

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

REFLECTIONS 2025-2026

Before commencing my report, as I have done in recent years, I want to take a moment to remember those of our members who are no longer with us. Their support demonstrated in a variety of ways across the years has been valued and their loss is most definitely felt by CPHS.

This last year has been another busy one with regards to raising awareness of both the Society and the amazing heritage of this area. Christine and I have again been out on the speakers' trail a fair bit. As ever, various Church organisations – St Athanasius Ladies' Group, Wishaw Old Parish Men's Club and Motherwell South Men's Club – as well as Probus and 1st Carluke Brownies have provided lively and interested audiences. In addition, we have continued to work with Carluke Library Staff on our 'Scotland's Memories' initiative. Each month, the Library hosts a small photo display on a particular topic for a week and then, on the Friday, there is an opportunity for people to come along and share their memories while having a cuppa and a sweet treat. These gatherings have proved to be very successful with around 20-25 people or so coming along to chat and reminisce with others visiting throughout the week. In fact, although we only schedule an hour for the chat, we often exceed it. Interestingly, these 'catch-ups' have also provided us with both new information and material for our archive. The topic for March-April is 'Health Care'. If you are free, why not pop along and share your memories of the health service? Did you work in the sector or were you a patient? In the same vein, our Open Mornings are also doing really well. There is always someone popping in to either browse the archive or seek specific information. It is interesting to hear the different and varied conversations that occur on these mornings.

Our big event of the year has to be have been the launch in November of our special WW2 publication – 'Sacrifice & Resilience : The Lives of the People of Carluke District during WW2'. Of course, it has been 'my baby' and 'a labour of love'. Researching it was my pleasure and I am delighted to say that the feedback has been very positive. If you have not already purchased a copy, we have some with this evening - cost £15.

Our triannual newsletter continues to be a valuable means of keeping in touch with our members as well as providing them with some interesting articles and I am pleased to say that the feedback remains very positive. My thanks go to our editor Maggie Martin as well as

to Maggie, Christine Warren, Anne Laird and Jan McNulty, who have ensured that the newsletter reaches all our members.

Similarly, our website and associated Facebook Page continue to attract interest not only from the local area but from across the globe. Once more, my thanks go to Jamie Taylor for maintaining these for us as well as uploading articles and photos as they become available. We know that there haven't been any new stories uploaded recently but this is due to workload in other areas. Hopefully, there will be some new articles very soon, however. Currently, we have 797 people following us on Facebook. As with last year, the most read item on the website has been 'Young Carluke Man Loses Life In Titanic'. It has now been viewed 1,551 times. With 1,483 views, the item on 'Hidden History in Local Names' is in second place. In third place, with 1281 views, is 'Carluk in the 1950s'. Again, feedback has been very positive.

From a research perspective, I am also pleased to report that CPHS continues to help people across the globe with a wide range of enquiries, many of these coming to us via the website, and, in return, several of these people have been happy to contribute their memories and photos to our archive and so have added to our understanding of the community's past. Some of these have appeared in our newsletters. This year has also seen us host several overseas visitors – from Australia, Canada, USA. They have all commented favourably on their visits and have gone away armed with lots of photos and information on their ancestors.

Looking forward to the coming year, I thought you might be interested to hear a little about a new project that Noreen and I are going to be involved in. It is called the Eco-Museum of Scottish Mining Landscapes and is a virtual museum covering Scotland's mining heritage from Ayrshire across the Central Belt to Fife. Having had a preliminary meeting with three of the organisers this morning, we are excited to do our bit to help promote Carluk's mining heritage. Please look out for more details in the months ahead.

Before closing, I would like to say a special thank you to two Committee members, Anne Laird and Lynn Cunningam. Sadly, both ladies have had to step down in the last twelve months for personal reasons. It goes without saying that their contributions to CPHS have been highly valued and their presence on the Committee is greatly missed.

This brings me to a special appeal. Our Committee is getting smaller by the day and, I am being totally honest here, when I say that, if we cannot entice some more people to join us, CPHS will be in danger of closing down. This would be a great pity as the Society approaches its Golden Anniversary in a couple of years. Can I please, please ask you to consider either putting yourself up for election this evening or consider joining us in the months ahead. What

does it involve you might say? I know that many are reluctant to become involved at committee level but be assured it does not need to be onerous. What we would love and need are people who are interested in the history (distant or recent – doesn't matter) of this area and want to see it conserved for the future. All we require of you is a couple of hours per month to attend our meetings.

My final words, as every year, are ones of thanks, firstly to the Committee who have willingly given up their time to, among other things, help organise the archive, and secondly to all our members and supporters. Your interest is what keeps us going so THANK YOU.

March 2026