a great influence on me. She was young and brought fresh ideas to Baldernock. She treated us with respect and listened to all our ideas with great interest. She was the first adult in the school who took notice of us as people not just little children. Mrs Morrison was my other Infant teacher. She was a very caring and capable teacher who used modern and progressive ideas. She complemented Miss Reid who still taught in the old ways. Miss Fotheringham and Mrs Morrison did a lot of one-to-one teaching as the classes were so small.

There was the 'wee room' and the 'big room'. Primaries 1, 2 and 3 were in the wee room and 4, 5, 6 and 7 in the big room. There was a dinner room that doubled as a library. The hall had a large locked cupboard that was the stock room (a real Aladdin's cave). English and maths, history and geography were the main subjects taught. We also had art, handcrafts, science, gym, music and religion. Gardening was also included in the schoolhouse gardens. On entering secondary education we were as advanced as, if not more so than, a lot of the other children from the surrounding schools.

A typical school day began at 8 o'clock when we all left home to walk the one and a half miles to school using the rights-of-way. We arrived at school about 8.30 for our first playtime. Miss Reid appeared out of the schoolhouse any time between 9.15 and 9.30. She rang a hand bell to summon us in. We stood at our desks to say good morning. Sums and English were always first on the agenda. There followed a second playtime about 10.30, then more book work. Lunchtime was at 12.00, returning any time between 1.30 and 2 o'clock. Time seemed irrelevant as long as the work was done. Lunch times were spent going for walks down the 'Bally' burn, guddling for minnows, or cycling up to the Linn Caves for a real adventure.

We had Easter, summer and Christmas holidays, and extra days or long weekends in October (Tattie holidays).

In Primary 7 the girls decided to hold a concert for the whole school. Miss Reid allowed everyone to walk to Mrs Stewart's house, in the middle of Balmore golf course, to act as our audience. Everything was fun. Education was fun and life was full of happy days at Baldernock.



Pupils of Baldernock Primary School with Miss Reid, headteacher, and Miss Caldwell (1960)

**Pupils** **Back row:** Morag Fairweather, Robert McOuat, Jill Caldwell, John Hood, Ian McNicol, Brian Williamson, David Russell, Jean Crosbie, Colin Cameron. **Third row:** Ann Morrison, Altabelle Brown, Raymond Morrison, Emily Brown, John McMillan, Janet McOuat, Irene Morrison, Ian Crosbie, Sandra Hood, James McOuat. **Second row:** Jim Brown, Alan Morrison, Duncan Brown, Donald Penrice, Agnes McOuat, Jean Penrice, Kay Brown, Sandy Peters, Ewen Cameron, Neil Fairweather, Gordon Wilson. **Front row:** David Crosbie, James Crosbie, George Crosbie.

### MARY STEWART

Mother of children at Baldernock School 1960–1975

I remember children walking to school from Balmore, along the right-of-way path which follows the burn, then goes up past Temple Cottage and along the track through the golf course. Often mothers would walk up with smaller children.

My perceptions of the school were of a fairly harmonious place, where the big girls, especially one or two very motherly ones, would keep the peace, to some extent, and look after the little ones. Kids from different backgrounds seemed to get along with each other,

and I felt that there were no messages of any sort of prejudice, ethnic, religious or social, being transmitted to these young minds, at least as far as the school's influence extended. It seemed to me a safe, tolerant place, providing a very good, sound start.

I still have some vivid memories of Miss Reid. Her little Corgi had a habit of nipping heels when you turned your back. To prevent him doing this she used to answer her front door grasping a rolled up umbrella, and waving it at him when he went to attack. When there was a concert at school Miss Reid conducted the singing with a small stick, tapping her foot and rocking to emphasise the timing. She could seem quite fierce, but at Easter and other holidays she would give the kids sweets and they came home really chuffed.

At lunch times, on nice days, many kids would sweep in on Temple Cottage like a small tornado. For a short time it would be very noisy with shouting, yelling kids rushing around, swinging on the big tree, poking around in the pond, playing games in the garden. Suddenly they would all run back up the track to the school, leaving the place seeming so quiet.

### **CATRIONA ('Tink') JENNINGS (STEWART)**

Pupil 1960–1967

I lived at Temple Cottage, Balmore, and attended Baldernock School from 1960 to 1967. I left in Primary 7.

The only Infant teachers I remember were Miss Telegraph Pole, who was tall and thin, and Miss Scrambled Eggs. I don't remember much about them. Miss Reid was the teacher of the older children. She had a Corgi called Fudge (who used to bite our ankles), red hair, and she could get very cross. She used to shake people by the ears and get very red in the face. I remember she got very cross one day when one of the children hid her belt in a rat hole. I don't remember her ever being cross at me, it was usually the boys. She was very nice most of the time. We were encouraged to follow up subjects we were interested in and Lesley Orr and I started to learn Gaelic when I was in Primary 7.

A school day would begin with a walk up the track over the golf course to school. The school had two classrooms, with desks set in rows, and the dining room. We did more serious subjects like English, maths and science in the morning, and seemed to do art most afternoons. We used to go outside and draw and paint and I remember sitting on top of the little 'shed' to draw the school. Most children from Baldernock took art in secondary school.

The school had a nice atmosphere and I only remember once getting into a fight with someone on the way home because they were picking on my younger brother.

Milk was available at playtime but the milk was warm so I didn't have it. At playtime we often climbed the holly tree, or played games like What's-the-time-Mr-Wolf. At lunch time

we often went to the woods down the track towards the golf course. We once each made little gardens in the wood and the boys used to carve their initials on the trees. Often we'd go to my house. When Corby, our Labrador, had pups, we'd each choose one and name it and come down at lunchtime to play with them.

We sometimes had pet crows and would try to teach them to fly. Sid, Percy and Fred were the best. Percy belonged to one of the boys, David Morrison or Alastair McNicol, mine was Sid. Sid was very tame and would come to meet me from school. Percy returned to the wild. He used to hide apple cores in the gutter of the roof.

We had a den in 'Crow Wood' opposite the golf clubhouse. It was a rhododendron bush with a chicken skeleton hanging outside it and we had postcards of mice dressed up in clothes. John Smilley used to come and for a while kept a dead fish in his spectacle case.

### **LESLEY WISEMAN (ORR)**

Pupil 1961–1968

I lived at 'Storen', Balmore, and attended Baldernock from 1961 to 1968. I left at the end of Primary 7. My mother, Jean Orr (Williamson) and her sisters and brothers also went to Baldernock Primary School.

I remember being very reluctant to stay on what may have been my first day at school. I was in the small entrance hall, with its rows of pegs, being held back by a couple of the 'big boys' while Dad slipped backwards out of the front door, closing it and making his getaway. I'm pretty sure I was making a lot of noise. I was never very enthusiastic about going to school, and it says a lot for the teachers that they managed to provide such a reluctant student with a very good start to her education.

My vague memories of the Infant classroom – the 'wee room' – are partly pleasant and partly unpleasant. I loved making and writing about a little farm, with corrugated paper for the ploughed field. I still have 'My Farm Book' (along with one or two triumphs from the sewing lessons in the 'big ones' classroom). On the other hand, I seemed to be frightened of the Infant teachers (with the exception of Mrs Fotheringham, who I remember being kind and pretty). To this day I have a mental block about times tables which I'm sure stems directly from the ordeal of, in the Infant years, having to stand up, or sit down, but at any rate stand out, if you couldn't answer the multiplication.

Miss Reid was my teacher from Primary 4 onwards. She took the 'big ones' (Primaries 4 to 7) in the 'big ones room'. We did 'sums' for the first part of the day, till playtime, then English till lunchtime. That was the boring bit over. In the afternoon we did all kinds of

interesting and creative things – some kinds of history and geography, sewing, music, and lots of art. We wrote poetry and I remember learning about and writing ‘blank verse’ which I think at that time was quite unusual.

We had a television at the back of the classroom, and I remember watching the launching of the liner, Queen Elizabeth II, and no-one guessing the name in advance – it seemed so obvious once it was announced! I think we also had a big old radio, and listened to musical education programmes that had accompanying booklets. We did, I believe, two concerts each year, one at Christmas and one at the end of the school year. I certainly feel as if we spent most of the year practising for concerts, which I thoroughly enjoyed. The concerts had little plays and musical items. One boy, I can’t remember who, was told to mime the words of the songs as he couldn’t sing in tune. In retrospect that seems a bit unkind but I think Miss Reid was aiming for the highest standards!

We went on school trips. I don’t remember where we went, but I can remember getting on the coach outside the school – very exciting. Miss Reid also took some children to the annual Art Competition in the Kelvin Hall. That was the occasion of my only belting at Baldernock, which was well deserved. I and two friends, Tink and Liliias, were due to go off to the competition in the afternoon, about half-an-hour after the end of the lunch break. We three were having a good time down the golf course and decided that there wasn’t much point going back for half-an-hour of class: we might as well have the extra time playing and go back in time to go to the Kelvin Hall. I’m sure Miss Reid was very worried when we didn’t return at the ringing of the bell, and when we did arrive we were given a smart whack of the belt. I think the belt was used appropriately and was probably absolutely necessary to keep some children in order. I seem to remember Miss Reid chasing (with tiny, skirt-restricted steps) someone around the classroom, waving the belt over her head in frustration.

During the morning playtime we mostly played in and around the playgrounds, front and back, or in the field. One of my favourite things was to play in the old holly tree beside the big gate. The pupils enjoyed a great deal of freedom at lunchtime – roaming the countryside freely. Guddling for trout or just mucking about in the burns was popular. Tree climbing, and jumping off, and assorted ‘dares’ were probably a lot more dangerous than we realised. Visits to the ‘Bakie’s Hole’, a local dump, often produced treasures.

One of the best parts of the day, certainly in the summer, was the slow walk home from school, sometimes with friends and sometimes alone. The route I followed daily was a footpath though the golf course. In places it ran alongside a burn and I remember playing with a friend and sailing our shoes down the burn. Unfortunately one of hers disappeared and she went home with only one. (Later that evening I was sent back, in the dark, to find it.) At Hallowe’en we would pinch ‘tumshies’ from a field on the way home to make our lanterns.

Sometimes, when I was older, I would cycle to school, up Glenorchard Road, to Tower Road, and over the 'humpie' – a hump-backed bridge to the east of the school. Glenorchard Road goes past a wood full of crows' nests. One day I found a young crow on the road, quite mature but unable to fly. I picked him up and sat him on my handlebars, which he gripped quite happily, and I cycled on to school. I left him sitting on the bike, propped against the school wall, and was delighted to find him still there at playtime. I kept him for a time at Temple Cottage, where my friend Tink lived. She was an experienced crow handler, and helped me to feed him and care for him. I called him Pluto and gave him flying practice every lunchtime. One day when I threw him up he managed to stay in the air until he reached a nearby tree. He didn't return to his pen that day, but he stayed near Temple Cottage for a long time – at least I think it was him. The raising of crows was not considered an unusual activity at Baldernock.

## 1962

*March 28*

*Took children to Kelvin Hall to see the Exhibition. A pupil was lost. Police rescued him – he had walked to Dalmuir. No ill effects, but the situation was very worrying. The child left the party to go to the lavatory without informing either his teacher or myself. We were both astonished because we had counted the children most carefully before leaving the Kelvin Hall.*

### **KENNETH ANDERSON**

Pupil 1962–1965

I was at Baldernock from 1962 to 1965, leaving in Primary 4.

My teachers were Miss Gibson (whom I don't remember much) and Miss Reid, the headmistress. When Miss Gibson left she was replaced by Mrs Fotheringham who was very well liked. When Mrs Fotheringham left I believe that the whole school sang 'God Save Mrs Fotheringham' to her. Miss Reid was quite nice, but quite frightening. She was small and brisk, wore a green suit and had a nasty Corgi dog and a mini car.

The main subjects taught were 'the three Rs', although Miss Reid also took some art lessons which we enjoyed. In the Infant classroom, when I started, we used slates to write on, and learned to add with coloured wooden 'rods'. A terrible incident occurred when one girl attacked another with a 'rod' and the other's mum came up to school to 'sort things out'. I don't remember any religious education but we did have nature walks with Mrs Fotheringham, and in summer she would take us outside and read Enid Blyton's 'Famous Five' books to us.

There were two classrooms. The main one was Miss Reid's. It was quite big with a blackboard at the front and pipes round the edge. We sat at desks and there were also benches round the wall. The dinner room led off from the back of this room as did the girls' toilet – both added their distinct aromas to the classroom. The Infants' room was smaller, again with wooden desks and a roll-over blackboard at the front. Quite often there were plants in this room.

In the morning we went to school in a green minibus driven by a very fierce man called Mr. Currie. During the morning we had lessons followed by a mid-morning break when we had free milk and an option to buy biscuits from Miss Reid – the favourites being Royal Scots and Jaffa Cakes. I don't think that we played many organised playground games although two favourites were Giant Steps and Queen Victoria. Later morning lessons were sometimes carried on outside in the field or in the back playground if the weather was good.

At dinner time we had dinner in the dinner room, supervised by a fearsome wee lady from Torrance called Mrs Legrix. We were not allowed out of the room until we had cleared our plates, so consequently many a fishcake or spam slice was hidden in your hanky and then disposed of later in the burn. We had great freedom at dinner time and could play in the field (where there were two good holly bushes to climb inside). Another good outing was down to Temple Cottage where Mary Stewart had interesting visitors and interesting animals including a pony, a monkey, and a big black dog called Corby. To get to Mary's you had to walk across the 'golfie', where sometimes you could find golf balls. You could also 'guddle' for fish in the burn and catch small trout. One day George Crosbie got his finger bitten by a water-rat when he was 'guddling'. Another time a boy lifted a drain cover in the field and climbed into it and got stuck – there was great excitement. The one place that was out of bounds (but very exciting) was the Baker's Hole, a dump opposite North Bardowie Farm.

At the end of the school day I had to walk home to Bardowie. For a while I used to go past Barnellan, but both the Bains and the Hoods had scary dogs and once I was so frightened that I went back to school and Miss Reid ran me home in her mini. After that I used to walk up to Kettlehill with William McOuat and then back down the road to Bardowie.

Two of the highlights of the school year were the sports day, at the end of the summer term, and the school concert, held just before the Christmas holidays. Initially the concerts were held in the evening and were rather grand. I remember some of the girls wearing big net skirts. Later on they were held in the afternoon. Miss Reid used to get very worked up during rehearsals. I remember my brother, Russell, and Neil Orr walking round a cardboard tree which they were supposed to shake whilst singing a song about 'shaking dem simmens down'. They were not putting enough animation into it, so Miss Reid grabbed them each by an arm and swung them round so hard that their hair stood up on end and they couldn't sing. There was usually a mixture of folk and traditional songs, some contemporary songs

(I remember a memorable rendition of 'Blowing in the Wind' – the American protest Civil Rights song – which never made it past the rehearsal stage) and some dancing. A lady came and played the piano, but sometimes her tempo was way out. Lesley Orr once sang a nice song about 'White Horses', but the piano was so fast that it ended up sounding like a punk rock song. On the day of the concert somebody artistic (Lilias Morrison in my day) would carefully write up the programme on the blackboard. At the interval we had plastic beakers of squash and gruesome cold meat sandwiches prepared by Mrs Legrix.

Sports day was held in the front playground which was quite small and sloped down. Each class had a running race which involved several laps of the playground. It could get quite confusing because sometimes the faster runners lapped the slower ones and if Miss Reid hadn't noticed the results could be quite erratic. Certainly you would not have argued about the results with her. The finale of sports day was the obstacle race which involved several different activities including running along a bench and running backwards and forwards with a bean bag. Miss Reid always demonstrated the course first but invariably, again, the race always got confused as people forgot, for example, how many times they had to pass a hoop down their body. I suspect that watching it now would be very funny but at the time both the competitors and Miss Reid took it very seriously.



Pupils of Baldernock Primary School with Miss Reid, headteacher, and Mrs Fotheringham (1965)

**Pupils** **Back row:** Ted McBride, John McBride, Alan Stewart, William McOuat, Don Cameron, Duncan Brown, David Morrison, Norman Penrice, Andrew McFarlane, Robert Crosbie, Christopher Lenton. **Third row:** Linda —, Margaret Crosbie, Lilias Morrison, Agnes McOuat, Jean Penrice, Alma Watson, Catriona Stewart, Kay Brown, Carol Sharp. **Second row:** Gavin Muirhead, Fiona Patterson, Alison Dewar, Sally Allen, Susan Matthew, Nancy Imrie, Edie Stewart, Margaret Imrie, Mary Nisbet, —, Jeanette Boag. **Front row:** Robert Sharp, Neil Orr, Robin Arnott, John Nisbet, Marty Stewart, Ronald Imrie.

## RUSSELL ANDERSON

Pupil 1964–5 and 1967–8

In 1964–65 my Infant teacher was Mrs Fotheringham. She was very popular, so much so that when she left the whole school sang 'God save Mrs Fotheringham'. Then there were several short-term fill-ins including a Miss Russell. The headmistress and teacher of Primaries 4 to 7 was Miss Annie Reid. The children in Primary 1 were terrified of her. The dinner lady was Mrs Legrix. Nobody was quite sure about her name and some called her Miss McGree. The minibus driver was Mr Currie. In 1964–65 we still used slates in the Infants' classroom. Arithmetic was taught using rods (Cusenaire) – 1s were 3/8" wooden cubes stained yellow, 2s were twice as long as 1s and were red, and so on up to 10s. The classroom had space in the two front corners which were often occupied by children standing facing the wall as a punishment. There was a big cupboard opposite the door in which books were kept. Choosing a book out of the cupboard and reading it was a treat.

There weren't many school rules but one was 'no throwing stones' and I got the belt for this in Primary 1. Miss Reid had heard about the stone fight we had been having at playtime on the roof of the back shelters and came into Mrs Fotheringham's class to punish me. It was only a tap but I cried because it was so terrifying. We got time off one day to go down to Bardowie Cross and wave to the Queen who was passing through en route to somewhere. Someone gave us wee paper Union Jacks to wave.

In 1967–68 the Infant teacher was Mrs Herdman. I was in Primary 4 so was taught by Miss Reid but on two afternoons a week we went through to Mrs Herdman for history and geography. We often got a laugh in the afternoon when we were in Mrs Herdman's classroom. One particular boy would excuse himself from Miss Reid's classroom and would look in and torment Mrs Herdman on his way past. She got wise to this and on hearing Miss Reid's door opening would tiptoe over and hide behind the door. When the boy popped his head in she would try to grab him. If she didn't get hold of him she sometimes chased him out in the playground and we'd all be up at the door to see if she got him.

Miss Reid's classroom had an upright piano at the back left, near the door that led out to the back. The phone was on the right hand side near the main door. Miss Reid had a special posh voice for answering the phone, 'Annie Reid', as if every next call might be a suitor who might judge her on her phone answering manner. Miss Reid taught the 3Rs as far as I remember. There were certainly no foreign languages. We did sing regularly with her playing the piano – we used the Singing Together books. Miss Reid had tapes of all the songs which I think she taped from schools' radio. We practised them for the school concert at Christmas time and anyone who sang off-key had to practise mouthing the words without making any noise. As well as the basics we went outside for nature study. Peripatetic gym teachers came from time to time, but not regularly. Sometimes gym was outside in the front

playground, when it involved throwing bean bags about. It wasn't long before they ended up on the shelter roof or in the burn. We also had gym in the dinner room sometimes.

Miss Reid may have been traditional but was open to ideas – once she told us about a transcendental meditation lesson she had had. She explained how to get into deep meditation but not how to get out of it: perhaps she hoped some would try it and make her job easier for a while. Another example of her willingness to innovate was her discovery within a few weeks of lino tiles coming into the shops that they could be cut into thin strips which were good for belting naughty children. One tile made about six belts. The first one she used was sky blue marbled with white. For the same purpose she once tried out a length of electrical cable across the back of the legs which was remarkably effective.

At wee playtime we usually ate the piece out of our poke. Miss Reid sold biscuits, individually or by the packet if you had enough money – Ginger Nuts, Rich Teas, Royal Scots, Fruit Shortcakes, Gypsy Creams and Majestics. Then it was outside for games of Dodgie, Kingsie, Victoria, Giant Steps, What's-the-time-Mr-Wolf, Kick-the-can or Fights in the Park. This last was not really a game, more just a big brawl. We played it very occasionally, perhaps once or twice a term. It started suddenly when out of the blue someone shouted 'Fights in the park!' You had to go straight to the park (the old garden where the Portakabin is now) and fight the first person you met there. I hated it because I always seemed to meet Duncan Brown who had me beaten in no time. In winter, if it was frosty, we used to make ice slides in the front playground by carrying the water in crisp pokes and pouring it on the cold ground. Often there were blood stains at the end from cut heads before Mrs Legrix came out with the hot ashes from the boiler and spoiled the fun.

At dinner playtime we went hunting golf balls (Neil Orr, Robin Arnott and I found 53 one day after the burn had been flooded), burning grass, jumping the burn, playing dares or down to the Stewarts' (Temple Cottage) where there was a great rope swing, lots of animals (one boy got bitten by the monkey when it escaped from the roof of its shed) and sometimes rides on the Mini Moke. One dinner time Crocket came back to school with a water rat attached by its teeth to his finger. I don't remember if it was dead or alive but the story was that it had bitten him while he was guddling under the bridge and couldn't be prised off.

Another time we were up on the cloakroom roofs and found a way to get inside the main attic from there. There was a wee hole in the ceiling of Miss Reid's classroom so we could look through. When she came back from her lunch we dropped grit through the hole, trying to get a direct hit on her. It was really funny and I think we eventually gave ourselves away by laughing out loud so that she realised what was going on.

Mid-afternoon once a week the butcher's van came. Miss Reid always went out to buy meat so it was a bit wild in the classroom for a few minutes. The butcher sold Lees' Snowballs and if we had money we were allowed to go out and buy one.

Every day I walked to school from Balmore with Neil Orr and Christopher Lenton. We cut up the back to the golf clubhouse then along the path beside the burn, past the monkey tree, up to Temple Cottage, then up the road. On the way home we often guddled for trout and put the ones we caught in pools we made with stones and gravel. On the rare occasions that we had money it could be spent on the way home at the clubhouse. You just knocked on the kitchen window and they opened it and took your order. Most of the sweets were big things like Mars Bars, beyond our means, but we could afford penny caramels and they were much bigger then than now.

### **NEIL ORR**

Pupil 1964–1971

There was no other world. The land of Balmore, Baldernock and Bardowie was flat. At the edges were Torrance and Milngavie – any further and you fell off.

As a child my imagination gorged on Balmore golf course, the Branziet Burn, the space around Baldernock School and the Gemmells' farm. My energy matched their size. My friends were perfect in every way except for John Nisbet who was overly theatrical as a goalkeeper.

My memories of the long walk to school are vivid. From the back of my house I climbed a long high flight of steps built from blocks of sandstone. I walked a short distance to the first fence of smooth wire strands. Standing momentarily wobbly on the top wire or climbing through took me into a long gently rising field. At the top was a gate which led onto the single-track tarmac road which led to Balmore Golf Club. This was the best of roads. Not the sharp, rough, grey and gravelly surface but the smooth, black, wonderfully tarry kind that melted in summer. The road stopped at the clubhouse where a path led behind it and down a steep hill to the first bridge of the journey: the first crossing of the Branziet Burn. The changes in scenery were striking. From field to road to path to water to enormous, smooth green, stretched-to-the-horizon golf course. It was immense. There was always the temptation to play on the vast tidy openness but fear of the greenkeeper won the day. The bunkers were immaculately raked but the fact that they contained sand made them justifiably children's territory. The greens were absolutely forbidden. The greenkeepers swung long thin canes across the close-cropped green, swashing away the morning dew. I followed the path between stone dykes leading from the golf course to a second bridge. The first had been made of old railway sleepers: this one was a real bridge. It had a handrail and was slatted underfoot allowing me to see the water below. On occasions it wasn't sufficient to walk over – climbing below satisfied my curiosity and ensured no part of the journey was missed. The path now ran alongside the burn, the water flowing towards me. There was a steep bank to the right and a stone dyke to the left. Three rocks crossed the path where small feet kept the surface low. In the pools trout darted for cover as my

shadow crossed the water and my feet patted the ground. This stretch of path held a special interest. There was a row of trees on the right between path and burn many of which had bulbous growths on the trunks. Each roundish shape was known as a monkey's head. The monkeys' heads were fed a handful of grass on each passing in the same way as climbers add to cairns. Each time I passed the grass had gone. Eaten, no doubt. Crossing a third wooden bridge with a small waterfall below led back across the golf course to another single track road. Now this was a road. A surface of loose stones with a raised middle section where grass grew. To walk this road led me by a bell which hung on a chain from a metal pole. Its purpose was to warn golfers of each other's presence. It was impossible to pass without giving it a hefty clang. I could take a different route across the golf course again. We knew this as going 'roon the roonel'. I don't know why. On the hill of this shortcut there was long rough grass which we regularly set alight. I don't remember where we got the matches from but the memory of striking a light and transferring it to dry grass, gathered and folded over to ensure a healthy fire is clear. The smell and sight of dry grass alight and spreading is unique. At a certain time of the year curlews nested here. The birds would dive and scream if I got too close to the nest. The journey to school was long and eventful – the journey home was longer.

Baldernock Primary School showed a high green wooden front to the world. The playground below was tarmac and sloped gently to a wooden fence which kept us from a small burn. To one side of the playground was a solid stone dyke on the other side of which was a rough road. The road running alongside the playground was level. The sloping playground gave the stone dyke a unique play quality – the higher the play side went, the longer the drop to the road. Choosing at which point to jump the wall and dare the drop was an act of bravery. At the bottom corner was a gate joining the wall and wooden fence – it was mostly used as a goal. On the other side was a slate-roofed, stone-built shed completely open to the front. There was a long, green-painted wooden bench fixed to the back wall, and a green metal support column in the middle which was impossible to climb. The right hand opening formed the other goal. We played football every day. Two captains stood before a line of expectant players. They were a mix of those who were sought after and those who were left. Ronald Imrie was always first choice goalkeeper because he would throw himself onto the tarmac to save a ball. Our football was played on this sloping ground with teams charging between diagonally opposite goals like the random rush of a flock of starlings. If a shot beat the keeper for height there was great debate about claims that the ball was over the bar.

The rough road beside the playground led the world to the home of Stan and Mary Stewart. Mary Stewart was a vet who kept birds, dogs and, for a short time, a rescued fox in cages within grounds which surrounded a large stone-built two storey home. The Stewarts' home was often an extension of the playground. You could swing on the trapeze in the long hall, jump in and out of the unusual step-through window-cum-door, visit the fox in its run or gawp at the hippies who came to stay. A lady called Jan lived and worked with the Stewarts. She drove a Mini Moke – a forest-green buggy with a canvas hood and wide

wheel-arches. The Mini Moke picked up kids on the way along the road. The best thing that could happen was to take the last place in the Moke and be driven past some hapless soul with Jan hooting and the passengers shouting in derision.

Not far from the school was a rubbish dump known as the 'Baker's Hole'. Rubbish was tipped over the lip of a steep slope, at the bottom of which was a deep and dirty pool. We knew for a fact that a baker had been tipping rubbish from his horse drawn cart when it fell and drowned in the pool. We were absolutely forbidden to go there and spent many happy and exciting hours rummaging through the rubbish or playing on a raft made of oil drums and wooden boards, punting across the water with a wooden pole. One day a small boy threw a brick through the screen of a discarded television. The implosion was amazing. Flying glass sliced the boy's forehead and there was trouble that day.

In the opposite direction to the 'Baker's Hole' was a small wood. It was here that four of us threw down a challenge and made a stand against the whole school. In preparation we made bows and arrows with string and sharpened sticks. We drew the stuffing from a mattress across the wooden arrows and soaked it in white spirit. On seeing our enemy approach we set the stuffing alight and fired our jagged sticks. The whole episode was completely within our playing possibilities at Baldernock School.

Miss Reid was the headteacher during my time at Baldernock. She was the kindest lady who, at times, was driven to ferocious temper by our inability to sit still and listen. I don't remember learning a great deal, although on going to secondary school I wasn't disadvantaged. Miss Reid always dressed in the roughest tweed. She had a kind face with a liberal growth of white hair around her mouth. She was an individual in every sense, a spinster who lived with a toothless Corgi. She was dedicated to her school and her children. It was a mark of our respect for her that despite her striking characteristics she was never given a nickname. She organised shows and Christmas plays, paid from her own pocket for bus trips, taught four classes at once, and if you were on the receiving end of a temper she held your ears and shook. Miss Reid was so loved and respected that many pupils and parents visited her in her retirement and many people felt a great loss when she died.

The other staff member I most clearly recall was Mrs Legrix, mainly because I could not believe that day in, day out she served the most disgusting frog spawn for pudding. As a result of complaints several parents came to the school to sample lunch. This would have given our opinions strength and changed the menu, however the traitors claimed to have thoroughly enjoyed the meal!

The faces of the children I went to school with are etched in my memory. Occasionally I meet an ex-pupil. No number of years or experiences can dull these images from childhood and I'm still surprised to see an adult trait or characteristic in the small friend I remember.

I had no way of knowing it at the time but Baldernock Primary School was a unique, special and happy environment, cocooned by wide open space, cared for by dedicated teachers and parents. All of that allowed a very small me to feel important, capable, free to learn and confident to explore.



Pupils of Baldernock Primary School with Miss Reid, headteacher, and Mrs Herdman (*circa* 1970)

**Pupils** **Back row:** —, David McBride, Ronald Imrie, Robin Orr, Gavin Muirhead, Ted McBride, John McBride, John Nisbet, Neil Orr, Marty Stewart, Kevin Earl, Billy Boag. **Third row:** Janet McFarlane, Jill Allan, Sally Arnott, Mary Nisbet, Alison Dewar, Sally Allan, Edie Stewart, Susan Anderson, Nancy Imrie, Margaret Imrie, Lynda Morrison, Ruth Imrie, —. **Second row:** Jim McFarlane, Andrew Wilson, Andrew Boag, Christine Imrie, May Bowie, Libby Imrie, Catherine Ralston, Glenys Muirhead, Anne Laughland, —, Clare Cunningham, Maureen Nisbet, Bruce Arnott, Sandy Orr. **Front row:** Alan Reid, Robbie Stewart, Alex Forbes, Andrew Crosbie, James Nisbet, Simon Bridges, Scott Wilson, Angus Cunningham, Alan Brown.

## 1964

*September*

*Lectures on Introduction of Project Methods. Experiments in all subjects is the keynote. Creative English has become important – stressing open end situations.*

## 1966

*May*

*Teacher seriously ill having taken a nervous breakdown.*

## **ROBBIE STEWART**

Pupil 1968–1975

I was the youngest and last of the five Stewarts to pass through Baldernock. I was a pupil from P1 to P7, from 1968 to 1975. I left the year Miss Reid retired. The teachers at that time were Miss Reid, Miss Hart and Mrs Fotheringham. Mr. Fulton drove the school bus and brought the dinners.

We used to walk over the golf course, from the 16th tee over to where the 'sand pit' used to be, then up the lane. The morning prayer was followed by lessons. I can't really recall specific subjects beyond language and maths. We were not, however, taught grammar or structured spelling. In the main classroom were single lidded desks, T.V., piano...

During playtimes there were various 'whole school' games including Kick-the-can, Relievers, Rounders, Red Rover and British Bulldogs. Other more incidental activities were playing on bikes, climbing on walls and roofs, 'dreeping' off 'Rose Cottage', and rocket ship games in the holly tree. Also leaping over, or just sitting on, the playground wall, and going for walks. We had occasional bike races round the 'square' (past Easter Fluchter, up by Low Blochairn, down to the church and back down the dump road past 'The Baker's Hole'). There were often large groups playing on the swings or having water fights at Temple Cottage.

The weather and time of year, then as now, clearly influenced what we did and where we went. Squidging tar on the road softened by the hot summer sun. Burning holes in paper using a magnifying glass, or perhaps simply climbing up onto the flat roof of the cloakroom and lying on the hot black felt. Sitting in noisy, steaming sheds when wet and cold 'outside'. The disappointment at coming out to find that a brilliantly and painstakingly polished slide made on a previous playtime had been salted by some unknown, unseen adult. Yes, there were I suppose some things that, when they became more obviously dangerous, had to have curbs put upon them. But a really good slide?

The trouble was, many of the games we played involved personal risk of injury. Indeed with some, danger and risk were really the whole point. 'Knify', or the more dangerous 'chicken', for example, played by two with penknives or little sheath knives. This was understandably banned. So, however, was the traditional British Bulldogs where twenty or more children would collectively put themselves into a situation where risk and danger were essential elements of the game, and glory (or the infamy of depriving another of it) was the goal. The final straw for Miss Reid with this game was when I, if my memory serves me correctly, picked Robbie Ralston up by the ears in order to get him 'out'! (Sorry, Robbie.) One of the previously three weeping willows was also lost to this game.

Before the Portakabin was built we used to cycle in the field it now occupies, make a track and race and 'bomb about'. To register our protest after the Portakabin was built in our

field, we created a track with a really skiddy and muddy corner positioned to make the maximum amount of mud fly over the hut, and splattered it well. We deservedly got into serious trouble over that and Simon and myself (the ringleaders) had to scrub the side of the Portakabin clean.

I once brought a pair of boxing gloves to school. The fairest way they could be used was for Simon, being left handed, to have the left while I took the right. It was a short lived and rather brutal game which ended in one or both of us with bloody noses.

A fantastic seasonal activity was stubble fights in the field. After the crop had been cut, the stubble which was left could be grabbed in bunches and hauled out of the ground with great clods of earth still attached. These made perfect missiles and would fly with grace and stability until they found their target. I was informed by my brother Marty that Robin Orr's eye was the last unfortunate target before that game was stopped (till the next year anyway).

On extremely wet days, when the burn was so high that the road became spectacularly flooded, one or two of us would go to the top of the hill to await the regular empty clang and rumble of one of MacFarlane's lorries on its way to Barraston Quarry. On its approach some of us would desperately urge the driver to go faster, while the rest, some crouching behind corrugated metal sheets, waited in anticipation and building excitement. Some drivers, probably with a greater sense of responsibility (but no sense of fun), would slow disappointingly to a mere crawl, creating nothing more than a gentle wash and a groan of disapproval. Others, of a more carefree and accommodating nature, would accelerate down the hill, charging towards the vast plain of water that used to be the road. The cries and yells of fear and delight rose to a crescendo as a curtain of water and spray surged into the air and came tumbling dramatically down upon and around us.

One warm, early summer dinner time a small troop of girls and boys took a stroll up to the Linn Caves to do a spot of 'snogging'. (Nice choice of venue what with the bits of old cars and bursting bags of rubbish!) Clambering down the bank towards the Linn we came across a couple (adults) of a similar (yet one would now think, more mature) disposition, just across the burn. This encounter merely made us feel more 'naughty' ourselves and we settled on the grass on our side. It didn't take long for the man to become rather irate and he started shouting that he was a school inspector and was just about to come and visit the school! Slightly dubious about the truth of this statement we thought it best to leave, which we did.

Back in the days, as they say, when playgrounds were strictly the domain of children, and the limits to what you could do and where you could go were dictated not by playground supervisors or clear rules and boundaries, but more by how much time was available and, merely, the weather, we fortunate children were blessed with Baldernock Primary School.

About a quarter of a century ago I was sitting in Miss Hart's class, probably Primary 4. I'm not sure what specifically inspired the thought (possibly Miss Hart herself) but I remember thinking, 'I would like to be a teacher'. So now here I am, a lot later, and after a fairly long and valuable detour through joinery, a primary school teacher.



Pupils of Baldernock Primary School with Mrs Morrison and Miss Hart (*circa* 1971)

**Pupils** **Back row:** Robbie Ralston, Jim McFarlane, —, Robbie Stewart, John Nisbet, Angus Moir, Scott Wilson, Bruce Arnott, Andrew Wilson, Alan Brown. **Third row:** Glenys Muirhead, Christine Imrie, —, Catherine Ralston, Ruth Imrie, May Bowie, Alison Drake, Mary Nisbet, —, Lesley Morrison. **Second row:** Bruce Allan, —, Emma Robertson, Fiona McBride, Lois Anderson, Frances Wallace, Vivienne Brown, Rhona Morrison, Lesley Laughland, Hilary Brown, Isobel Henderson, Alan Reid. **Front row:** Stephen Wilson, Andrew Curtis, Ian Wallace, Gary Crosbie, William Imrie.

### **SHEENA FORSYTH**

Needlework teacher 1968–1982

In October 1968 I started going to Baldernock School on a Tuesday morning as visiting teacher of needlework. At that time the school was in Stirlingshire and that Education Authority employed specialist teachers in primary schools. Baldernock was then a two-teacher school and I was made very welcome. I took two classes each morning: Primaries 3

to 5 till the morning interval and Primaries 6 and 7 after the interval. Miss Reid was the headteacher and she lived in the schoolhouse. At the interval she gave us tea and biscuits in her house – it was very friendly.

The children did a variety of sewing and knitting, and Primaries 6 and 7 enjoyed using the sewing machine. It was a wonderful opportunity for them since the classes were small.

The room I used also served as the dinner room and the dinner lady arrived with the dinners at 11.45 and then I had to find a quiet corner where I sorted the 'work' and left everything ready for the following week. The school was increasing in numbers and when a third teacher was appointed the sewing classes moved into a room in the schoolhouse. It was then unoccupied since Miss Colquhoun, the headteacher who came when Miss Reid retired, lived in Milngavie.

In 1982 I retired and was very sorry to leave the friendly atmosphere of Baldernock School.

## **1969**

*April 28*

*Roll has risen to 63.*

### **ANDREW WILSON**

Pupil 1970–1977

I lived at No. 4, Barraston Holdings, Torrance. All four Wilson brothers attended Baldernock and now my son, Donald, and daughter, Claire, attend, with Peter coming along in the future. My mother worked as school secretary / school meals assistant for eight years, from January 1978 to December 1985.

Miss Reid was the headteacher while I was at school and she lived in the schoolhouse (now used for Playgroup and the school offices). My memories of Miss Reid are that she was particularly good with a garden cane, and her dog, Fudgie, had to be kept indoors while we tended the garden otherwise he would have chased us. Other teachers when I was there were Miss Hart, who married a local farmer and became Mrs Watson, and Mrs Morrison. Mrs Legrix was the janitor, cleaner and dinner lady combined.

During Primaries 1, 2 and 3 we travelled to school and back by bus, but from Primary 4 onwards we cycled in the summer and our parents would share a run driving us in the winter months.

Prayers would be said first thing in the morning before lessons. Maths, English, history and geography were subjects studied at school. There were two classrooms to start with and later on the cabin was built. We sat at small, single wooden desks. Curtains hung on the windows in the big classroom. We would climb up and hide behind the curtains, slide the windows open and climb up onto the roof. It was common practice to climb onto the dinner room roof and through the hatch into the attic of the large classroom. This all stopped when the ceiling cracked around 1975 and Miss Reid caned the culprits, myself included.

Playtime was flexible – games included Dodge ball, Kick-the-can, British Bulldogs, Tig, etc. The more adventurous playtimes were spent scaling the roofs, guddling in the burn or playing in the woods.

Lunchtime was in the dinner room. No packed lunches in those days. A big container sat at the side of the sink and was appropriately called ‘the dump’. When Miss Reid and Mrs Legrix were not looking a frantic dash was made to scrape the contents of the plate into the container. After lunch we were free to roam the countryside. The ‘Bakie’s Hole’ was a favourite place. It was a dump which could have been an old mine or quarry. The Linn Caves was another place to investigate, as was Fluchter Quarry, where children played until it was filled in. Guddling at ‘the Humpy’ was a favourite pastime. Temple Cottage was also one of our haunts as well as the clubhouse on the golf course. Excursions further afield took us by bike to Torrance Cafe.

Afternoon classes were often disrupted by the sound of Brown the Butcher’s van drawing into the school yard. The classroom was vacated by the children rushing out for crisps and sweets and Miss Reid would pick up her bag and toddle out to get her meat.

Holidays at school came at Easter, summer, autumn and Christmas, and we had a special holiday for Princess Anne’s wedding.

### **RHONA MORRISON**

Pupil 1971–1978

I lived in Balmore at The Croft. My father was at Baldernock: Robert Morrison. I was there from Primary 1 until leaving at the end of Primary 7.

Miss Hart was my first teacher then Mrs Maynard, then finally Miss Colquhoun. Mrs Maynard used to read to us at the end of the day and this was my favourite time. The books that are the strongest in my memory are *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *The Phantom Tollbooth*. When Mrs Maynard left Baldernock to teach at Banton I thought at the time that I would never get over her leaving.

Subjects were fairly general. I do remember gardening and woodland walks, painting, and drama which involved singing. Classrooms were fairly big, as I remember, with the walls covered with children's paintings.

A typical day at school, as far as I can recall, would begin with us being picked up by the school bus just outside our house. The actual day-to-day routine I don't really remember, just that my time at Baldernock was always a happy time and I still have close friends from those days. Although all of my contemporaries have now moved away most of the parents are still in the parish so we always hear what everyone else is up to.

At the time I didn't realise how lucky I was but now, looking back and talking to people who went to primary school in cities, I know we really were fortunate to have such a lovely setting with lots of room to run about.



Pupils of Baldernock Primary School with Miss Reid, headteacher, and Miss Hart (*circa* 1973)

**Pupils** **Back row:** Andrew Wilson, Seoras McKenzie, Davy Clarke, Angus Moir, Simon Bridges, Robbie Stewart, Andrew Crosbie, Andrew Boag, Neil Moir. **Fourth row:** —, Alan Reid, Robbie Ralston, Bruce Allan, Sandy Orr, Jim McFarlane, Howard Thomson, Alan Brown, Gary Crosbie, —, Stephen Wilson. **Third row:** Lesley Laughland, Christine Imrie, Libby Imrie, Alison Drake, Ruth Imrie, Janet McFarlane, Caroline Frazer, Jill Allan, Ann Laughland, May Bowie, Helen Fraser, Vivienne Brown, Fiona Buchan, Glenys Muirhead. **Second row:** Oliver Riches, John Ralston, Anne Bowie, Isobel Henderson, Janice Alexander, Hilary Brown, Lois Anderson, Shona Phair, Rhona Morrison, Fiona McBride, Linda Frazer, Lydia Thomson, Tom Crosbie, Cameron Phair. **Front row:** Stewart Bridges, William Henderson, Michael Brown, Andrew Curtis.

## 1971

*January 22*

*Again asked sub-committee about a mobile classroom.*

*June 22*

*Children went to Portobello Baths. Attendants turned on waves for 20 minutes especially for our pupils. Children greatly enjoyed this.*

*June 30*

*School closed for summer break. At last granted mobile classroom. Building has started.*

## 1972

*October 18*

*Granted a week's holiday at this time. This break in October is to be a permanent feature.*

### **PAULINE FRASER**

Cleaner / dinner lady 1973–1977

My time at Baldernock School as cleaner and dinner lady was very enjoyable.

One might think it an onerous job but, as Miss Reid said, 'It isn't hard work but it's constant!'

Baldernock was still old fashioned, although it was gradually being updated – new plastic chairs instead of wooden ones, and so on. After my time, there were new toilets built. Instead of going outside they are now under one roof. The old ones were easy enough to clean – with a hose pipe!

At the end of the day I loved to see, by just looking around, what had happened each day – pictures on the wall, paint spilled on the floor, words on the blackboards. Miss Reid's chair surrounded by small chairs meant story time, not always from a book. Learning time by talking and listening together. I was always amazed at the things 'Miss Reid told us about it'.

I remember finding some old record books in a cupboard. How times had changed. One of the duties of the cleaner was to 'fumigate' the classrooms. Reasons for low attendance were 'helping with the potato picking' or having no shoes to wear.

The duty of dinner lady was to serve and wash up. The dinners came by van from another school, Torrance or Lennoxton. The dinners were quite varied and usually plentiful. The most hated dishes were black pudding and butter beans! There was no choice in those days. I think I was quite soft with the children: I didn't try very hard to make them eat what was before them. I remember one of my daughters coming home with butter beans in her pocket: Miss Reid had said she had to eat them before she could go out to play! One meal the children loved was on coming home from the school trip. Miss Reid would stop the bus at the fish and chip shop and order 40 bags of chips for the return journey.

While I was at Baldernock I started coaching gymnastics at the Allander Sports Centre and started a class for the Baldernock children. That year one of the Sportsmen of the Year Photograph competitions showed a little girl from Baldernock trying to do the splits with a look of agony on her face! But what a photograph!

When my girls started at Baldernock they were warned that if they fell in the burn they would have to wear some of Miss Reid's clothes until theirs were dry. This seemed quite a threat: I can't recall it happening whilst I was at the school even though there were often wet shoes around from playing in the burn.

I think children in small schools are so lucky to have the space to develop without being overwhelmed by numbers. It was something really nice about Baldernock, knowing all the children, the brothers and sisters, mums and dads, aunts and uncles and cousins and grannies and grandads! One big happy family.

### **MISS AGNES COLQUHOUN**

Headteacher 1975–1984

I was appointed as headteacher of Baldernock Primary School in September 1975. This was a year of much change from the County system of local government to Regionalisation, Baldernock then becoming part of Strathclyde Region. As a school (previously being within Stirling County) we were now transferred to Dumbarton Division, HQ at the town of Dumbarton.

Our new bosses were very generous in supplying and re-equipping the small rural school, rather neglected by Stirling in previous years. Classrooms were modernised and the three-teacher school (Roll of around 50–60 pupils) settled into a pleasant routine of traditional teaching using textbooks and jotters and other educational equipment.

My staff and I managed to incorporate many of the new ideas in education, in addition to the basic principles of English and mathematics. I had a teaching staff of three (including myself as a full-time teacher of the two Senior stages). I was ably supported by an ancillary staff of a cleaner cum dining room attendant, and an auxiliary.

Having no full-time janitor I opened up the school building before 9 a.m. each morning, as some of the children from the outlying farms arrived early by taxi. The majority of the pupils joined the school bus (Green's of Kirkintilloch) at various points from Balmore village, Bardowie, Barnellan and individual houses en route.

Having spent all my teaching years in city schools, school life, although basically the same, took on a slightly different complexion. As well as teaching full-time, I had to oversee the maintenance of the school building (ably supported by the maintenance staff at Kirkintilloch) and for the first few years do some secretarial work. Latterly I was allocated a part-time secretary, who combined this with her duties as assistant dining attendant. This was greatly appreciated by me.

We now sent our 11+ pupils to Douglas Academy, Milngavie, having previously been a feeder school to Kilsyth Academy. A Schools' Council was set up and a parent representative and I attended Council meetings at Douglas Academy at intervals.

Meanwhile at local level our school still lacked visiting teachers for physical education and music, etc. Swimming instruction was finally arranged which meant the P4–P7 pupils had a weekly visit to Allander Sports Centre at Milngavie. This was greatly enjoyed by the older pupils. I managed to give a limited musical lesson or two to the pupils in the upper school but was pleased to have a part-time teacher of music appointed during my later years at the school. Also we had the services of a sewing and handwork specialist teacher for half a day each week, very much welcomed by the staff and pupils.

The children looked forward to their weekly visit from Mr Devlin, the Minister of Baldernock Church. I arranged for a school service to be held in the church each term and the parents were invited to attend these services when the pupils read the bible lessons and the school choir contributed a musical item or two.

On the whole I found the country children very 'biddable' and had no problem with discipline. In the playground it was interesting to see how all age groups played happily together while the older pupils always kept a watchful eye on the younger ones. There was no school uniform in those days as I felt the youngsters had to dress for the weather, summer and winter. I don't think it detracted from the character of the school.

I remember one very severe winter at Baldernock when the school had to be closed for one day. Another incident I recall was when I had to abandon my car in a deep snowdrift on the return journey to my home in Milngavie. Rescue was at hand, however, when a kind farmer found a way home for me. In contrast to this there were happy rambles in the warm summer days to local places of interest – the Linn Caves or the Auld Wives' Lifts.

I am delighted to hear from time to time of the excellent careers many of my former pupils have made, hoping that in some way the foundation laid in the basic subjects at primary

level have contributed to their success in their various trades and professions. I should like to pay tribute, too, to the constant but unobtrusive support and consideration I received from the parents of my pupils throughout my ten years at Baldernock.

It is my earnest hope that Baldernock School will continue to be a source of fine learning into the new millennium and beyond.



Pupils of Baldernock Primary School with Miss Colquhoun, headteacher, and Mrs Brownlee  
(circa 1975)

**Pupils** **Back row:** Hilary Brown, Rhona Morrison, Lesley Laughland, Shona Phair, Helen Frazer, Vivienne Brown, Lois Anderson, Frances Wallace, Fiona McBride. **Fourth row:** William Imrie, Alan Brown, Dan O'Keefe, Seoras McKenzie, Andrew Wilson, Bruce Allan, Gary Crosbie, Alan Reid, Ian Wallace, Paul O'Keefe, Michael Brown. **Third row:** Andrew Curtis, Cameron Phair, Tom Crosbie, Stephen Wilson, Isobel Henderson, Jim McFarlane, Robbie Ralston, Sandy Orr, Linda Frazer, Frazer Murray, John Ralston, Oliver Riches. **Second row:** Sophie Hansen, Lucy Keele, Clare Keele, Morag Drummond, Grace Henderson, Mary Robertson, Sarah O'Keefe, Anne Bowie, Susanna Riches, Toni Jackman, Sandra Williamson, Maureen Fairfull, Celia Fairfull, Morag Morrison, Isla Brown. **Front row:** Alan Crosbie, Thomas O'Keefe, William Henderson, Angus Wilson, Stewart Bridges, Archie Alexander.

## **1974**

*December 3–5*

*Staff on strike. This is the first time this has happened in this school. We acted on the advice given by E.I.S.*

## **1975**

*May 15*

*This marks the start of Reorganisation. We are now part of Strathclyde Region, Dumbarton Division.*

*September 15*

*Miss Reid removed today to Crook of Devon. The school house is now available for school purposes.*

*November 3*

*The burn overflowed during the night after heavy rain and the road was flooded badly. Repair to field drains is long overdue and I hope to have some very necessary work carried out here.*

## **1976**

*January 24*

*Today (Saturday) a wooden fence was erected along the bank of the burn in the infant playground.*

*May 14*

*Mr Bowie, of Whitefaulds, has given permission for part of a field to be used as a football pitch for the boys of Baldernock. Mr O'Keefe, a parent of three children at the school, gives two hours of his time every Saturday morning of the football season to organise and coach the enthusiastic 'footballers' of the school.*

*September 23*

*Sudden collapse of part of ceiling in large classroom this morning caused an emergency situation at the school today. Miraculously no-one was badly hurt, only shaken, and a few minor cuts sustained by P3 children.*

## **1977**

*February 3*

*Visit from school nurse to check up some pupils regarding hair cleanliness.*

## **1978**

*September 10*

*Work started today on building of new toilets attached to school building.*

**LYNN d'HUY**

Visiting pupil June 1976

I came from Holland to spend three weeks in P7 at the end of the summer term. My mother is Scottish and she wanted me to get an impression of the Scottish way of life, so I was sent on my own at eleven years of age to the Anderson family in Bardowie. My mother was a school friend of Audrey Anderson. They were both brought up in Milngavie. Lois Anderson was my age and because of the school not being finished for the term I was allowed to go with Lois to the school.

Packed with a bag of crisps we walked to the school. The first thing I noticed was that every girl wore a bluish skirt and white knee socks. I was used to going to school in trousers so I felt a bit awkward walking in my pants. Something else I remember was that the boys came hissing past me, 'Scotland beat Holland!'. I hadn't a clue what they were talking about because I didn't know what 'beat' was other than beating eggs! Finally I found out that Scotland had won a game of football against Holland.

I had a good time in school because it was the last week before holidays. One day we went for a school walk. After the first mile I was dead beat because I was not used to climbing hills since Holland is flat as a pancake. Fortunately I recovered and I enjoyed the walk immensely. It was lovely to be in the countryside like that. In Holland we don't have so much space, so walks like that were never organised in school. Our teacher, Miss Colquhoun, and especially the girls, were very nice to me and I got a notebook in which I could write the things we were learning. It was an eventful week which I will never forget.

**CALUM WILSON**

Pupil 1977-1984

I lived at 4, Barraston Holdings, Torrance. I began in Primary 1, in 1977, and finished in Primary 7, in 1984. My teachers were Mrs Brownlee, Mrs McKirdy and Mrs Morrison. Miss Colquhoun and Mrs MacDonald were the headteachers during my time at Baldernock.

I travelled to school by bus all the time, except on two days when I was banned for fighting on the bus. Days began with prayers, then lessons. The main subjects taught were English, maths, geography, history, music and gardening. Computer studies were introduced in Primary 7 by Mrs MacDonald.

Primary 1, 2 and 3s' classroom was the hut, which was cold in winter. Toys and changes of clothes were the contents. The rest of the primary years were in the classrooms. New toilets were built around 1979.

We had milk at interval time, and fluoride tablets were given to all the classes below me. Games included Dodge ball and Wallie (kicking the ball on the wall in lines). Primaries 6 and 7 were allowed to go for walks at playtime down to the woods, 'the humpie', or Fluchter Cottage, no further.

Easter, summer, October and Christmas were the main holiday times. We had a day off for Charles and Diana's wedding.

The belt was banned when I was in Primary 7.



Pupils of Baldernock Primary School (1977)

**Back row:** Kevin Fleming, Michael Brown, Linda Frazer, Janice Alexander, Fiona McBride, Dan O'Keefe, Shona Phair, Lois Anderson, Hilary Brown, Ian Wallace, Frazer Murray. **Fourth row:** Angus Wilson, Roddy Murray, Archie Alexander, William Henderson, John Ralston, Stephen Wilson, Andrew Curtis, Willie Imrie, Stewart Bridges, Thomas O'Keefe. **Third row:** Alan Crosbie, Grace Henderson, Anne Bowie, Susan Ralston, Isabel Henderson, Rhona Morrison, Sandra Williamson, Maureen Fairfull, Toni Jackman, Claire Keele, Cameron Phair. **Second row:** Sheena McOuat, Carol Jackman, —, Celia Fairfull, Lucy Keele, Sophie Hansen, Vicky Jack, Isla Brown, Lisa Head, Alex Brown, Nancy Jack, Joanne Henderson. **Front row:** Petr O'Keefe, Andrew Mc—, John Williamson, Calum Wilson.

## **MARGARET WILSON**

Secretary/School Meals Assistant 1978–1985

I started working at Baldernock Primary School in January 1978 as Secretary/School Meals Assistant after Jean Orr left. I worked alongside Pauline Fraser for a few months until Joan Bridges came to replace her. Joan and I worked together till I left in December 1985.

My 'office' consisted of a typewriter on one of the dining tables in the corner of the dining room. In these days all the children took school lunches. There were no packed lunches and no children went home. The lunches were delivered in containers from various schools depending on which kitchen had the contract at that time. After a few years we acquired a heated cupboard so that the food would at least be kept warm. We served all the children with a plain but wholesome main course and then a sweet. Sometimes we had to do a bit of coaxing to get the children to eat. All the dishes had to be washed and dried by hand, and at the same time we had to keep an eye on the children in the playground as we had no Janitor or Auxiliary then. I only ever remember one serious accident in the eight years I was there.

It was a very happy atmosphere during Miss Colquhoun's reign and was reflected in the way all the children played together from the very young, in P1, to P7.

## **MICHAEL JARVIS**

Pupil 1978–1985

When I went to school Miss Colquhoun was headmistress. She was an excellent pianist and choirmaster and produced concerts of high quality in school, in church, and always a group for the 'Carols by Candlelight' in Balmore Hall at Christmas. She was assisted by Mrs Morrison (Fay Caldwell) who was the fount of all knowledge: 'Mrs Morrison says...' Mrs Brownlee taught the Infants and Mrs McKirdy was also there.

The Portakabin was a scary place to be in thunderstorms. If the teacher was not in the room 'monitors' from P7, who were sent over to look after them, told the children that the thunder was only clouds bumping together – the little ones were not convinced.

At this time holidays would be Easter (one-and-a-half weeks), May half-term Monday, summer holidays (end of June to mid-August), autumn holiday Monday, and about one-and-a-half weeks at Christmas. There were sometimes days off because of snow or flooding.

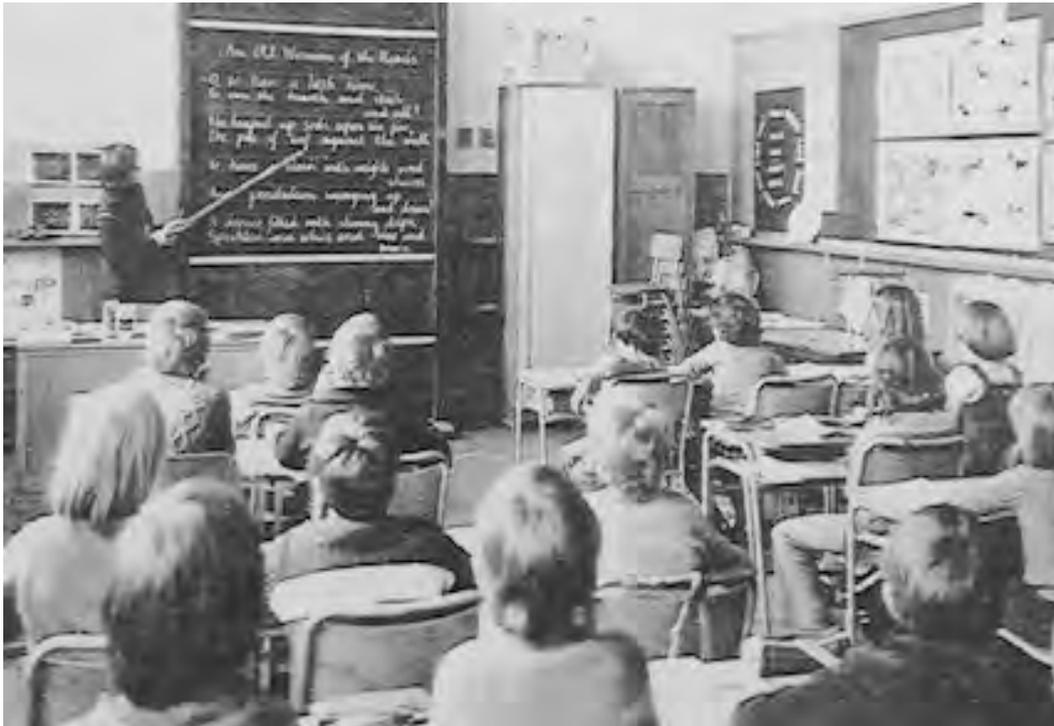
We had spelling (with homework), mental arithmetic (ten questions a day), writing news daily, composition and projects (Tudors, Stewarts, Eskimos, fossils, and so on).

I had 'janitor duty' and had to unlock the back door on arrival at school.

Sometimes, in winter, school finished early as Miss Colquhoun wouldn't allow the children to walk home in the dark. Most children, of course, travelled to and from school by minibus, coach or taxi.

The games in vogue were Dodgy ball, Pom Pom and Kiss-cuddle-torture. Also, of course, football and Rounders in the field when the farmer kindly mowed a spare section of grass.

In the early part of Miss Colquhoun's reign the children used to walk to the 'humpy' – the bridge at Blairskaith – and guddle, unsuccessfully. Some of the more daring or naughty used to walk to the Linn Caves at lunchtime.



### **AUDREY ANDERSON**

Gardening instructor 1980–1981

Miss Reid was a keen gardener but in her latter years things had become too much for her and the outer garden had reverted to a weedy meadow. In 1980 it was suggested that the P6 and P7 boys, under supervision, might spend Friday afternoons on a restoration project.

We gradually cleared the paths, cut the box hedge, and dug the ground, incorporating a good load of dung thanks to one of the farmer parents. By early April we were able to sow potatoes and prepare the seed bed for other vegetables. These were sown in due course – lettuce, turnip, spinach, radishes and beetroot. At the same time we rescued Miss Reid's very good rhubarb bed. Thereafter it was a case of thinning, weeding and harvesting. By the middle of the summer term we were able to sell rhubarb and vegetables to the parents, and by the end of the season we were able to buy several new garden tools with the proceeds.

In the session 1980–81 we again prepared the ground, with dung provided by another farmer father, and planted a few shrubs and roses in the dividing area between the old flower garden and our vegetable patch. The vegetables did well again but during the summer holidays four of our own new rose bushes were removed and, worse still, someone dug up and removed most of our potatoes, and uprooted our broccoli and just left the plants to die.

By this time it was more and more difficult to make time for the project and as no one offered to take it on the garden once more reverted to the wild. Since then there have been several attempts to rekindle interest but none has been sustained and the vegetable garden is now part of the play area.

The boys who worked for these two summers really enjoyed themselves and there was no problem with discipline – the threat of return to the classroom was enough to sort out even the most truculent.



Baldernock 'gardeners', 1981

## 1980

*February 22*

*Conversion work has begun on school house. This seemingly will take many months to complete as the repair work is very extensive.*

## 1982

*April 28*

*We have now abolished corporal punishment at Baldernock School on instruction from the D.E. Officer, Dumbarton, although official banning of the belt does not take effect until August 1982.*

## 1984

*August 20*

*P6/7 pupils were reminded not to stand or shout on the school bus.*

*December 5*

*All staff in accordance with E.I.S. instructions took Industrial Action today and did not attend school.*



Pupils of Baldernock Primary School (1983)

**Back row:** Calum Wilson, Tracy Stewart, Alastair Morrison, Pauline Ford, Michael Jarvis, Sheena McOuat, Alastair Noble, Nancy Jack, Richard Bond, Frances Wallace, Mark Curtis, Joanne Henderson, Simon Head, Philip Riches. **Third row:** Norma Murphy, Ian Crosby, Susie Bond, Susan Fox, Andrew Fraser, Jacqueline Fairfull, Lee Curry, David Clark, Craig Murphy, Dominic Shanahan, Craig Crowther, Janet McOuat, Taryn Studzinski, Diana Jarvis. **Second row:** Susan Riddick, Sarah Fairfull, Aileen Russell, Sarah Armstrong, Joanne Crosby, Joanne Crowther, Ruth Cowling, Fiona MacKay, Jeeka Jarvis, Sarah Crowther, Alison Fox, Kirsty MacKay, Michelle Crowther, Yvonne Tinning. **Front row:** Robbie McOuat, Alex Henderson, Richard Fox, Christopher Curry, John Fraser, Stuart Riddick, Malcolm McNeish, Andrew Gemmell, Grahame Jarvis.

## 1985

*January 23*

*I was asked to speak to the P.A. meeting on Curricular Development tonight. The new school closure time of 3.15 p.m. was approved.*

*May 8*

*There was a small fire on the roof of the P6/7 classroom today at 3.20 caused by workmen who were using a blow torch to strip off old paint. The fire brigade was called to check the area although the fire had been quickly put out by workmen.*

*May 14*

*Pupils were dismissed at 2.00 p.m. today and parents were invited at 2.45 p.m. to discuss pupil's progress. Nurse... looked at ring worm pupils today.*

*June 12*

*All parents were invited to the Open Day and tea was served. The new uniform was admired and pupils were involved in showing various areas of the curriculum.*

*December 5*

*There was a National Strike of all teachers and all Baldernock staff decided to support this national E.I.S. call to action. School was therefore closed.*

## **1986**

*April 11*

*We continue to receive advice from the E.I.S. on action to be taken during this unfortunate time of unrest.*

*June 11*

*A child accidentally broke the glass cover of the cloakroom fire siren. The alarm did not ring but at approximately 3.15, 45 minutes later, both alarms went off and could not be stopped by the janitor. The result was that the alarms overheated and it was thought safer to call out the fire brigade.*

*November 5*

*There is no longer a problem with the bridge/culvert flooding at the school gate. The Education Department has had this problem fixed.*

## **1987**

*May 8*

*The role is now 48 pupils and another family are due to move out of the district. The proposed roll could be as low as 44 in August '87 and this would result in there being only two teachers at Baldernock.*

### **FRANCES COULL**

Teacher 1982–83 and 1985–92

It was on a day of torrential rain that I first set eyes on Baldernock School and found myself, for the first time, in this time-warp of rolling fields, farms, woods and beautiful countryside. Even in the downpour it looked appealing.

I had gone to visit at the headteacher's (Miss Colquhoun's) request so that there could be a smooth takeover when I taught her class as a supply teacher, whilst she was away on educational business the following week.

Looking back on my first day's work there, I found well behaved and lively children, so anxious to help this stranger in their midst. This stranger, I may say, was totally unused to dealing simultaneously with such a wide range of ages and abilities and was quite certain who, at the end of the school day, had had the steepest learning curve.

It was a year or so later when I was asked to return and teach for a whole session. I was delighted at the prospect, because the contrast between Baldernock and my then school in Clydebank was stark. It would mean farewell to a tedious morning journey and all the regimentation of ill-disciplined children, some of whom were quite deprived if not disturbed. It was no fault of theirs that they lived in a harsh environment in an ugly urban sprawl. Until they went on a school trip most of my class of Primary 6 had never seen cows and sheep, hills and streams. They would have been amazed to see, from their classroom window, cattle grazing in the field next to the playground, or to walk to a nearby wood for a nature lesson.

So with a pleasant drive via 'the Humpie', with perhaps a sighting of the heron and the yellowhammers, and delightful children to work with, I looked forward to a relatively easy year. Little did I realise I was to teach three stages of Infants!

Well, it was certainly bewildering at first, coping with such a broad spectrum of ages and abilities, but it was never stressful, due mainly to the splendid support I received from both the parents and the whole staff, from the headteacher to the lady who walked most days from Balmore to clean the school, often gathering nature specimens on the way and occasionally bringing handwork materials to help augment the school's stock! Once she was so pleased with the children for keeping the floor free of mud, that she awarded each of them a stick of candy!

If the staff made a good team, then the pupils were encouraged on the whole to operate almost as a family unit – the older ones adopting a caring interest in the younger children – most evident at wet playtimes and lunchtimes when games were often invented and little plays enacted. This was quite remarkable to witness and made a huge impression on me.

Generally I found the Baldernock children to have a candour that was refreshing and an innocence that the urban children lacked. These days in or around Milngavie, when I'm occasionally greeted by an ex-pupil, I notice that although the innocence has of course disappeared, the open manner has remained. It is always good to hear how well they are getting on. Baldernock must have given them a good start.

In a small country school there is the danger of the staff feeling isolated, but we had at Baldernock a great many visitors, mostly on educational matters, and it was good to be able to meet most of them, so I never felt out on a limb. One day, without any warning, an inspector came to examine. Little fuss was made of his visit and he seemed well pleased, giving a good report.

I have many happy memories of my first year in a rural school, but the most abiding was the pleasure I got at Christmas, in and around the school, listening to the sound of well-trained children's voices ringing out the carols they were practising at lunchtime with the headteacher. Somehow they never sounded quite so enchanting at the 'Carols by Candlelight' evening or with the organ at the church service.

In retrospect perhaps the spectacles are a trifle rose-tinted, but that first year at Baldernock was one of the happiest of my teaching career. I think my class enjoyed it too and made good progress.

ELIZABETH MacDONALD  
Headteacher 1984–1987

I have been asked to write 'a piece on my time at Baldernock'. I thought carefully about this – was this a turn of phrase? – a malapropism or a misspelling? Was there peace in my time at Baldernock? Indeed, it was so very peaceful arriving at Baldernock, just after 8 a.m. in the morning. I had driven through heavy traffic and commuter panic. I would park my car in the driveway of the schoolhouse, walk round through the garden gate, into the empty playground. The little burn gurgled at the foot of the playground and the wind rustled through the trees. I had about half an hour of absolute quietness to open mail and attend to the business side of running a school. I was a 'teaching head' – a full-time teacher (except for one half-day cover for my class) – and so part of this precious time had also to be for class preparation.

The first rule I made was to Head Office. I could not – would not – answer the phone during the morning: this was teaching time. The knock-on effect was that some afternoons were hectic with phone calls. The pupils of my composite class (P5, P6, P7) were excellent when these interruptions took me out of class. They would continue with their work quietly – most of the time!

Peace or piece – I was very interested in Science and Environmental Studies in the primary school, and I decided that we had to have a piece of the action. We created a science area in the empty top flat of the schoolhouse. (Later we were obliged to abandon this area.) We invited Jordanhill College lecturers out to Baldernock to help us with our environmental

investigations. We 'planted' an old wheelbarrow with plants and seeds gifted from local garden centres and stationed it outside the front door of the school. We took over part of the schoolhouse garden and tended it through the seasons, always delighted in the spring when crocus, daffodils and bluebells appeared from nowhere. Parents ran money-making events which helped us buy many extras for the school garden and the science curriculum. At that time, I had a 'per capita' of less than £1000 per year for books and equipment, the school role being about 56 children.

We had no gym at Baldernock and when I enquired as to PE for the children, was told they could do 'physical jerks' in the playground on good days! The staff were most supportive and agreed to an idea that we could perhaps use the Allander Sports Centre facilities. We put this to the 'Office' and mountains were moved. We were given a weekly bus to take us all to the sports centre and we were given professional help to enable us to provide swimming lessons for the Infants as well as the middle and upper school. We could use the excellent court facilities and the gym. We were the fittest school in the 'country'! Other keep-fit activities included 'marathon' running – down to the 'Humpy Bridge' and back again. (This was stopwatch timed – maths! – and exhausting.)

We had no bookshelves for storage but despite this we introduced a whole new reading scheme and arranged it on tables which we placed one on top of the other in the schoolhouse back kitchen and pantry area.

Dumbarton Division were helpful and provided us with a completely new library of fiction and non-fiction books. One small thing: we had to learn the Dewey Decimal System of arranging books and then do it ourselves. Pupils were responsible for cataloguing their library and they did it, arranging every last paperback and hardback book with a Dewey number and its library reference.

About 1986 we took delivery of our first computer and in no time at all, with the help of pupils, we were up and running. At this time we did a history of our area and this was put on computer and, as part of a joint venture with local secondary schools, our work was edited and was included in a National Computer Record of 'The Doomsday Book' – a 20th century version – written by school pupils from all over Britain.

Another 'piece of my time' at Baldernock which was not quite as peaceful, was the weather. One morning the electricity pylon, which is close to the school, was shorting and crackling. It was a dreich, foggy morning. I phoned the electricity board for advice and explanations. They sent someone along to check it out – it turned out to be 'atmospheric conditions'.

Several days a year the burn at the foot of the playground would severely flood and these 'welly boot' days were anxious ones for the teachers, and fun for the children. One winter's day, about lunch time, the snow closed in. We had 'white out' conditions and decided to

take emergency action. The school bus could not get up the road. We had to get the pupils home. Mrs Morrison bravely took the responsibility of escorting the children home through the snow, over the hill to Bardowie via the old Fluchter path, while I anxiously used the phone until it was red hot, informing parents, the local authority, etc., of our dilemma. Everyone got home safely but the school was snowed in for several days.

Weather conditions were all part and parcel of teaching in our local school. Weather, work, innovation, change, all part of Baldernock School life. I was told that I 'dragged Baldernock School screaming and kicking into the 20th century'. I feel it a great privilege to have been part of the history of a very dear and precious place and I hope that the 21st century will be as happy and successful as previous centuries have been for Baldernock Primary School.

### **MARTIN KING**

Pupil 1984–1991

I left Baldernock at the end of P7 (24/6/91). I was aged 11 and looked forward to moving to Douglas Academy in Milngavie.

As there are no pavements or street lamps between my home and the primary school I used to get a private taxi to take me and some other pupils (including the Jarvis, Bond, Mucklow, Templeton, Henderson and McAllister children) to and from school.

My teachers throughout my time at Baldernock were, in chronological order, Mrs Manchanda, Mrs Coull, Mrs Morrison and Mrs Rand. They were all right as far as teachers go. Subjects taught included Maths, English (Language as it was called then) and some science, P.E. and music. There was also a sewing teacher called Mrs Teenan.

The classes were always composite due to the small numbers in each class. My class was seemingly the biggest class intake to Douglas Academy there had ever been, and that was only fifteen pupils! In the classroom the tables were arranged in groups within your class. The walls were covered in 'hints & tips' posters and there was an old BBC computer in the corner. You were not allowed into the class with your 'outdoor' shoes on. They had to be left in the cloakroom where you had your own peg and changed into your 'sandshoes'. Inside the classroom you also had your own drawer. Pupils lucky enough to get a desk with runners underneath could keep their trays there, others had to keep their trays down the front of the class which meant a walk every time you needed something. This also, however, provided the perfect excuse when you were asked what you were doing out of your seat!

During my time there Baldernock had a short-lived football team, of which I was part. We played two games; one against Torrance and one against Blanefield. We lost both badly.

I think it had something to do with not being allowed to play football at breaks (although we did) and coming from a small school.

One of the highlights of the week, apart from 3.15 on a Friday afternoon, was our weekly bus journey to the Allander Sports Centre to take part in various activities like swimming, indoor hockey and 'Dodgy-Ball'.

As a leaving present each pupil in my class at Baldernock received a pocket-size French dictionary which I still have and even use at university.

## **1989**

*October 23*

*During the October break much renovation and repair work was carried out in and around the school. A new playground surface has been laid, and an old fireplace and blackboard have been removed from the infant classroom.*

*November 1*

*Tonight the first meeting of the Baldernock Primary School Board took place in the library of the school house.*

*December 15*

*The whole school visited the pantomime this afternoon at the Pavilion Theatre, Glasgow. The bus was 2 hours late in returning for us.*

### **KIRSTY BURNS**

Pupil 1986–1992

Undeniably, as yet, my happiest days have been at Baldernock Primary School, and I find it upsetting to look back because I was so content then in comparison to now. However, I do regret the innocence and naivete associated with the school: great at the time but it made my move to a large school difficult.

I had a brilliant year group, several of whom I am still very close to. We all got on really well, unlike perhaps some of the other year groups.

At lunches up to P5 we played our own versions of He-Man and Thundercats (popular TV programmes of the time). John was always the 'baddie'. Another pastime seemed to be kiss, cuddle and torture – torture being extremely painful in the boys' case, especially if caught by Roberta. (Something perhaps more tortuous was the thought of being kissed.)

My favourite part of the working day was the afternoon where we worked on crafts or our projects. My favourite project was centred around 'The Desperate Journey' as we drew many pictures under the supervision of Mrs Rand, in my eyes a brilliant teacher and inspiration. We had music lessons, never taken seriously to the annoyance of the elderly woman on piano. The boys preferred to shout obscenities than sing the correct words.

I remember the shame of being caught writing (in pencil) 'Julia luvs Gordon' on the Portakabin wall. I loved the theatre companies which would perform small plays in the Portakabin, also where assembly and PE would occur. The school plays were amusing as the P1s stood around, even after being repeatedly told what to do, still staring, spaced-out, towards their parents. One girl also had the most distinctive, off-key voice and it seemed to plague the amateur school videos! Dressed in dressing gowns, sheets and tea towels we were squashed into a tiny space to be shown off.

Looking back, most memories are irrelevant. Mrs Coull's rages prompting tears, prompting you sitting on her lap being told that she was not really a monster. Getting sweets for picking up litter from the schoolhouse garden. Anyhow, it was a very happy time.

## **1992**

*March 18*

*National Testing had been organised to begin today. However, 100% of the parents withdrew their children from such tests.*

*August 18*

*BBC Television contacted us to invite us to take part in a television news programme, Reporting Scotland. They will be filming the Primary 1 children entering school and playing in class.*

*August 19*

*Twelve infants enrolled and the television cameras were here to welcome them. We were featured on Reporting Scotland in the evening.*

## **CHANI BOND**

Pupil 1988–1994

I didn't join the pupils of Baldernock Primary until Primary 2 and I believe it was because of that I never really settled there. I have no rose-tinted memories of Baldernock Primary but despite this it played a large part in the way my character has formed.

I will not lie and say that Baldernock Primary is an ideal, perfect school. It is just like any other school in that it has its own fair share of bullies, outcasts and inane crazes that sweep the school. I do however feel that the school is set in ideal conditions. The atmosphere is one of safety in its quiet location and I believe the setting played a great part in defining our social patterns during my years there.

Games were adored and abandoned frequently as we progressed into 'maturity'. The range was wide and quite often resulted in one or more of us being injured in some way. Chain tig, Poison tig and Red Rovers being the ones most prone to cause injury. And of course there were our wet weather games in the revered shelter: Polo and Mr Wolf. The shelter was an odd extension to our playtimes, becoming either a house or a den. Other such areas were the gate to the garden, the area beside the Janitor's cupboard and the holly bush.

As neither of my parents attended this primary school I never heard any of the school's myths but during my spell there I heard various tales of ghosts, etc., each time being recounted more hysterically and elaborately.

I have many memories of my time at Baldernock Primary School. Playing an incredibly distracted Mary in the school's nativity play one year and being a backing vocalist in 'Boo Bear' (once the school had progressed into less traditional Christmas shows that were less likely to feature three boys with tea towels on their heads and wearing dressing gowns to represent the three wise men). It is because of memories such as these and various other good and bad memories that I will remember Baldernock Primary forever.

## **CORDELIA LOGAN**

Pupil 1988–1995

I am 15 now. I attended Baldernock School from Primary 1 to Primary 7, 1988–95. At that time I lived at Wester Acredyke, Balmore, and still do.

My teachers at Baldernock were Mrs Dickson, Mrs Morrison, Mrs Rand and Mrs Coull. They were all very nice. If I had to say my favourite teacher I would say I couldn't as they were all brilliant and each had different qualities. They were all brilliant about my diabetes as well.

I think that as Baldernock School is in such a rural area we had really nice views from the classroom windows, and a relaxed environment, and were really lucky. There were three classrooms. All the classrooms had pictures and stories written by pupils on the walls, and the desks were arranged in groups.

A typical school day was: get on school bus; morning of maths; playtime; language; lunch; topics; bus home.

I usually got the bus to school, which was a privilege as there were so few pupils and the bus always seemed to be half-empty. Sometimes I travelled to school by foot on the old school route that many people used and this was a real treat for me and my brother and sisters. We loved the fresh air and wildlife (and of course we were never late for school).

Subjects taught were maths, language and topics, music, P.E., art, and religious studies. The best part of school work I thought was the topics, which ranged from Charlotte's Web to the Second World War. My favourite topic was the Second World War with Mrs Rand in P5, as we got to make our own house and family and then we acted out things like the Blitz. The reason I enjoyed topics most was really because I hated maths and I loved drama which was sometimes included in topics. The topics were also a time when we could socialise more. I must confess that at school if the teacher wasn't looking I would sometimes look up the answer to certain maths questions. (Sorry!) Language I loved because I got a chance to read out loud and I also got better marks in it.

When looking at the social aspects of school, I enjoyed being friends with pupils in more than one class.

**FAYE GOVAN**

Pupil 1990–1996

I lived in Bardowie, Station Road, and I haven't moved since. My parents were not at Baldernock Primary School. I started school in Primary 1, a year ahead of myself at the age of 4, and left at the end of Primary 6 – 1990–1996.

Mrs Bell was very nice and friendly – a good teacher, especially when I was little. Mrs Meldrum was part-time. Still nice and friendly but more strict as we were getting older and more troublesome. Mrs Dickson was very nice and friendly, and treated us more like 'adults' instead of 'wee kids'.

I was taught language, which was basically English workbooks and spelling, etc., maths, which was either worksheets or textbooks, and quite a few extras like swimming, netball, Rounders, music (singing) and recorder (optional), and we also did a lot of arty and creative things.

There were three classrooms. I was only ever in two, and I spent most of my time in the one situated in the main building, just beside the door as you go in. I liked the classrooms because they were tall, light and yellow, which I liked because it reminded me of the sun when I was little. This classroom contained a teacher's desk, a small reading area, a blackboard and our desks.

The other classroom I was in was the Portakabin across the road which I liked because it made me feel old and important and only 5s, 6s and 7s were allowed there – I was one of the oldest! The Portakabin had a blackboard, a desk, our desks and it always had our paintings on the wall. It also had a cupboard that had an old BBC computer and spare equipment in it.

We had holidays at Christmas, Easter, autumn and summer. We had 6 weeks in summer and in-service days, in which the teachers got training, throughout the year. We did not get any special days off, only the ones everyone got as standard.

At 8.30 a.m. I got the school bus which took me straight to school. We then put our coats and bags in the cloakroom and went to class. We usually did language in the morning and maths in the afternoon, or other activities depending on the day. We had a morning break at around 11:00 and then continued language until lunch at 12:00. At break we all went outside and played games such as Hopscotch, Tig, In-den-123, etc., or sometimes we just talked. At lunch we all went into the dining hall and ate our packed lunches or bought meals from the dinner lady who served hot meals. After we finished eating we went back to the playground and played games again or sometimes we got the skipping ropes out and did skipping rhymes. We then went to class to do maths. I think at around 2 o'clock we had another break, and then we did maths until 3.15 when we were let out of school and I got the bus home again.

I was in Primary 4, I think, and we were doing our annual Christmas nativity play. We had the stage all set up and we had finished all our rehearsals – the first performance was the next day! We were all very excited... On the big day everyone was nervous. It was about halfway through and Graeme, a boy a bit younger than me, was playing Joseph. He was running across the stage, and suddenly fell off it! We were all in fits of laughter as he was helped back onto the stage. Luckily, this happened in the day-time performance so there weren't many people there but it was still very funny. He didn't fall off again and he always watched his step on the stage – just in case!

## DUNCAN WILSON

Pupil 1993–

I began school at Baldernock in 1993 and I am still there.

Mrs Rand was my first teacher in Primary 1 and 2. She was kind and pleasant. She had a roar that really broke the windows. I had Mrs Bell in Primary 3 and 4. She was friendly and talked about her family. On a nice sunny day we would go out into the garden and Mrs Bell would read us a poem or story. Also we played games with her in the garden like 'I sent a letter to my love'. I think Primary 4 was the best year at school because we were top of the little one's playground. In Primary 5 and 6 I'm back with Mrs Rand.

I first went into the big classroom in the main building for P1 & 2. It was very spacious and had enormous windows on the left. It had three doors and a blackboard. We sat at desks for six pupils and the desks had trays which pull out. There was a library corner which always had the signs 'Quiet' and 'Shhhh' above it. In Primaries 3 & 4 we went into the smaller classroom in the main building. The desks and seats were taller than before. There was a storage cupboard at the end of the classroom that kept the computer and tape recorders and this room was where we dressed for the Christmas play.

The Primary 5,6,7 classroom is a Portakabin on its own. It has its own cloakroom with a sink in it and the desks and chairs inside are even bigger! In the summer the sun blazes through the big windows on each side making it very hot and hard to work. In the winter time it gets very cold and we only have four heaters.

At quarter to nine I get the minibus to school with my sister Kirsty and ten other children. When we get to school we usually have some playing time before the nine o'clock bell. We line up in twos and go into the cloakroom. We change our shoes and take off our coats and we go into the classroom and take out our spelling until Mrs Rand has collected dinner money and has checked her diary. In the morning we do some topic work. In Primary 5 we studied Charles Rennie Mackintosh and painted some of his paintings and learned a good deal about him. That was probably the most interesting artist of all. At the moment we are doing Claude Monet and the class has brought in lovely paintings that he produced.

At playtime we usually play football or Tig. When we go back in we take out our mental maths and after that carry on with our maths programme which is on a white board. I like maths with its symmetry and I'm one of the top at multiplication. I think language is the most boring subject because it's 'write this' and 'write that'.

At lunchtime we play and then when the bell rings we go in for second sitting. I usually have packed lunches although sometimes I have school dinners. The dinner lady normally gives the bigger boys a larger portion. My favourite is curry.

In the afternoon we do language up until quarter to three and then we do some art work. One day a week we go to gym at a different school in Milngavie. We used to have swimming lessons but they stopped. The bell rings at 3.15 and I get the minibus home. Sometimes Mum comes to collect me.

## 1995

*March 3*

*I attended a Devolved Management of Resources meeting in Braidfield High School. Mrs Nugent attended a registration course at ECSU.*

## 1998

*November 23*

*I had a visit from the accounts manager with the responsibility of financing installation of infrastructure for access to the Internet. He agreed Baldernock had particular but not insurmountable problems in accommodating this resource.*

ASHLEY TEMPLETON

Pupil 1993–

I have really enjoyed being at Baldernock Primary School. I like the fact that it is a small school as everyone knows each other and a good atmosphere is created because of that. I have been very lucky to have had the opportunity to take part in many different events in and out of school such as the Christmas Show, Mugdock Fun Run and the Inter-School Quiz.

At school my favourite subjects are maths, art, drama and netball.

As we move into autumn at school we usually hold a Coffee Morning, with lots of different stalls for children and adults to spend their money on. At Hallowe'en the PTA holds a disco which is fun. Then at the end of a hard working year we have a barbecue which everyone is welcome to attend. All of these events I enjoy but my main memories of Baldernock School will be of the many friendships I have made there. Even although my friends might move to different schools I hope to remain in contact with them.

MAUREEN CLARK  
Headteacher 1988 –

I was fortunate in being allowed to read a draft copy of the book on Baldernock Primary School. I found the book to be an extremely riveting read. When I came to the end, however, I was somewhat depressed when I reflected on the changes in the headteacher's role at Baldernock in recent years.

When I was fortunate in securing the position of headteacher in 1988 I came to this idyllic place as a full-time teaching head. My previous experience of teaching had been in what was considered at the time to be an area of priority treatment. Many of the children had been less fortunate in their young lives than most of the children at Baldernock. However the joy and satisfaction of teaching comes through working with children no matter their background.

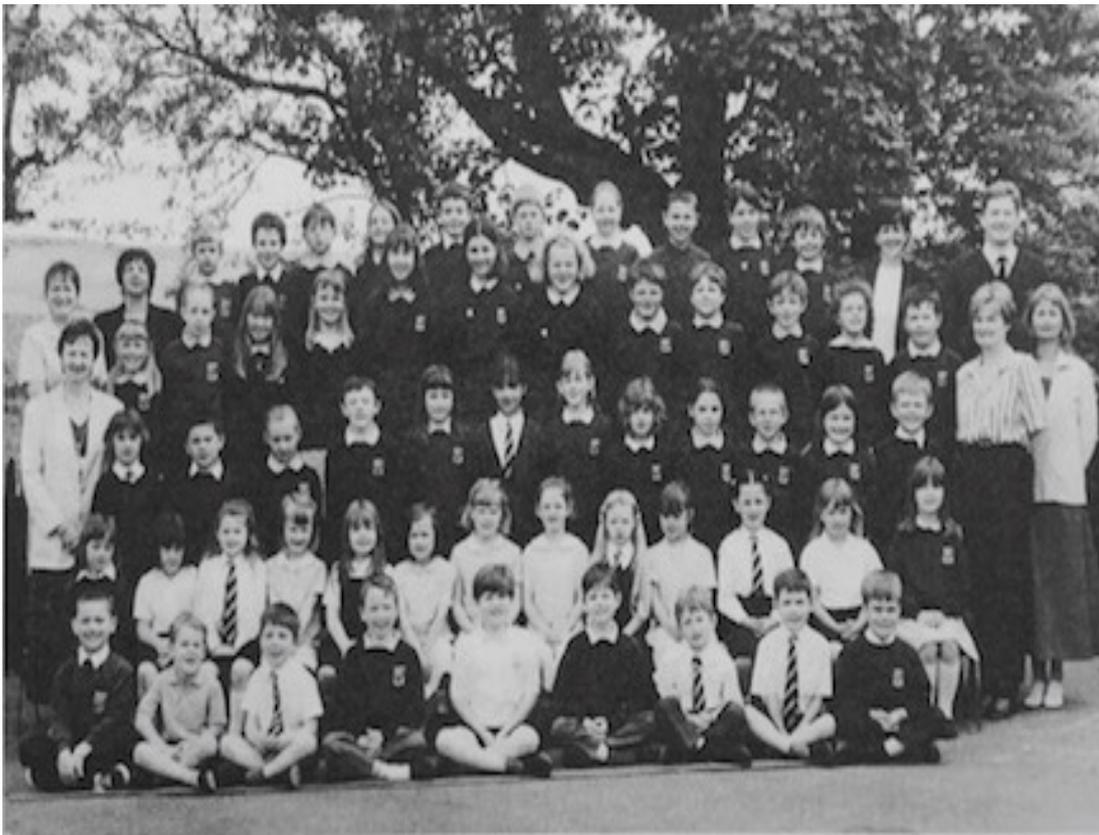
When I came to Baldernock major changes were being introduced in education. Teachers' conditions of service changed, the 5-14 curricular guidelines were introduced and we had to look at the balance and structure of the curriculum. Policies for everything from areas of the curriculum to home-school links had to be written; programmes of study had to be devised, implemented and monitored; each child had to have an education appropriate to his or her individual needs. As these innovations came into force the headteacher's administrative duties increased quite substantially and less time was spent in the classroom. Schools were given responsibility for 85% of the school budget; school development plans had to be written; staff and parents had to be involved in decision making; parents had to be informed about the curriculum and the progress of their child.

Today we have to address government initiatives such as Early Intervention; Raising Standards; Information and Communication Technology; Education and Industry Links. Each year we have to produce a school development plan and a standard and quality report among other things.

The saddest thing about our school today is the need to have a secure entry system and procedures to meet with class teachers. No longer can children wander through the golf course or climb on the shed roof during break times: stringent health and safety regulations have put paid to that.

Perhaps children are safer in school, perhaps they are receiving a more balanced education. I think we are doing a good job in preparing the children for a life in the twenty-first century but are they any happier than the children who attended the school at the beginning of the twentieth century?

Today I consider myself to be more fortunate than many of my headteacher colleagues. Because of the smallness of the school I have more contact with the children and I know what their individual needs and strengths are. I can monitor the educational provision very closely. With the support of an excellent teaching and ancillary staff I am confident that I am ensuring that the educational experience of the children at Baldernock continues to provide them with a firm foundation for future learning. I hope the children are happy to come to school each day and will keep with them, for the rest of their lives, happy memories of their time at Baldernock Primary.



Pupils of Baldernock Primary School in 1999, with Mrs Clark, headteacher, Mrs Bell, Mrs Dickson and Mrs Rand (teachers), Mrs Brenan (learning support teacher), Mrs Nugent (school secretary) and Mr Sinclair (janitor)

**Pupils**    **Back row:** William Logan, Jack Stirling, Stuart Rooney, Shiona Burns, Jonathan Lyons, Grant Minnes, Lisa McInnes, Shawn Gilmour, Julie McKirdy, David Robertson.    **Fourth row:** Kirsty Wilson, Heather McKirdy, Jordan Forrest, Kim Bell, Ashley Templeton, Katie Andersen, Anne Gemmell, Billy Pirie, David Vallance, Nicholas Russell, Rachael Payne, Nathan Peddie.    **Third row:** Courtney Maguire, Craig Banziger, Kirsty Chaplin, Duncan Wilson, Victoria Logan, Lyndsay Dissanaike, Heather Howie, Jennifer Anderson, Kellianne McCarney, Christopher McKirdy, Devon Brewster, Alec Hazell.    **Second row:** Rebecca Payne, Ariana Banziger, Christina Clark, Julie Ross, Hayley Russell, Lyndsay Vallance, Rebecca Jeffcoate, Lucy Minnes, Robyn Nicol, Claire Wilson, Rebecca Spencer, Lisa Brewster, Debbi Murphy.    **Front row:** Sam Gilmour, Tom Langhorne, Douglas Hazell, Ryan McCarney, Calum Fraser, Mark Gibbons, Mitchell Maguire, Andrew Hazell, Donald Wilson.

**The following are views of life at Baldernock Primary School in 1998,  
written by some of the pupils, aged 8 to 11.**

**Which subject have you most enjoyed at school? Why?**

**Which subject have you most disliked at school? Why?**

**How do you get to school? Has anything funny ever happened on the way to school or going home?**

**Tell us about some of the teachers.**

**Do you like school dinners?**

# Appendix 1

## **Baldernock School (Fluchter)**

*From The Story of Baldernock*  
*By Elizabeth Robertson and Willie Ure*  
*Auld Kirk Museum Publications No. 19*  
*Strathkelvin District Libraries & Museums 1991*  
*ISBN: 0904966321*

We know nothing of the first Fluchter school, except its location at Thimblefield, near East Fluchter crossroads. In 1763 a thatched house, consisting of a single classroom and the master's dwelling, was erected on the present site, and this was replaced in 1810 by a two-storey building, at a cost of £439 to the Heritors of Baldernock. The ground floor was used for the school, while the upper floor and attics provided accommodation for the schoolmaster.

Six years earlier, one Peter McEwan was selected by the Heritors to fill the post of schoolmaster, and summoned to appear before Dumbarton Presbytery, to be examined for his worthiness. He carried a document confirming his appointment, but no certificate regarding his moral character. At the same time a petition was presented to Presbytery from some smaller heritors, complaining of Mr McEwan's bad language and drunken behaviour. The Presbytery postponed his examination until he produced a glowing testimonial from his late minister, and the appointment was sanctioned reluctantly, with an ensuing investigation followed by his quick dispatch. This is a measure of the influence exercised by Presbyteries until an Act of 1861 removed most of their power.

In 1825 the schoolmaster, James Paterson, was qualified by Presbyterian Certificate to teach English, Writing, Arithmetic, Greek, Latin, French, Book-keeping, Algebra, and Practical Mathematics. All were purported to be taught at Baldernock, except French. The schoolmaster was paid £19 8s 10d per annum, plus a fee from each pupil of:

3s for English	5s for Arithmetic
4s for Writing	6s for English Grammar
8s for Latin	Other subjects were by arrangement

Some of the poorer scholars were taught on a voluntary basis, if they showed exceptional ability. The 1841 Statistical Account commented:

*Reading, Writing and a little Arithmetic constitute the whole of the education of the people. Most of the children get little time for even these, and there is no desire for more.*

So although the choice of subjects was surprisingly wide, parents with large families and small wages could ill afford the cost, or the loss of labour involved. Their livelihood largely depended on help from the children. But in spite of this, more than fifty pupils attended the school on a regular basis. John Mann, a schoolmaster of this period, should be mentioned, as one who 'left behind a fragrant memory'. How many 'Lads o' Pairs' were helped by him?

This was a time when educational chaos reigned throughout Scotland. Schools were run by heritors, churches, sectarian bodies, societies and private individuals, so conspiring to make the country's education insular and fragmented. In an endeavour to make order out of this chaos, 'The Education (Scotland) Act 1872' was passed, 'to make provision for the efficient education of the children of the whole of Scotland'.

The Act stipulated that, 'A popularly elected School Board should forthwith be established in every parish and burgh'. Parish schools had in many cases supplied secondary as well as elementary education, and as these schools had been open to the poorest they embraced children from all social classes, from the whole of Scotland. The Act recognised this, and, for many years after, secondary as well as elementary education was given in these schools. Baldernock was such a school.

The central authority was the Scottish Education Department. It administered and distributed the Parliamentary Grants for education through the School Boards, and their Inspectors had right of entry to all schools. 984 School Boards were elected and existing schools were taken over, without cost.

In 1873, an Educational Census revealed that there were 112 children in Baldernock parish between the ages of five and thirteen. The newly appointed School Board discussed moving the school to a more convenient location, the Loch Park field, belonging to Branziet Farm, presenting the most promising site, but this plan was abandoned with the closure of Balmore Adventure School at Balmore crossroads, which brought additional pupils to the Fluchter School. Instead, it was agreed to extend the existing accommodation.

The present schoolhouse appears to have been built at this time, and the outlay of £1931 was advanced by the Public Works Loan Commissioners, to be repaid over fifty years. The Headmaster's salary initially was sixty pounds per annum, plus school fees and a maximum Government Grant of 15s per head for an acceptable average overall attendance. A schoolmaster's salary could be augmented in many ways – as Session Clerk, Heritor's Clerk, Registrar, and Land Surveyor; and if he could sing in tune he might lead the singing as Precentor at Baldernock Church.

During the alterations, the school was held for six months within the church, and the official opening of the new premises took place in October, 1875. This seemed to be a grand affair at which the visitors 'partook of cake and wine provided by Mr Charles

Higginbotham, Chairman of the Board'. The new schoolhouse was a substantial residence which in theory would provide accommodation for pupils being coached for University entry, but there is no record of this plan coming to fruition. When Mr McEwen, the schoolmaster, moved out of the school building, the upper storey was used as a Junior classroom, but it was soon to be closed off and windows bricked up, while downstairs the ceilings were possibly raised when three large window replacements were fitted at the back of the school.

School attendances were erratic, in spite of the recent introduction of the Compulsory Clause. In the Spring potato-planting took precedence over poetry. The turnips needed thinning and soon fruit was ripe for the picking. Then there were Highland Shows and Sabbath School outings, all before the school closed for its official summer break in August. When it resumed in mid-September, the roll would be incomplete until the latter part of November, due to late harvests, potato-lifting, possible bad weather and Fast days during the time of the November Church Communion. Added to this were half-day holidays for the ice (when the loch was safely frozen over) and the odd day off for a ploughing match. Epidemics of Whooping Cough or Measles, or the dreaded Scarlet Fever were an extra bonus for the healthy children, for the school could be closed for up to a month. But there was still time for extra-curriculum activities, for in 1882 a weekly dancing class was introduced.

Despite the need to justify the Government Grant and ensure the 125 full days' attendance needed for pupils to qualify for examination, it was five years before a Compulsory Officer was appointed to round up the truants. Perhaps his salary of six pounds a year was too dearly earned, for he only lasted a few weeks. However, his successor had more stamina, and defaulting parents began to be summoned before the School Board. Later, on two occasions Police Constables were assigned the role of 'Whupper-in' (attendance officer) with understandable success!

Thomas McEwen had only the help of a Sewing Mistress and a pupil-teacher – a promising senior pupil who received individual tuition in return for assisting with the younger children, a common practice in country schools. That high standards were achieved is undisputed, for in 1888, the year after education became free, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools was to report:

*The condition of this school is highly satisfactory... It is altogether a superior country school.*

The report in 1896 had a slight sting in the tail:

*The pupils show an intelligent acquaintance with the subject-matter of the lessons, though a kind of rustic diffidence prevents them from doing justice to themselves.*

The next year the report was glowing. Senior pupils presented in Latin, French, Domestic Economy and Agriculture were all successful and two girls were particularly commended. Both were to win County Bursaries (five pounds per year with travelling expenses) for the Girls' High School in Glasgow.

The fear of epidemics was very real at the beginning of the century. When three cases of Diphtheria coincided with an outbreak of Whooping Cough, the school was closed immediately and fumigated, with every vestige of wall-paper stripped from the classroom walls.

John Gibson, who succeeded Thomas McEwen, had still only one teacher and a Sewing Mistress, the recommended number to teach approximately a hundred pupils. Consequently, the regular turn-over of staff may have been due to pressure of work, combined with the remote situation. But Mary Gibson, the Sewing Mistress, was content to stay. She lived next door, which might have influenced her decision. It certainly wasn't the salary, which in 1883 was thirteen pounds per year; nor was it her prospects, for twenty-seven years later she earned only two pounds more. Miss Gibson's record is surely unique, for she taught at the Fluchter school for sixty-five years.

By this time the Attendance Officer, as he was now called, was much in evidence. Older children were still needed to work at seed time and harvest, but when recognised holidays were given at such times, more regular attendance resulted. The school was open as usual on Christmas Day, but the pupils had an extended New Year's holiday, with an orange and sweets, and a 'Penny Show' of conjuring tricks and dramatic sketches to mark the occasion.

By 1912 there were 110 pupils on the roll, with five classes, under two teachers, in the larger of the two rooms, which was divided by only a thin partition. The School Inspector not surprisingly commented:

*It is very trying to the teachers and militates against quiet and effective work on the part of the pupils.*

In such circumstances the stipulated requirements only permitted 92 children! A year later a new cloakroom was added, but the classroom accommodation remained unchanged.

The school garden, which was to remain in existence until 1948, was established in 1916 with remarkable success, giving practical experience to boys and girls alike and also contributing to the war effort. Another contribution was made when the children public-spiritedly donated their annual prize money to the Red Cross fund for wounded soldiers.

By the end of 1918, the Headmaster had only an Assistant Teacher, with the roll down to eighty-six. That year saw the introduction of 'The Education (Scotland) Act 1918', when thirty-eight Education Authorities took the place of the School Boards. On 12th May 1919, James Bartholomew, chairman of Baldernock School Board, held his last meeting. Those present were: John Christison, John Marshall, William Galloway and John McOuat. The Board had been approximately forty-six years in existence.

The Headmaster of the time was Thomas Baird, who taught the fourth year and Qualifying and Supplementary (Secondary) classes. During his reign a new classroom was added and equipment installed in the former Infants' room for a Cookery class which was introduced, for both girls and boys. A progressive school indeed! And at long last the pupils were granted a regular holiday on Christmas Day.

In the twenties pupils still carried a dinner 'piece' – which might be eaten on the way to school, if they missed their breakfast – and they could buy hot milk from Miss Gibson's home next door. One girl, Mamie Thomson, had a neat solution. During the winter, she and her brother had just time to run to the shelter of some haystacks at the top of the 'Lang Lea', where they met their father carrying a can of soup still warm from the Branziet farm kitchen. They sat behind the stacks, supped the soup and ran, perhaps more slowly, back to school again.

In January 1928, Tom Baird, the Headmaster's son, tragically died while climbing in the Cairngorms. The whole community and beyond was shocked by the news, and the schoolroom where the funeral service was held was inadequate for the numbers present. More than 300 mourners followed the cortege the mile to the churchyard to pay their final respects. Mr Baird left Baldernock school later in the year.

The year after his departure, 'The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1929' was passed, which abolished the brief rule of the Education Authorities, whose functions were taken over by the County Councils.

There were to be four changes of Headmaster within nine years, but the standard of work appeared to be maintained. The report from His Majesty's Inspector in 1933 is worth recording:

*The work of the Senior and Advanced Divisions is distinctly meritorious.*

*Praise is due, not only to the success with which the pupils acquit themselves in written and oral tests, but to their engaging demeanour and evident interest in their lessons.*

Former pupils take a bow! Mr Robert Cockburn, who was now Headmaster, appeared to be a man of many parts. The school log of 11th October 1935 contains the cryptic entry:

*Headmaster has been taking Physical exercises.*

In what capacity?

A further classroom, to be used for practical work, was added around this period and the Sewing class was held in Miss Gibson's home. By 1937 wireless was incorporated into the lessons. The following year Mary Gibson retired, after teaching at Baldernock school for sixty-five years. She died only nine days later, and the school was closed on the afternoon of her funeral.

The outbreak of war in 1939 brought fifty-one evacuees from Whiteinch School in Glasgow, and although about half quickly drifted home, the remainder became part of the school. Balmore Hall was used as an overflow for about a year for the younger pupils.

In earlier years Baldernock schoolchildren were totally at the mercy of the seasons. One day in 1944 twenty pupils struggled through blizzard conditions, and arrived at the school door breathless but triumphant. Was it dedication to their lessons, or might it have been the opportunity to hansom their new Wellington boots, supplied by the W.V.S. in the previous week, which motivated them? Up until the fifties no school transport was provided.

By 1946, the Advanced Division was transferred to Torrance School and Baldernock's status changed to that of a Primary School, with the numbers dropping dramatically to twenty-five. They stayed around this level for several years.

No record of Baldernock school would be complete without including Miss Reid, Head Teacher from 1953 till 1975. Her school was her life and she brought life into her school, with teaching methods ahead of her time. She encouraged creativity and remained undaunted by set rules and regulations, yet maintained a high standard of discipline. For many of her former scholars, it may truthfully be said that their schooldays were among their happiest. Miss Reid displayed other talents, shining brilliantly in a production of 'Bunty Pulls the Strings' when it was performed in Milngavie in 1974. She was also Registrar and Librarian for the parish. The library was an adjunct of the school building, now the kitchen area.

By the late Sixties the numbers had risen again, with 66 pupils on the roll, and only two members of staff. At that time the schoolhouse was considered to be one of the finest in the county. Nowadays the lower floor houses the school library, office, Head Teacher's office and the staffroom, while the upper floor is used by Baldernock Playgroup. Several years ago, a Portakabin was erected as an extra classroom, on the site of the former school garden. Mrs Maureen Clark, the present Headmistress, has a staff of three and two peripatetic teachers. Today's sixty-two pupils display no 'rustic diffidence', and are as conversant as most with computers and other new technology available to them. The active Parent-Teacher Association has enabled the purchase of much extra equipment.

Academically, Baldernock Primary School compares favourably with any other, but it has an added dimension too. It is surely unique in retaining the essential qualities of a small country school in a parish only seven miles from the centre of Glasgow. Long may it be so.

#### Head Teachers of Baldernock School:

1825	James Paterson
1844	John Mann
1873	Thomas McEwen
1891	John Gibson M.A.
1916	Thomas Baird
1928	A. C. McGregor
1929	Wm Roberts Gardiner M.A.
1931	Robert Cockburn
1937	Matthew Baird B.Sc.
1946	Helen Stewart
1948	Annie Reid M.A.
1975	Agnes Colquhoun M.A.
1984	Elizabeth McDonald
1988	Maureen Clark B.Ed.

## Appendix 2

### Principal teaching staff at Baldernock School since 1873

**commenced:**

**left:**

	1873	<u>Thomas McEwen</u>	Headteacher	Jan. 1891 (died in post)
	1874	James Logan	Pupil-teacher (PT)	1879
	1878	Mary Gibson	Sewing teacher	28/8/38, after 60 years' service (died following week)
June	1882	Jane Bryce	PT	1884
	1884	Margaret Livingstone	PT	1891
Jan.	1890	Clementina Harvey	PT	Dec. 1893
Jan.	1891	<u>John Deas</u>	Acting Headteacher	March 1891
March	1891	<u>John Gibson</u>	Headteacher	1915
Jan.	1894	Helen Livingstone	PT	July 1894
Sept.	1894	Lizzie Boyd	Ex-PT	Dec. 1894
Feb.	1895	Kate Miller	Ex-PT	May 1897
April	1897	Margaret Anderson	Ex-PT	June 1897
Sept.	1897	Jessie Morrison	Ex-PT	May 1906
May	1906	Anne Harrison	Ex-PT	Dec. 1906
Feb.	1907	Helen Douglas		Jan. 1908
Jan.	1908	Roberta Hamilton		May 1908
June	1908	Margaret Mather		Oct. 1908
Oct.	1908	Alice Priestly		April 1909
Feb.	1909	Anne Craig	Extra Assistant	May 1909
April	1909	Isabella Smith		Sept. 1911
May	1909	Isabella Carson		Sept. 1912
Sept.	1911	Elizabeth Stirling		Oct. 1913
Sept.	1912	Helen Brown		1915
Oct.	1913	Betsy McOrist		Nov. 1917
May	1915	Mary Gibson		Aug. 1915
Aug.	1915	Christina Johnstone		Jan. 1917
Nov.	1915	<u>David Mackay</u>	Interim Headteacher	Feb. 1916
Feb.	1916	<u>Thomas Baird</u>	Headteacher	June 1928
March	1917	Catherine Wilson		May 1926
Nov.	1917	Martha Shaw		?

March 1918	Katie Jane Sinclair (Miss)	Infants	Dec. 1918
	(returned March 1919)		June 1919
Aug. 1919	Agnes Ralston		Oct. 1921
Oct. 1921	Anne Sinclair (Mrs)		Sept. 1931
May 1926	Catherine McAffer		Aug. 1926
Aug. 1926	Katherine Espie		?
Aug. 1927	<u>A. C. McGregor</u>	Headteacher	May 1929
June 1929	<u>William Gardiner</u>	Headteacher	Nov. 1931
Feb. 1930	Margaret Newlands	Domestic subjects	?
Sept. 1931	Alice Fife	Infants	March 1934
Nov. 1931	<u>Robert Cockburn</u>	Headteacher	April 1937
March 1934	Elizabeth Ogilvie	Infants	Nov. 1946
April 1937	<u>Matthew Baird</u>	Headteacher	1946
Oct. 1946	<u>Helen Stewart</u>	Headteacher	Aug. 1948
Nov. 1947	Mrs Bowman	Temporary teacher during Miss Stewart's illness	
Aug. 1948	<u>Annie Reid</u>	Headteacher	1975
	1952 Aileen Manson		1954
	1955 Muriel Kennedy		1956
Aug. 1956	Wilhelmina Harrower		?
	1957 Isabel McDonald		1959
	1958 Mrs Fotheringham		1965
	1967 Mrs Herdman		1968
	1968 Elizabeth Hart (Mrs Watson)		1975
	1971 Fay Morrison		1992
	1971 Gwyneth Maynard		1976
	1975 <u>Agnes Colquhoun</u>	Headteacher	1984
	1975 Mary Brownlee		1979
	1979 Christine McKirdy		1980
	1984 <u>Elizabeth MacDonald</u>	Headteacher	1987
	1984 Frances Coull		1992
	1988 <u>Maureen Clark</u>	Headteacher	
Aug. 1990	Sue Rand		
Aug. 1992	Deborah Dickson	(Jobshare)	
Aug. 1994	Debra Bell		
Aug. 1995	Avril Meldrum	(Jobshare)	

In addition there were sometimes temporary teachers, such as Miss Pringle and Miss Shaw, who filled in during prolonged absences, and on occasions even the headmaster's wife, for example Mrs Gardiner, would take over when required!



## Appendix 3

### Milestones in Scottish Education 1872 -1999

**1872**

By Act of Parliament it became compulsory for all children between the ages of five and thirteen to attend school. Exemptions could be given to those over ten who had achieved a required standard in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. This Act also passed responsibility for the delivery of education into the hands of local authorities.

**1883**

School leaving age raised to fourteen by Act of Parliament, but half-time education was allowed for those over ten.

**1889-90**

Fees for elementary education were abolished. A two-year course leading to a Merit Certificate was introduced.

**1901**

Part-time education abolished.

**1903**

Qualifying Examination introduced.

**1908**

School meals service introduced; medical inspection made compulsory.

**1918**

School Boards abolished by Act of Parliament; new education authorities set up.

**1923**

Advanced Divisions of elementary schools set up with vocationally-based courses.

**1930**

Free school milk introduced.

**1936**

By Act of Parliament all children granted the right to Secondary Education. Senior Secondary schools introduced; Advanced Division classes abolished.

**1939**

The Scottish Education Department moved to Edinburgh from London (where it had been since 1872).

**1945**

By Act of Parliament secondary education legally free. The 1945 Act also laid down the duty of providing transport for children living outside walking distance, defined in the Code as two miles for those under eight, three for those over eight. The Act also laid a duty on education authorities to establish nursery schools wherever there was enough parental demand.

**1947**

School leaving age raised to fifteen.

**1949**

57% of Scottish schools had radio sets (94% by 1966).

**1962**

Appearance of the Ordinary Grade in the Scottish Certificate of Education.

**1965**

Circular 600 was an authoritarian statement by the Scottish Education Department that the Scottish educational system would henceforth be comprehensive. (In 1964 55,000 pupils or 6.5% of the whole population were being educated in independent and fee-paying schools.)

**1971**

Abolition of free school milk.

**1972**

School leaving age raised to sixteen

**1981**

The Education Act 1980 brought in parental-choice legislation. The Scottish Act gave parents the right to choose the school attended by their children.

**1988**

School Boards established.

**1991**

The Parents' Charter 1991 (updated 1995) set out how parents could secure the best possible education for their child.

**1993**

National Curriculum Guidelines for 5–14 year olds issued by the SOED from 1993. National testing (National guidelines: Assessment 5–14) introduced.

**1993**

DMR (Devolved Management of Resources) introduced and fully operational by 1998.

**1995**

The total population in Scotland in 1994-5 was 845,440 of whom 96% were in local authority schools; most of the remaining 4% attended independent schools.

Following the Children (Scotland) Act, local authorities for the first time had to produce a plan for children's services.

The government aimed through its pre-school education initiative to provide, over time, a place in the pre-school years for every child whose parents wished it.

**1999**

Introduction of early intervention initiatives for language and mathematics.

Introduction of the National Grid for Learning – intended ultimately to provide access to education and lifelong learning for all.

**Sources:**

*Educating Auchinairn and Bishopbriggs 1896–1996* by Bill Findlay

*The History of Scottish Education, Volume 2* by James Scotland

*Education in Scotland: Policy and Practice* by Margaret M. Clark and Pamela Munn

Mrs Clark, Headteacher, Baldernock Primary School

# Appendix 4

## The Mann McEwen family

Professor Tom Preston, who kindly loaned to us the photographs on page 11, is the great-grandson of Thomas McEwen, headmaster of Baldernock from 1872 to 1891. He is the grandson of Katherine, Thomas McEwen's eldest child, one of Thomas's six children all of whom were raised in Baldernock schoolhouse. Professor Preston is also the great-great-grandson of John Mann, headteacher at Baldernock from 1844 to 1873 and father-in-law of Thomas McEwen.

John Mann had four surviving children: two sons, Johnnie and James, and two daughters, Mary and Eliza. Eliza was raised and died in Baldernock schoolhouse. She married Thomas McEwen, who succeeded his father-in-law as headmaster at Baldernock. Thomas and Eliza had three children before Eliza died in childbirth. The third of Thomas's children died in infancy. The eldest two, Katherine and Euphemia, were adopted by their aunt Mary and her husband.

Thomas McEwen later married a Miss Bruce and had a further three children. Three children were born of the second marriage, Bruce (who had one daughter, Dr Marjorie McEwen, who was recognised as a collaborator in the discovery of the DNA double helix), Tom and Janet. Janet (Christie), the youngest of those born in Baldernock schoolhouse, when she died left her home and a large sum to University charities, to allow girls to go to Paris for a year. This was something she had not been able to do as a young woman, unlike her two half-sisters whose wealthy adoptive parents had enabled them to go on a 'grand tour'.

One of those half-sisters, Katherine, became the Lady Principal of Alexandra College, Dublin. She married physicist Professor Thomas Preston, who was Inspector of Arts and Science for Ireland from 1895 to 1900. They had three children, the eldest of whom, Professor George Preston, is Professor Tom Preston's father. It is notable that Katherine named her house in Rathgar, Dublin, 'Bardowie', after the castle and loch in Baldernock Parish.

The Mann McEwen grave can be found in Baldernock cemetery, standing at the west end door of the kirk.

The photographs on page 11 come from an archive of photographs and letters sent to and from Baldernock over a century ago.



- 1905            Motor-driven fire-engines brought into commission.  
Motor-buses first used in London.
- 1906            Foundation of Rolls-Royce Ltd.
- 1911            Amundsen became first man to reach the South Pole.
- 1912            S.S. Titanic sank after collision with iceberg near Cape Race: led to  
International Convention on Safety at Sea.
- 1914–18        World War I
- 1915            First automatic telephone exchange in Britain.
- 1916            Refrigeration of blood for transfusion.
- 1919            First woman M.P., Lady Astor, took her seat in the Commons.
- 1920            Gramophone discs first electrically recorded.
- 1923            de Pescara's helicopter made successful flight.
- 1924            Defeat of Baldwin Government. Succeeded by first British Labour  
Government under Ramsay Macdonald.  
Photographs first transmitted across the Atlantic by wireless telegraphy from  
Britain to the USA.
- 1925            Pneumatic tyres first used on London buses.  
First regular weekly BBC's broadcast to the Continent.  
First transatlantic broadcast.
- 1926            John Logie Baird, inventor, first demonstrated television; he used a  
mechanical scanning disc.
- 1927            Charles Augustus Lindbergh, USA, first solo flight over Atlantic.  
Communication established across the Atlantic by radio-telephone.
- 1928            Sir Alexander Fleming discovered *Penicillium notatum*, a green mould, caused  
destruction of nearby bacteria on a culture plate by producing a  
substance which he called penicillin (the first antibiotic).
- 1939–45        World War II

- 1948 Nationalisation of British Health Services.
- 1951 42,000 people in Britain owned TV sets.
- 1952 Television in Scotland, from transmitter at Kirk O'Shotts.
- 1953 Queen Elizabeth II crowned.  
Sir John Hunt's expedition conquered Mt. Everest; Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tensing reached summit.
- 1954 Roger Bannister first man to run a mile in under 4 minutes.
- 1957 Schools' Broadcasting on TV started in Britain.
- 1961 Yuri Gagarin, first man in space in 5-ton Soviet spaceship, Vostok, orbited the earth in 1 hour, 48 minutes.
- 1963 Great Train Robbery of £2.5 million from Glasgow–London mail train at Cheddington, Bucks.  
President Kennedy assassinated at Dallas, Texas.
- 1964 BBC 2 begins broadcasting.  
Forth Road Bridge opened.
- 1965 Local Authorities asked to submit plans for comprehensive schools in Britain.
- 1966 Aberfan mining village disaster: torrential rain caused landslide of tip; school engulfed. 116 children and 28 adults killed.
- 1967 First British colour TV broadcast – 625-line definition used.  
First heart transplant operation by Dr. Christian Barnard at Cape Town.
- 1969 Neil Armstrong, commander of US spacecraft Apollo 11 became the first man to set foot on the moon; televised pictures of landing transmitted to Earth. Rock samples brought back in the spacecraft.
- 1970 Oil discovered in North Sea by British Petroleum Company.
- 1971 Terms agreed for UK entry into EEC.  
Decimal currency introduced in UK.  
End of free school milk in Britain.

- 1972 School leaving age in Britain raised from 15 to 16.  
First pocket calculators, using microchip technology.
- 1973 Watergate: allegations of political espionage by U.S Republicans on U.S. Democratic Party.
- 1974 World's first 'test-tube' babies officially announced to have been born.  
Opening of first McDonald's hamburger and fast-food restaurant in London.
- 1975 Development of floppy discs and portable computers.  
First domestic video cassette recorders introduced.
- 1978 Skateboard craze among children cost NHS £6 million.
- 1979 First mass marketing of computer-based games and toys.  
Sony-Walkman introduced – portable cassette-player with earphones.  
Application of fibre-optic cable technology to public telephone and television-based information systems.
- 1982 Falklands War  
Marriage of Prince of Wales and Lady Diana Spencer seen by 750 million television viewers worldwide.  
Home computers cheaply available; introduction of IBM personal computer.
- 1986 Education Act abolished corporal punishment in schools.  
First pocket telephone.
- 1988 National Curriculum and testing, devolution of responsibilities from local authorities to schools and freedom to opt out of local control.



“... long walks to school playing by the burns, outside toilets frozen solid, milk warming by the fire ... proudly performing for friends and family in our school plays ... and friendships that will last forever ...” **Lilias Morrison, pupil, 1961–68**

“It was a great wee school.”

Mrs Legrix, April 1999

