

Illinois, USA, 19 May 2015

Fellow Members of the Abdie Curling Club:

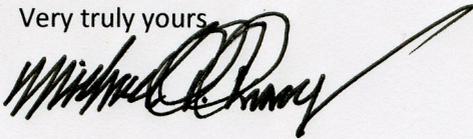
It is with great honour and pride to present to this distinguished Curling Club the manuscript entitled: "The Ancient Scottish Game of My Ancestors of Abdie Parish, Fife." I humbly ask that you now accept this as a token of my great respect of your Club's illustrious history of 184 years.

Lindores Loch is a picturesque natural ice rink and the hills and valleys surrounding it have echoed over the centuries to the clamour of many epic curling matches with keen curlers such as Dalgleish, Pitcairn of Kinnaird, Buist of Berryhill, Walker of Higham and Woodmill, Dun of Grange and Russell of Parkhill. Not only is this a history of my ancestral heritage but also of your illustrious Club's history. You my fellow brethren are the keepers of this notable history.

I should personally like to express my sincere gratitude to Secretary Keith Rose, Club Archivist Gerry Watson, Treasurer Willie Monks and Honorary Club Archivist James Stirrat for all their help, consideration and efforts extended to me during these many long months. I am most humbled to be associated with the present members of the Abdie Curling Club and a member of the distinguished sporting club, the sport of my ancestors, and without whose support and help with this publication would not have been possible.

Wishing all prosperity to the Abdie Curling Club. Kindest and most fraternal regards to all, I am,

Very truly yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael T. Tracy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Michael T. Tracy

The Ancient Scottish Game of My Ancestors of Abdie Parish, Fife By Michael T. Tracy

On a cold day on Friday, 28 January 1831 eleven men of Abdie Parish, Fife gathered together on the frozen Loch of Lindores to begin an historic curling match. The Loch of Lindores is a freshwater loch situated in the north of Fife in the Parish of Abdie and the old Abdie Parish Church ruins are close to the north shoreline where these men were standing.



Fig.1. Lindores Loch, Abdie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2003 Michael T. Tracy

Few knew at the time that this match would play a significant role in the history of what later became known as the Abdie Curling Club. In the old minute book of the Abdie Curling Club it recorded the following: "...the winter of 1830-31 a match was undertaken to be played between the Married Men and Bachelors, the losers being bound to give a Dinner to the winners, this match was played on the 28th January 1831, the curlers on the side of the Benedicts being: Sir Frederick Maitland of Lindores, Messrs. Pitcairn of Kinnaird; Buist of Berryhill; Walker of Higham; Walker of Woodmill. Whilst those who upheld the honour of the Single life were: Messrs. Russell of Parkhill; Dun of Hattonhill; Buist the younger of Berryhill; Simson of Hallhill and Dr. Burton. On that day however Mr. Simson was unfortunately called to Edinburgh on business and it was agreed to by both parties Mr. Dun should play one of his Stones and Mr. George Buist the other."¹ Thus the very first match was played and the founding of the Abdie Curling Club would be established. The Abdie Curling Club is one of only fourteen remaining clubs that eventually established the Grand Caledonian Curling Club in 1838.²



Fig.2. "The Final Handshake, 24 December 2010" Lindores Loch, Abdie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Ali Rose © 2010 Ali Rose

¹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 28 January 1831, p. 2

² World Curling Federation. History of Curling. Assessed at www.worldcurling.org

Origins

Curling originated in medieval Scotland but the exact origins of the game are not known. It is widely believed to be one of the world's oldest team sports. The first written evidence appeared in Latin, when in 1540, John McQuhin, a notary in Paisley, Renfrewshire, Scotland, recorded in his protocol book dated February 1541, a challenge between John Sclater, a monk in Paisley Abbey and Gavin Hamilton, a representative of the Abbot.³ The report stated that Sclater threw a stone along the ice three times and further he was ready for the agreed match.⁴ There is also evidence of paintings by Flemish artist Pieter Bruegel the elder (1530-1569) portraying an activity similar to curling played on frozen ponds.⁵

Curling in Abdie Parish was played on frozen lochs and ponds well before 1831. Indeed over the past, the hills have echoed to the sound of many an epic battle fought with intense rivalry between Abdie and its surrounding neighbours. According to the Abdie Curling Club minutes: "The Lough of Lindores affords in winter one of the best situations in Scotland for the game of Curling which there much practised and keen contests have frequently taken place from time immemorial, a few members of an old club still remain, but as the places of those who in the course of nature disappeared, were not filled up, it had become nearly extinct. For the last ten or twelve years the Gentlemen in the neighborhood of the Lough have annually met and played at this game whenever the state of the ice admitted of that that amusement..."⁶

It was also not uncommon for the early curlers after playing a whole day upon the ice, would return at twilight and have a little refreshment, and start to it again quite fresh and play by the aid of lighted lanterns until the crowing of the cock warned them to stop.⁷

The first recorded curling match in Abdie was as previously mentioned on Friday, 28 January 1831 at Lindores Loch and was won by the Men and the dinner was given by the Bachelors at Saunderson's Inn at Newburgh, Fife on Monday, 31 January 1831 with 14 Gentlemen being present. Among them were Henry Buist of Berryhill, George Dun of Hattonhill and Henry Buist (younger) also of Berryhill.⁸ After the first dinner was given the Gentlemen agreed to a meeting that they should constitute themselves into a body to be called the "Abdie Curling Club." Henry Buist is considered to be one of its Founders.

The Royal Caledonian Curling Club

The institution in 1838 of a Grand National Club, with its headquarters in the Scottish capital, and having for its object the regulations of the laws and methods of curling regulation of the laws and methods of curling by the united deliberations of representatives from all the clubs of the country, is the most important and far reaching event in the whole history of curling⁹ Originally named The Grand Caledonian Curling Club in 1838 it published a yearly annual listing all local clubs and members to the

³ World Curling Federation. History of Curling. Assessed at www.worldcurling.org

⁴ World Curling Federation. History of Curling. Assessed at www.worldcurling.org

⁵ World Curling Federation. History of Curling. Assessed at www.worldcurling.org

⁶ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 28 January 1831, p. 2

⁷ Curling. Taylor, James. Edinburgh: Wilham Paterson, 1884, p.129

⁸ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1831, p. 3

⁹ History of Curling. Kerr, John. Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1890. Accessed at www.electricscotland.com/history/curling/chapter6.htm

present day. The first Annual of the Grand Caledonian Curling Club was printed in 1839.¹⁰ The Abdie Curling Club and its Founding Members were listed as follows:

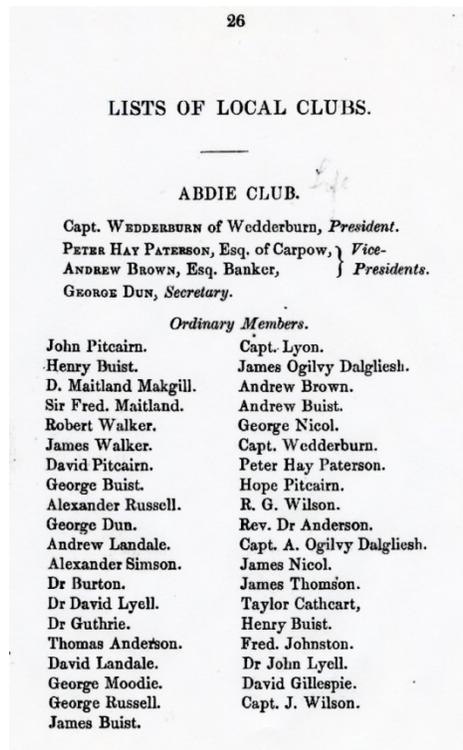


Fig.3. 1839 Annual of the Grand Caledonian Curling Club listing the Abdie Curling Club Members, Photograph Courtesy of The Royal Caledonian Curling Club © The Royal Caledonian Curling Club

According to the Annual of the Grand Caledonian Curling Club of 1841, James Ogilvy Dalgleish gave the report of the Abdie Curling Club in which he stated: "Report of the Abdie Curling Club's competition for the Grand Caledonian Club's Local Medal, 1839-40. The frosts in the beginning of the season being extremely precarious and short, and 'wars and rumours of wars' increasing against the club, it was deemed advisable to seize the first opportunity to decide the internal struggle, in order to remove every obstacle to meeting a foreign foe... The 8th, however, woefully disappointed the previous day's expectations, being a thick fog, and ultimately a thorough thaw with rain... It was resolved that the medal should be played for, and at half-past twelve o'clock, nineteen competitors took the field, and played the first two points at 36 yards, but the ice becoming more and more dull, the rink was successively reduced to 32, and finally to 24 yards. At three the umpires, Messrs. Ogilvy Dalgleish and Dun, declared the points gained by the different competitors to be as follows... The President then awarded the medal to Andrew Brown, Esq., banker, Newburgh, he having marked 12 points. Abdie, 20 July 1840, James Ogilvy Dalgleish."¹¹

¹⁰ Annual of the Grand Caledonian Curling Club 1839. Edinburgh: printed for the Grand Caledonian Curling Club, 1839, p.26

¹¹ Annual of the Grand Caledonian Curling Club 1841. Edinburgh: printed for the Grand Caledonian Curling Club, 1841, p.9



Fig.4. James Ogilvy Dalgleish (far left standing) at Ramornie, circa 1842-1855, Photograph Courtesy University of St. Andrews, Special Collections (ID ALB-85-23) © University of St. Andrews, Special Collections

Captain James Ogilvy Dalgleish was a notable member of the Abdie Curling Club from its inception and perhaps the most notable curler Fife has ever known. He was instrumental in The Royal Caledonian Curling Club for many years. According to the *Dundee Courier Newspaper* dated Friday, 30 January 1931: "For 30 years he never missed a dinner of the Abdie club, and when on 3 January 1853, he was unable to attend he was represented by a basket of champagne and brandy, 'to which, of course, the company did ample justice in drinking to his health.' It was Mr. David Martin, Dundee, who, 'being conscience struck,' sent the liquor to make amends for 'having forcibly entered Woodburne House, Ceres, and carried off their representative member to Malvern.' When he left Lindores, Captian Dalgleish was 'fined 3s 6d for having purchased Woodburne without the leave of the club.'"¹²

According to the Grand Caledonian Curling Club Annual of 1843 a Special Meeting of the Club was called on the occasion of the Queen and Prince Albert's visit to Scotland. On Wednesday, 31 August 1842 the Grand Caledonian Curling Club expressed sincere congratulations on the auspicious event of their visit to Scotland and the Special Meeting further resolved if his Royal Highness Prince Albert would consider becoming Patron of the Club.¹³ Prince Albert later accepted becoming a Patron of the Grand Caledonian Curling Club as evidenced by a letter to the Club from the Earl of Mansfield dated 19 September 1842 stating: "I have it in command from his Royal Highness to express to the Club his Royal Highness' gratification at this mark of their respectful attention to him and I have also to inform you that his Royal Highness has been so kind as to consent to become the Patron of the Grand Caledonian Curling Club..."¹⁴ In 1844 Queen Victoria would allow the Grand Caledonian Curling Club to assume the designation of The Royal Grand Caledonian Curling Club, by which title is now known.¹⁵ Furthermore, according to the Annual of the Club for 1845 it stated: "The Secretary read a letter from Mr. Gibson-Craig regarding the proposed change in the designation of the Club, and thereupon the motion by the Secretary, 'That the Designation of The Royal Grand Caledonian Curling Club shall, from and after 25 July 1844, be The Royal Caledonian Curling Club,' was unanimously carried."¹⁶

¹² *Dundee Courier Newspaper*, 30 January 1931, p.3

¹³ Annual of The Grand Caledonian Curling Club 1843. Edinburgh: printed for The Grand Caledonian Curling Club, 1843, p.87

¹⁴ Annual of The Grand Caledonian Curling Club 1843. Edinburgh: printed for The Grand Caledonian Curling Club, 1843, p.87

¹⁵ Office-Bearers of The Royal Grand Caledonian Curling Club 1843-1844. Edinburgh: printed for The Grand Caledonian Curling Club, 1844, p. viii

¹⁶ Annual of the Grand Caledonian Curling Club 1845. Edinburgh: printed for The Royal Caledonian Curling Club, 1845, p.37

Abdie Curling Club's President

Sir Frederick Lewis Maitland (1777-1839) had been born in Rankeilour, Fife. He resided with his wife and family at Abdie House, Abdie Parish, Fife which is very near Lindores Loch.



Fig.5. Abdie House, Residence of Sir Frederick Lewis Maitland, Abdie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Dr. Iain Macintyre, May 2013, © 2013 Dr. Iain Macintyre

He was elected as Abdie Curling Club's first President but served less than a year due to the fact that he was called away in the service of his country. Sir Frederick Lewis Maitland was a famous Admiral and Commander of the *Bellerophon*, who frustrated the attempt of Napoleon to escape by sea after the epic battle of Waterloo in 1815.¹⁷ He also took the surrender of Napoleon in July of 1815 on the same ship. He was an avid curler and took a great interest in the success of the club. According to the *Dundee Courier Newspaper* dated Friday, 30 January 1931: "The curlers of the North Fife parish of Abdie are proud of the fact that their first president was Sir Frederick Maitland, R.N., who had the distinction, while captain of the *Bellerophon*, of receiving and taking prisoner Napoleon Bonaparte in the Basque Roads on 15 July 1815. It is recorded that when Napoleon came on board he said, 'I am come to throw myself on the protection of your Prince and laws.' When shown into his cabin Napoleon was placid. 'This is a handsome cabin,' he said, and Captain Maitland announced, 'Such as it is, sir, it is at your service while you remain on the ship I command.' Sir Frederick presided at the first dinner of the Abdie club in Sanderson's Inn at Newburgh on 31 January 1831. Lady Maitland presented the first minute book to the club. It is handsomely bound, and the frontispiece is a drawing of Lindores Loch or Lough, as the beautiful stretch of water which lies between the Perth-Ladybank railway and the public road between Lindores and Collessie was then styled."¹⁸

¹⁷ www.wikipedia.org. Accessed at wiki/Frederick_Lewis_Maitland

¹⁸ *Dundee Courier Newspaper*, 30 January 1931, p.3



Fig.6. Sir Frederick Lewis Maitland, 1815, Photograph Courtesy of the University of St. Andrews, Special Collections (ID ALB-86-32.1) © University of St. Andrews, Special Collections

On Monday, 3 December 1832 Henry Buist of Berryhill was chosen as the club's President. Henry Buist was 61 years old and an avid curler.¹⁹ George Dun, a nephew of Henry Buist was also chosen as the club's Secretary. This meeting at Hattonhill, the residence of George Dun produced the Abdie Curling Club's first regulations and rules in curling which basically are still followed to this day. According to the minutes of the Abdie Curling Club: "The following regulations have been drawn out by the Committee and approved by the members of the club.

- 1) That a general meeting of the Members of the Club shall take place annually upon the 31st day of January (Sunday's exempted) being the anniversary of the Institution when a Committee shall be chosen to consist of a President, two Vice Presidents, and a Secretary to manage the general affairs thereof.
- 2) The admission of Members to the Club to be 2/6 each. Each Member providing Stones for himself.
- 3) No person to be admitted into the Club before he is proposed by a Member and approved by the Committee."²⁰

A rematch was scheduled between the Bachelors and Married Members of the Club and was played on Lindores Loch on Saturday, 26 January 1833. The Abdie Curling Club minutes of Wednesday, 30 January 1833 recorded the results of the match as: "...The Bachelors were again so unfortunate as to lose the day, the Benedicts having a majority of nine shots in a game of twenty seven, the players on the side of the fathers were: Pitcairn of Kinnaird, Buist of Berryhill, Walker of Woodmill, Walker of Higham while those on the side of the unfortunates were: Alexander Simson of Hallhill, Alexander Russell of Parkhill, James Buist of Kirktonbarns and George Dun of Hattonhill. When this match was taken it was understood that Mr. George Buist [son of Henry Buist of Berryhill] was to be one of the Bachelors and being one of the best players on their side, his absence on this occasion certainly was a mean of

¹⁹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 3 December 1832, p.5

²⁰ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 3 December 1832, p.5

throwing the balance so much in favour of their opponents, it being understood there were to be five players on a side.”²¹

Trafalgar Inn, Collessie

Trafalgar Junction is a junction between the present day A91 and the B937 highway near Collessie, Fife. This junction was also known as the Collessie cross-roads where a runner passed every day from Cupar to Auchtermuchty, who would have letters and parcels at the Trafalgar Inn.²²



Fig.7. Trafalgar Junction, Collessie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of James Stirrat © 2015 James Stirrat

After the very first recorded curling match was won by the Married Men, a dinner was given by the Bachelors at Saunderson’s Inn in Newburgh on Monday, 31 January 1831.²³ According to the club minutes of Thursday, 31 January 1833, its anniversary meeting, gives first mention of the Trafalgar Inn near Collessie where the Abdie Curling Club met for the first time there.²⁴ The Trafalgar Inn was built as a stage coaching inn in 1803 and later named in honour of the famous British naval victory of 21 October 1805. It remained in operation as an inn until 1926.²⁵



Fig.8. Trafalgar Inn, Collessie, Fife, circa 1885-1886

²¹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 30 January 1833, p.12

²² History of the County of Fife: From the Earliest Period to the Present Time, Volume II. Leighton, John M. and Swan, Joseph. Glasgow: Joseph Swan. 1840, p.97

²³ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1831, p.2

²⁴ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1833, p.13

²⁵ Trafalgar Inn and Crossroads, Collessie Memorial Plaque, Collessie, Fife



Fig.9. Trafalgar Inn Memorial Plaque, Collessie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of James Stirrat © 2015 James Stirrat

Abdie Curling Club Button

In an Anniversary meeting of the Abdie Curling Club of Tuesday, 18 February 1834, Henry Buist was presiding for his final time as President. Discussion centered around the topic that the Club should have a certain uniform while meeting. According to the History of Curling and Fifty Years of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club: “By decree of this society, every member (the chaplain exempted) was bound to wear the club uniform at play, the coat thereof being blue, the vest buff. Sixteen large buttons were to figure on the coat, eight small ones on the vest; the cost of the buttons and die being 5 pounds, 2 shillings, which members had to pay.”²⁶ It was proposed by Mr. John Pitcarin that a particular button might serve that purpose as well.²⁷ The Abdie Curling Club button was approved on Tuesday, 16 December 1834.²⁸

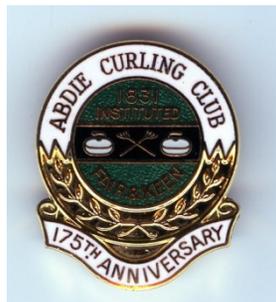


Fig.10. Abdie Curling Club Pin, Present Day, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy

Curling Location

The old matches of the Abdie Curling Club were played at the north end of Lindores Loch. Today the old curling pond is overgrown with reeds and other brush. According to the present Honorary Club Archivist, Mr. Gerry Watson: “The photograph below is of the reeds at the north end of the loch, and it was at this point the Abdie Curling Club used to curl. The water here is very shallow and they would cut a square within the reeds and this would have been their curling pond. The cutting of the reeds, I believe was done by men who were employed on cutting reeds on the River Tay (this according to Jim Stirrat who has been a member of the Abdie Curling Club for more than 50 years and whose father also

²⁶ History of Curling. And Fifty Years of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club. Kerr, John. Edinburgh: David Douglas. 1890, p.212

²⁷ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 18 February 1834, p.15

²⁸ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 16 December 1834, p.16

curled for the Club). The Club would also have employed an iceman whose job would have been to prepare and maintain the pond ready for use.”²⁹



Fig.11. Old Curling Pond at Lindores Loch, Abdie Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Gerry Watson, Honorary Abdie Curling Club Archivist, © 2014 Gerry Watson

Furthermore, according to the third old minute book of the Abdie Curling Club there is evidence that the Club employed an iceman/ice master to look after the pond. There are three entries recorded in the minute book. The first being at the Abdie Curling Club Annual Dinner held at the George Hotel, in Newburgh on Thursday, 28 February 1907: “Mr. Alexander Dall, Iceman was present at the dinner and presented by John Ballingall, on behalf of the club with a marble timepiece and suitable inscription as a mark of esteem for 25 years as iceman.”³⁰ The second entry being the Abdie Curling Club A.G.M. held at the Town Hall at Newburgh on Thursday, 8 October 1914: “Mr. Williamson was appointed Officer and Ice master at 3/- per working day and 10/- for reed cutting.”³¹ The third entry being the Abdie Curling Club A.G.M. held at the Public Hall at Newburgh in 1920: “Roof of House to be repaired, left with Secretary and Ice Master to get same done.”³² The Ice man or Ice Master was most likely employed throughout the winter season and was also a general handyman as well. Again, according to Honorary Club Archivist, Mr. Gerry Watson: “I personally would have thought that the duties of the Ice Master were wide reaching to the extent that he even got involved in repairs to the Curling House. The main duties would have been: marking out the ice to form a Curling Rink (this would involve having a rope exactly 38 yards long, the distance between the trees and then setting out the 6 foot circle etc., and the various scores across the Rink) as well as he would have set out more than 1 rink possibly several if the conditions for curling were good; maintain the Rink once it was formed by sweeping snow, leaves away from the rink; and was responsible for getting the Curling Club House ready, lit a fire and got the stones ready for play (the stones we have in the Curling House now do not have their handles tightly fitted, this is done just prior to use).”³³

²⁹ Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 2 December 2014

³⁰ Abdie Curling Club Third Minute Book, 28 February 1907

³¹ Abdie Curling Club Third Minute Book, 8 October 1914

³² Abdie Curling Club Third Minute Book, 1920

³³ Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 7 December 2014



Fig.12. Old Curling Pond From Distance at Lindores Loch, Abdie Parish, Fife (Club House is left of centre amongst the trees, reeds are in the centre, old Abdie Church and Berryhill farm off further to the right of photograph), Photograph Courtesy of Gerry Watson, Honorary Abdie Club Archivist, © 2014 Gerry Watson

In an old travel journal written by in 1842 by a German traveler to Scotland he comments upon witnessing a curling match and the preparation of the pond: “The rink, which of course must be smooth and level like a mirror, is always selected, cleaned and swept with great care. Most importantly, it must have no lengthwise cracks, which naturally make the stones deviate from the straight more than do crosswise ones. My friends told me that many men even had their own ‘curling ponds’ which had been prepared for this game and on to which it was possible, after the old course had been used and damaged, to pour two or three inches of water and let it freeze again.”³⁴

Interesting Curling Matches Played over the Years

Many of the Abdie Curling Club’s matches were for charitable purposes, the losers paying double what the winners did. One such charitable match was played on Saturday, 20 January 1838 at Lindores Loch. This particular match was played on behalf of the School of Lindores. The winners of the match were recorded as follows: Henry Buist, Captain Lyon, Paterson of Carpow, R. Walker, George Russell, T. Anderson, George Buist and George Dun with the sum of two guineas being collected from the winning team and three guineas from the losing team.³⁵

Thereafter a challenge was given by Captain Wedderburn on behalf of the Bachelors to Mr. Ogilvy Dalgliesh on the part of the Benedicts to play another charitable match this time to benefit the Newburgh Benevolent Society. The winners paying two guineas and the losers paying three guineas. The match would be played on Saturday, 10 February 1838 according to the Club’s minute book in three rinks on Lindores Loch.³⁶ Henry Buist of the Benedicts would play against his younger son, Henry of the Bachelors. The Benedicts had a total of 117 shots to the Bachelors 101 shots on that day.³⁷

A very important match would be played later on Saturday, 17 February 1838 on Lindores Loch as it was the first time the Abdie Curling Club would be facing an opponent from outside of the parish.

³⁴ Kohl Johann George. Travels in Scotland 1842. J.M.Y. Simpson, 2012 p.72

³⁵ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1838, p.25

³⁶ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 10 February 1838, p.33

³⁷ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 10 February 1838, p.33

Witness the following: "...no preparations were made, except warning the distant members to be in readiness... At half past ten o'clock, a multitude of the Cupar Club were discovered on the ice, flanked by a double horse car of stones, brooms and other implements of war. Thus taken by surprise it was long ere Abdie could recover her scattered senses, and longer ere she could muster her scattered sons. One by one they began to arrive at ¼ to 12 o'clock, twelve had a chance to come forward (Dalgeish, Russell, Brown, Andrew Walker Buist, Henry Buist, Jr., George Dun, Walker, James Buist, George Buist, H. Pitcairn and A. Simpson). Result at three o'clock 1st rink, Abdie 17, Cupar 14. 2nd rink, Abdie 24, Cupar 6."³⁸

Recorded Fines

The Abdie Curling Club records are entirely of a local character however a few lines are reported as being imposed on various members for "various delinquencies." Most of these however are repeated year after year. Some examples of these fines follow.

On Wednesday, 31 January 1838 the Abdie Curling Club held their annual meeting at the Trafalgar Inn. "The following gentlemen were fined in the sum of two shillings each for not appearing at this meeting in the club uniform, viz. Messrs. Andrew Walker Buist, Andrew Brown, George Nicol and George Russell, Mr. Pitcairn was with great applause fined in the sum of two pence for being on the ice on a previous day with an umbrella instead of a 'besom [broom]'..."³⁹

Some unfortunate members of the Abdie Curling Club were fined for having got married "without having consulted the Committee of the Club." Witness the following: "The meeting unanimously fined Mr. Hill in the sum of five shillings for getting married."⁴⁰ As mentioned previously most of the early matches of the Abdie Curling Club were between the Bachelors and Benedicts and for any one individual to disturb the balance of power by marriage was treated as a serious offence and fined accordingly.

Another serious club fine occurred on Monday, 1 February 1841. "The next matter of business which came before the Meeting was the consideration of various delinquencies, faults, or foibles of the individual members of the Club, which the Club as a body, hold themselves bound to take under their cognizance and fine and punish as to them may seem meet. The first case reported to the Meeting being a very serious one, occupied a good deal of time. Viz. That Dr. David Lyell on a recent occasion, in presence of witnesses now present, having shot at a Hare in her seat; this circumstance aggravated, by the fact of the Hare having been actually dead for some days previous, induced the Club to come to the resolution of fining Dr. Lyell in the sum of one shilling, with the understanding that should ever a similar case come before the Club it should not be treated with much less leniency. The second ground of complaint laid before the Meeting was the case of Charles Hill, Esq., of Luthrie, viz. That of his Lady having presented him with a son and Heir without the consent of the Club. Mr. Hill plead guilty and was fined the sum of 2/6."⁴¹

Other interesting fine mentioned occurred at the Meeting of Tuesday, 1 February 1848 held in the Commercial Inn at Newburgh: "Mr. Russell of Parkhill for getting married without the consent of the

³⁸ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 17 February 1838, p.33

³⁹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1838, p.29

⁴⁰ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1840, p.52

⁴¹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 1 February 1841, p.64

Club 5/-. Mr. John Pitcairn, Jr., for being the first member of the Club who had submitted to take chloroform in extracting a tooth 1/-. Also, the Secretary and Mr. Hope Pitcairn 1/- each for having dogs on the ice.”⁴²

Most of these fines are repeated year after year which give an insight into the mischievous schoolboy humour of imposing fines for trifling misdemeanors, a common feature of Victorian gentlemen’s clubs, which was common.

Trophies and Medals

The Abdie Curling Club possesses some exceptional trophies and medals. Three in particular deserve acknowledgement because of their long history and value. They are the Epergne, the Local Medal and the Burton Champion Medal.

The most prized trophy of the Abdie Curling Club is the Epergne. This trophy carries a long history spanning well over a century.



Fig.13. The Epergne Trophy, Photography Courtesy of the Abdie Curling Club © 2014 Abdie Curling Club

The Epergne was originally presented to James Ogilvy Dalgleish, Esquire at the Annual General Meeting of the Abdie Curling Club held at Dickman’s Inn at Newburgh, Fife on Monday, 31 January 1842 and is mentioned in the minute book of the Club.⁴³ The Epergne bears the following inscription: “Presented to James Ogilvy Dalgleish, Esq., a keen curler, by his brethren of the Abdie Curling Club as a mark of esteem and gratitude for his unwearied services to the Club and for his aid and exertions in associating a keen keen Curlers in one brotherhood. 1842.”⁴⁴

⁴² Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 1 February 1848, p.98

⁴³ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1842, p.70

⁴⁴ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1842, p.70



Fig.14. The Epergne Trophy Inscription, Photograph Courtesy of Willie Monks, Treasurer Abdie Curling Club, © 2015 Willie Monks

James Ogilvy Dalgleish is first mentioned in the Club's minute book in the list of members dated Saturday, 31 January 1835.⁴⁵ As mentioned previously, he was instrumental in the founding of the Grand Caledonian Curling Club in 1838 the precursor of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club. Dalgleish attended the original meetings, along with Mr. Pitcairn and Mr. Dun, and his hand is visible in most of the constitution and the essential features including the promotion of the sport by providing medals for competitions between member clubs, establishing provincial 'bonspiels' (tournaments), inaugurating Grand Matches, and publishing an Annual.⁴⁶ The Epergne was returned to Abdie in 1959 by James Ogilvy Dalgleish's grandson, Wing Commander J.W. Ogilvy Dalgleish of Oakham, Rutland, England.⁴⁷ Wing Commander Dalgleish further explained: "Although it is a lovely thing, I inherited from my father and it has been in my family for 117 years since it was presented to my grandfather but I am getting on now and should like to find it a suitable home in my lifetime, otherwise, owing to the conditions in the country today, it might later find its way into the sale rooms at Christie's where these period pieces are much sought after by collectors."⁴⁸

The Club also has in its possession a letter dated Wednesday, 2 February 1842 to Andrew Brown, Esq., Central Bank of Scotland at Newburgh, from MacKay Cunningham and Company who were the Edinburgh company that supplied the Epergne. Presently the Epergne is stored in a strong wooden box with MacKay Cunningham and Company stamped on the inside. They, however did not make the Epergne as it has London hallmarks.⁴⁹ This is because the expertise as not available in Scotland and the

⁴⁵ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1835, p.18

⁴⁶ Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 30 March 2015

⁴⁷ Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 30 March 2015

⁴⁸ Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 30 March 2015

⁴⁹ Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 30 March 2015

work would have been commissioned to a London silversmith.⁵⁰ Incidentally, the Epergne trophy is presently valued at over 6,000 pounds.

The second medal of significance is the Local Medal first called the Gold Medal. The first mention of the Local Medal (Gold Medal) being competed for was on Wednesday, 20 January 1847. According to the minutes of the Club: "The Club met this day and competed for the Gold Medal subscribed for at the last Annual Meeting – at the close of the match Messrs. Henry Buist Hattonhill and John Pitcairn, Jr., Kinnaird stood equal scoring 10 each when an additional shot of out-wicking was allowed by the umpire Mr. McCathie of Clunie, and gained by Mr. Buist."⁵¹ Further, the old minutes reflect another reference to the new Gold Medal on Tuesday, 2 February 1847: "The Secretary also reported to the meeting the result of the competition for the new Gold Medal belonging to the Club, Mr. Henry Buist of Hattonhill, winner."⁵²



Fig.15. The Local Medal (Front View), Photograph Courtesy of Willie Monks, Treasurer Abdie Curling Club, © 2015 Willie Monks

The members of the Abdie Curling Club played for the Gold Medal again recorded on Thursday, 6 January 1848.⁵³ It should be noted that the Gold Medal was purchased by the members of Club also on this same day and the minutes further recorded the names of the Subscribers to the Gold Medal with the amount of their subscriptions.⁵⁴ The Local Medal is solid 18 carat gold and has been completed for since 1848 and is currently valued over 6,000 pounds.

⁵⁰ Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 30 March 2015

⁵¹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 20 January 1847, p.92

⁵² Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 2 February 1847, p.94

⁵³ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 6 January 1848, p.99

⁵⁴ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 6 January 1848, p.100



Fig.16. The Local Medal (Back View), Photograph Courtesy of Willie Monks, Treasurer Abdie Curling Club, © 2015 Willie Monks

The Abdie Curling Club plays for the Local Medal in their points competition with the Burton Champion Medal in their points competition with the Burton Champion Medal going to the runner up. Most curling clubs will have a points competition each year and Abdie's is held one evening and is based on completing successfully various disciplines in curling, such as promoting stones, in-wicking, out-wicking and is the same format as over 160 years ago.⁵⁵

The Burton Champion Medal is another medal of significance to the Abdie Curling Club and also has a rich history spanning over 160 years. Dr. John Burton (abt 1806-1891) a resident of Abdie parish played in the first Abdie curling match on Friday, 28 January 1831 at Lindores Loch.⁵⁶ Dr. Burton was also the first Secretary of the Abdie Curling Club being appointed at the subsequent dinner given by the bachelors (the losers) at Saunderson's Inn at Newburgh, Fife on Monday, 31 January 1831.⁵⁷ He did not hold this position for long having relocated to Haddington, East Lothian prior to a meeting of a number of club members held at the residence of Mr. Henry Buist at Hattonhill, on Monday, 3 December 1832, whereupon Mr. George Dun was appointed Secretary of the Abdie Curling Club.⁵⁸

Dr. John Burton was not mentioned in the Club's minute books until 1856 whereupon the following appears within the minutes for the Annual Meeting of the Abdie Curling Club held at the Commercial Inn at Newburgh, Fife on Thursday, 7 February 1856: "The Secretary then produced a Gold Medal received this day from Dr. Burton of Walsall bearing the following inscription 'Presented to the United Newburgh and Abdie Curling Clubs as a Champion Medal by Dr. Burton of Walsall, and accompanied by the letter copied hereafter. The meeting being highly pleased and justly proud of this kind of mark of respect from an old friend, instructed the Secretary to write Dr. Burton with their best thanks, and at the same time to explain that the Newburgh, and Abdie Curling Clubs are two separate

⁵⁵ Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 15 May 2015

⁵⁶ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 28 January 1831, p.2

⁵⁷ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1831, p.4

⁵⁸ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 3 December 1832, p.5

and distinct Clubs, and that it was the Abdie Curling Club of which he was a member, to let him know fully how matters stand, and lay the subject before him for his decision.”⁵⁹

On Saturday, 2 February 1856 writing from Walsall, Dr. Burton wrote the following letter which was copied into the Club’s minutes: “Dear Sir, Wishing all prosperity to the United Newburgh and Abdie Curling Clubs, and also not wishing to forget or be forgotten by my old friends in and about Newburgh. I have made a Silver Gilt Medal from a design which is sketched by myself but which I regret the workman has very imperfectly carried out which I request that you will be kind enough to present to the members of the club at your meeting on Thursday, 7 February. Be pleased to add my grateful recollection of many acts of friendship and kindness I secured from the members when I was among them, with my most sincere wishes for their and the Club’s continued prosperity. I regret that I could not afford to present a more handsome medal but I trust they will not value my good will by the intrinsic value of the gift. The only conditions I have to attach is that the medal shall be contested for once in each year if the ice will stand it, and be worn by the winner until fairly won by him by some successful brother of the Club. The medal in any case being and remaining the property of the Club forever. The rules to be observed in the contests for the Championship will be best settled by your managing Committee. I have addressed the box containing the medal and thistle green collar to be worn about the neck to you at the Commercial Inn, Newburgh’ to be kept until for’ it will arrive by post on Thursday morning at the latest... I am yours (signed) John Burton, M.D.”⁶⁰



Fig.17. The Burton Champion Medal, Photograph Courtesy of the Abdie Curling Club © 2014 Abdie Curling Club

The Secretary Mr. David Dun replied with a letter dated Tuesday, 12 February 1856: “Dear Sir, I duly received your esteemed favour of the 2nd inst. And on the 7th day of our Annual Meeting I received

⁵⁹ Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 7 February 1856

⁶⁰ Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 7 February 1856

the handsome Medal therein referred to, which I then laid before the members of the Club and am instructed by them to convey to you their best thanks for your kind remembrance of your old friends and presenting them with this highly valued Gold 'Champion Medal' which shall compete for according to your directions. We observe that the Medal is presented to the 'United Newburgh and Abdie Curling Clubs,' these have all along been two distinct Clubs, the Newburgh Club which plays on Lochmill started several years after you left this neighbourhood and is a quite a different Club from that of which you were a member viz. – The Abdie Curling Club. The following members of the Newburgh Club are also members of the Abdie viz. Messr. James Nicol, John Honeyman, George Buist and Rev. Dr. Anderson, the most of the others I expect you will not know much of... I beg to enclose the designation of several of the Abdie Club as some of them have changed since you knew them and hope this will show you how matters stand. I shall be happy to receive from you any further commands on the subject, I am (signed) David Dun, Secretary Abdie Curling Club.”⁶¹

After receiving the above letter, Dr. Burton wrote the President Dr. Lyall wishing the Medal returned to him for alterations of the inscription which was done on the 20th February 1856 in a registered letter.⁶² On Wednesday, 3 December 1856 President Dr. Lyall read the following letter from Dr. Burton, and at the same time produced the Gold Champions Medal on the ice, to the curlers there assembled, which was received with rapturous applause.⁶³ The letter from Dr. Burton was written on Friday, 28 November 1856 and reads: “My Dear Dr. Lyall, I have this day dispatched the Abdie Curling Club Champion Medal as a registered letter by post. After a deal of trouble and badgering the marker, I have got him to turn out something which will do credit to one of your champion. In embossing the curling figure, from the 'heathens' here knowing nothing of the game, I have had much difficulty to drive into their heads what the attitude ought to be. It is not what I would have liked the action of the figure not being sufficiently energetic, or the stoop for the delivery of the stone sufficiently marked. But this is the fourth made before being anything but horrible deformities and if you would be kind enough not to be hypercritical and fancy that the figure is taken when just before the act of stooping commences, you may conceive such an attitude in a good curler. The scene of the Medal by an equally accommodating supposition may fancied to be Lindores Loch. In short you may fancy ony thing ye like best, if you winna fancy that. I can never forget my old Fife friends, and their kindness to me when a stranger amongst them. Kindest and most fraternal regards to all, and accept best wishes for yourself and family, from yours (signed) John Burton. P.S. I leave the Club to make rules for contesting the Champion all I stipulate for is, that the Medal is and shall forever remain the property of the Abdie Curling Club. (Int. J.B.).”⁶⁴

⁶¹ Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 7 February 1856

⁶² Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 7 February 1856

⁶³ Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 3 December 1856

⁶⁴ Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 3 December 1856



Fig.18. The Burton Champion Medal (Back View), Photograph Courtesy of Willie Monks, Treasurer Abdie Curling Club © 2015 Willie Monks

It is worthy to note the Club's heartfelt reply to Dr. Burton written by the Secretary Mr. David Dun dated Wednesday, 3 December 1856: "Dear Sir, I have again the pleasure of returning you the most sincere thanks of the number of the Abdie Curling Club for the splendid gold Champion Medal handed us on the ice today per Dr. Lyall of Newburgh. I can assure you that the members en masse are highly delighted with the medal, the attitude of the player, and the design altogether, our 'fertile minds' can easily imagine the scene to be laid on Lindores Loch, but it is so luckily happens that very little imagination is necessary for the representation of the tree and paling are the exact counterpart of a tree and paling 200 yards from where we played today, with the trees on the island on the other side of the Loch. I have just in conclusion to beg of you to accept the heartfelt and most enthusiastic thanks, and the best wishes of the Abdie Curlers which I can only imperfectly express, with the hope that they may on some not far distant day have the extreme happiness of your joining them in competing for it. The first competition is fixed weather permitting, for Monday the 8th inst., which shall take place according to your directions, henceforth annually ad infinitum. I have the honour (signed) David Dun."⁶⁵

The very first Burton's Champion Medal competition took place on Monday, 2 February 1857 as the Club's minutes reflected: "A good muster of Knights of the broom having appeared today it was unanimously resolved that on account of the excellent condition of the ice and through no public intimation had been given, to play for the said medal under the express understanding that should this

⁶⁵ Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 3 December 1856

frost continue or should proper ice again be had this season, it would be re-competed for on some suitable day when intimation will be forwarded to all concerned, and it is also understood that should the highest score on the second competition be lower than that of this day, the present winner shall be Medal Holder, and vice versa. The competition accordingly took place, 13 players, good ice, play fair. Winner Mr. Guild by 10 points to whom the medal was handed over.”⁶⁶ The minutes continued further dated Wednesday, 4 February 1857: “In the terms of Monday’s resolution and the continuation of the ice, the Second Competition for the above medal came off today in consequence of the last day’s number of points not having been reached Mr. Guild is still Medal Holder.”⁶⁷



Fig.19. The Burton Champion Medal (Front View), Photograph Courtesy of Willie Monks, Treasurer Abdie Curling Club © 2015 Willie Monks

Dr. John Burton took an active interest in the Abdie Curling Club for a number of decades after his presentation of the Burton Champion Medal in 1856. It is thought that he personally presented the Medal to the Club for its 25th Anniversary. He is also listed as being an Occasional Curler in the Annuals with Abdie inferring that for 60 years, 1831 until the year of his death in 1891, he paid his subscription but because he lived elsewhere and did not play. In fact Dr. Burton was only involved with one match with the Club, that being the very first one in 1831 and is considered a Founder of the Club. Dr. Burton does not appear in the minute books until the Annual Meeting of Thursday, 7 February 1889 held at the Commercial Hotel where after listing those present it states: “Letters of apology were read from Dr. Burton, Robert Cathcart and others.”⁶⁸ He appears again in the Club’s minutes on Wednesday, 21

⁶⁶ Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 2 February 1857

⁶⁷ Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 4 February 1857

⁶⁸ Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 15 May 2015

January 1891: "The circulars intimating Annual Meeting were posted, the Secretary also wrote Dr. Burton and although he is about 86 years of age, his reply will show he still retains his great interest in the Club."⁶⁹

Dr. John Burton died on Wednesday, 6 May 1891 at his residence at Forest Lodge, Kelso, Roxburgh at the age of 85.⁷⁰ His obituary appeared in the *British Medical Journal* on Saturday, 1 August 1891 which gives a glimpse of his character: "Dr. Burton was a striking personality and one of the best known citizens... Beneath a brusque exterior and strange unceremoniousness of manner, he was a singularly kind man to the suffering, considerate and sympathetic and to children affectionate and tender... He was deeply read and kept himself well abreast of the scientific thought and discovery of his time so far as it concerned his work. 'There was says our contemporary' much in Dr. Burton that was singularly attractive to those who were permitted to be his intimate friends full of fun, a master of dry humour and a thorough despiser of cant and humbug, he throughout his long lie humorously cultivated the art of a cynic, was eccentric in some things even to awkwardness, and mischievously enjoyed the luxury of saying slightly disagreeable things. Many prized most highly his friendship, admired alike the ruggedness and beauty of his character, and held in reverence his high moral nature, which had no taint of the ignoble or the mean."⁷¹

In January of 1892 the Secretary of the Abdie Curling Club wrote within what appears to be a review of the previous year by stating: "During the year the Club has to record the death of two of its oldest members, Dr. Burton having died at Kelso on the 6th April 1891 [should be 6th May 1891] and John Pitcairn at St. Andrews on the 19th January 1892 both gentlemen took great interest in the Club and their memory will be treasured by those who knew them."⁷²

The Burton Champion Medal is solid 18 carat gold and has been competed for since 1857 and is currently valued over 3,000 pounds. It should also be noted that the order of medals in the Club's point competition is: (First) The Local Medal, (Second) The Burton Champion Medal and (Third) The Hamilton Medal.

Abdie Curling Club House

The Abdie Curling Club House was built between the years 1863-1865 and is one of only a few such stone built structures of that era presently in existence.⁷³ According to the *Fifeshire Herald Newspaper*, of Thursday, 7 August 1862: "To Builders, Smiths, Etc., Estimates are wanted for the Mason, Wright, and other works, as follows, viz... 6) Of a House at Lindores Loch for the Abdie Curling Club."⁷⁴ This distinctive stone house is located on the northwest end of Lindores Loch and its entrance is flanked by openings with wrought iron bars and timber shutters. The interior has a stone fireplace and shelves for storing curling stones.

⁶⁹ Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 15 May 2015

⁷⁰ Death Record of John Burton, 6 May 1891, Kelso Parish Records, Statutory Deaths 793/00 0056

⁷¹ *British Medical Journal*, 1 August 1891 p.280

⁷² Email Communication of Mr. Gerry Watson to Mr. Michael T. Tracy, 15 May 2015

⁷³ History of Curling. And Fifty Years of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club. Kerr, John. Edinburgh: David Douglas. 1890, p.212

⁷⁴ *Fifeshire Herald Newspaper*, 7 August 1862, p.1



Fig.20. Abdie Curling Club House Interior 2010, Abdie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Ali Rose © 2010 Ali Rose



Fig.21. Abdie Curling Club House, Lindores Loch, Abdie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Ali Rose © 2010 Ali Rose

Old Newspaper Accounts of the Abdie Curling Club

The first recorded mention of the Abdie Curling Club in local newspapers of the area was in the *Fife Herald Newspaper* of Thursday, 8 February 1838. According to the account: *"When winter muffles up his cloak, And binds the mire like ony rock, When to the lochs the curlers flock, Wi' glesome speed.'* Never were the words of our immortal Burns more faithfully illustrated than here; since the first cracking ice was fit to be approached on Saturday the 13th ultimo, when the Abdie Curling Club laid down their first stone for the season. And never certainly did nature spread a more lovely sheet for the display of the curler's science, than there lay stretched on the bosom of the romantic and beautiful loch of Lindores... Nevertheless, with all enthusiasm of the olden time, the club, undaunted by wind or weather have continued their exhilarating sport without intermitting a single day..."⁷⁵

⁷⁵ *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 8 February 1838, p.3

Another interesting newspaper account of the Abdie Curling Club was published in the *Fife Herald Newspaper* dated Thursday, 13 February 1840: "The anniversary meeting of the Abdie Curling Club was held at Trafalgar Inn on the 31st ultimo, when a large muster of the members dined together... The office bearers for next year are Captain J. Wilson Inchre, President; Messrs. Russell of Parkhill and A. Buist of Berryhill, Vice Presidents; James Ogilvy Dalgliesh, Esquire, Representative to the Grand Caledonian Curling Club; Mr. George Dun, Secretary. The members resolved to present the latter gentleman with a pair of handsome curling stones, bearing the following inscription: 'Presented to Mr. George Dun, tenant, Grange of Lindores, a keen, keen, Curler, by his friends of the Abdie Curling Club, for his long and zealous services as their secretary, 31 January 1840.' Many preparations had been made for the winter's campaign. Among others, a flag staff was erected on the high grounds of Lindores (formed from a tree presented by George Makgill, Esq., of Kemback), on which a flag, presented by J. O. Dalgleish, Esq., bearing the initials of the club, is hoisted to apprise the members when the ice will bear their joyous sport."⁷⁶

"Curling Dinner at Newburgh, Testimonial to J.O. Dalgleish, Esquire," ran the headline of the *Fife Herald Newspaper* of Thursday, 10 February 1842. The newspaper further reported: "On Monday last week, the annual dinner of the Abdie Curling Club took place in Dickman's Inn, Newburgh... The members of the Abdie Curling Club took the opportunity of their annual dinner to present a piece of plate, purchased by subscription among themselves, to their President (who is about to leave the neighbourhood), as a token of their kindness in various ways, to the Club. The plate consisted of a very handsome silver epergne, costing about 50 pounds... Mr. Dalgleish returned the thanks in an admirable speech, replete with the good feeling and good sense, excellently expressed."⁷⁷

Other area newspapers carried news about the Abdie Curling Club as well, even as far away as Lancashire. According to the *Preston Chronicle Newspaper* of Saturday, 11 February 1843: "Curling. The general annual meeting of the Abdie Curling Club (considered to be one of the 'crack' clubs in Fife), was held in an inn in the town of Newburgh. Betwixt twenty and thirty members sat down to dinner... The President kindly furnished the wines during the dinner; and sent likewise a dozen bottles of whiskey, for behoof of the club in curling weather... Many appropriate toasts and speeches were proposed and delivered during the course of the evening, and the company did not break up ere a late hour; all seemed to say, 'Happy to meet and sorry to part, and happy to meet again.' The curler, who had seen the thermometer standing at 28 degrees and 30 degrees for a day or two, and witnessed the ice growing thicker and thicker, till within a single night of being fit for duty, went to bed to dream of brooms, stones, and rinks, with all the fun attending the said game, frost at 30 degrees; hurled up by day break, to get everything put in order for the day's work; but, ongoing out, great was his regret to find the ponds flooded with water, and the roads besmeared with mud, ankle deep, and a thick Scotch mist filling the atmosphere with a temperature of 50 degrees..."⁷⁸

A curling match on Lindores Loch was reported by the *Preston Chronicle Newspaper* on Saturday, 11 March 1843 stating: "Curling. February, as a month, has been all that the curler could wish, consequently many bonspeils have been played in Fife, as well as in many other counties of Scotland. On Wednesday, the 15th ult., the Abdie club met as usual, on the beautiful Loch of Lindores, to play for the local media given by the Grand Caledonian Curling Club, of which club Prince Albert is the patron. Nineteen competitors started for the prize, and after all the shots had been played and

⁷⁶ *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 13 February 1840, p.3

⁷⁷ *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 10 February 1842, p.3

⁷⁸ *Preston Chronicle Newspaper*, 11 February 1843, p.3

counted, it was found there were two individuals who marked eleven, that being the highest number of points gained, viz., Mr. Brown, of the Central Bank, Newburgh, and Mr. Buist, Ormiston. In consequence of this, they played (according to the rule of the grand club) four shots at 'out wicking,' but the competition not being decided by these shots, the umpire proposed that each should play four shots more at 'guarding' when Mr. Buist was declared the victor by a majority of one over Mr. Brown... Strange to say, some of those who are reckoned the most regular and best players of the club marked the fewest; and strange to tell, all the medals which have been competed for by this club have been gained by the bachelors."⁷⁹

There was an interesting ball in honour of the wives and sweethearts of the Abdie Curling Club curlers held on Friday, 22 February 1850 and mentioned by the *Fife Herald Newspaper* for Thursday, 7 March 1850 edition: "Abdie. At the annual meeting of the Abdie Curling Club, held in the Commercial Inn, Newburgh, on Tuesday the 5th ult., it was unanimously resolved that 'curlers' wives and sweethearts' ought to participate in the winter's amusements; and therefore, to compensate as much as possible for their want of enjoyment on the ice, a ball was resolved upon. Accordingly, a ball, under the management of the president and committee of the Abdie Curling Club, was held in the Mason Hall, Newburgh, on the evening of Friday the 22nd ult., when there assembled all the beauty and fashion for miles around... Dancing commenced at nine o'clock and continued until one, when the company of nearly 100 sat down to an excellent supper... After supper dancing was resumed, and kept up with great spirit until five in the morning, when the party separated in every way gratified with the evening's proceedings."⁸⁰

Keen Curlers of the Buist and Dun Families

Henry Buist (1771-1865) was a Founder of the Abdie Curling Club. He became the Club's second President and served in that capacity from Monday, 3 December 1832 until Tuesday, 18 February 1834.⁸¹ He was an active member well into his late 60s and continued curling until the age of 69 in 1840. The last recorded match he played in was on Wednesday, 8 January 1840 in which he had 5 shots.⁸² Henry Buist died on Tuesday, 7 November 1865 at the age of 94 years⁸³ and was buried in the Abdie Churchyard along with the rest of his sons.

⁷⁹ *Preston Chronicle Newspaper*, 11 March 1843, p.2

⁸⁰ *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 7 March 1850, p.3

⁸¹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 3 December 1832, p.5 & 18 February 1834, p.15

⁸² Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 8 January 1840, p.50

⁸³ Death Record of Henry Buist, 7 November 1865, Abdie Parish Records, Statutory Deaths, National Records of Scotland



Fig.22. Henry Buist & Family Gravesites, Abdie Churchyard, Abdie Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2003 Michael T. Tracy

All of Henry Buist's sons were members of the Abdie Curling Club and keen curlers of their time. His eldest son, George Buist (1809-1889) was also a Founding Member and was elected Vice President in 1835⁸⁴ and President in 1850.⁸⁵ According to the Abdie Curling Club minutes of Thursday, 8 February 1844 there is mention that "he was fined in the usual some 1/- for want of Club uniform."⁸⁶

Andrew Walker Buist (1816-1877) the second son of Founder Henry Buist was another keen curler of his time. He is first mentioned as playing his first match at the age of 22 on Saturday, 20 January 1838 at Lindores Loch⁸⁷ and was subsequently elected to membership on Friday, 16 February 1838.⁸⁸ Andrew Walker Buist was elected Vice President of the Abdie Curling Club twice, once in 1840⁸⁹ and in 1848.⁹⁰ It is noted in the club minutes that he played in the Abdie-Balyarrow match on Wednesday, 29 December 1841; competed for the gold medal on Saturday, 29 December 1841;⁹¹ competed for the gold medal on Saturday, 6 January 1849 in which he tied for second place at 7 shots;⁹² and played in the Grand Match at the Royal Curling Pond between the North side of the Forth and the South on Tuesday, 15 February 1853.⁹³ It was noted that the North side won and "Messrs. A.W. Buist and the Rev. J. Gilchrist were balloted against four good players from the Vale of Leven Club and beat them by 18 to 10."⁹⁴ Andrew W. Buist was also listed in the 1862 Annual of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club.

⁸⁴ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1835, p.19

⁸⁵ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 5 February 1850, p.112

⁸⁶ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 8 February 1844, p.78

⁸⁷ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 20 January 1838, p.25

⁸⁸ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 16 February 1838, p.26

⁸⁹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1840, p.51

⁹⁰ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 1 February 1848, p.97

⁹¹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1842, p.84

⁹² Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1849, p.105

⁹³ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 15 February 1853, p.125

⁹⁴ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 15 February 1853, p.125

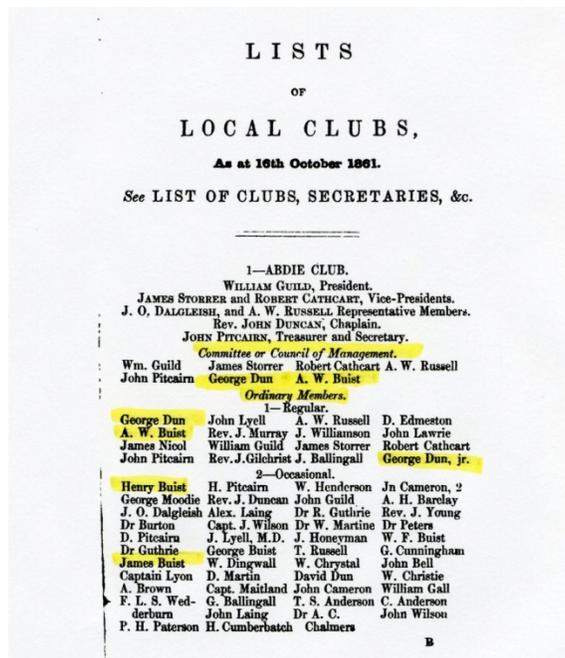


Fig.23. 1862 Annual of The Royal Caledonian Curling Club, Photograph Courtesy of The Royal Caledonian Curling Club © The Royal Caledonian Curling Club

Henry Buist, Jr. (1820-1854) was first mentioned as a member of the Abdie Curling Club at the age of 18.⁹⁵ His first match that Henry Buist played in was against his father in the Bachelors verses the Married Men on Saturday, 10 February 1838.⁹⁶ He like his older brothers was eventually elected Vice President of the Abdie Curling Club in 1843.⁹⁷ By 1847 he was residing at Hattonhill, Abdie and was declared winner and noted for the new Gold Medal belonging to the Club.⁹⁸ He served the Abdie Curling Club as Secretary and Treasurer for six years beginning from Tuesday, 6 February 1849 until his death in 1854.⁹⁹

A keen curler like his father and brothers, Henry Buist played in many matches on Lindores Loch and elsewhere. One such match was the Gold Medal Match played on Saturday, 12 February 1853 near the end of his life in which he was noted in the minutes as “having been won by Secretary Henry Buist at nine points.”¹⁰⁰

Toward the end of 1854 Henry Buist was ailing. In a letter written by James Nicol, Chairman of the Abdie Curling Club to Mr. Alexander Cassels of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club: “In consequence of the severe indisposition of our Secretary Mr. Henry Buist, Jr., the returns of the Abdie Curling Club could not possibly be forwarded to you sooner...Mr. Buist is so very poorly that he could not be disturbed about any business whatever...”¹⁰¹ Henry Buist died on Tuesday, 21 November 1854 at

⁹⁵ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 16 February 1838, p.33

⁹⁶ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 16 February 1838, p.33

⁹⁷ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1843, p.72

⁹⁸ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 2 February 1847, p.94

⁹⁹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 6 February 1849, p.103

¹⁰⁰ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 12 February 1853, p.122

¹⁰¹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 20 November 1854, p.129

Hattonhill, Abdie Parish at the age of 34.¹⁰² In the minutes of the Abdie Curling Club for Thursday, 28 December 1854: "Mr. Pitcairn stated that in consequence of the lamented death of Mr. Henry Buist, Jr., our Secretary the meeting should appoint a Secretary ad interim to do the official duties until the annual General Meeting in February."¹⁰³ At the Club's regular meeting held in Speedies Commercial Inn at Newburgh on Thursday, 8 February 1855 a tribute to Henry Buist, Jr., stated: "The meeting then appointed David Dun [son of George Dun] to be Secretary and Treasurer in the room of, the late, Mr. Henry Buist and there unanimously resolved; That the meeting of the Club desire to record their sincere regret for the loss occasioned by the death of Henry Buist, Esquire of Hattonhill, In whom, as a club they have lost an ardent and attached Member, an efficient Secretary and a 'Keen Keen Curler' and as Individuals, a worthy member of Society a pleasant Companion and a kind hearted friend and the instructed the Secretary to convey to the Father and Brothers of the deceased, this imperfect expression of their deep felt Sympathy, and their condolence with them under the bereavement."¹⁰⁴

The Dun family of Abdie Parish, Fife were equally keen curlers. Henry Buist's sister Jean Buist (1773-1803) married David Dun (1765-1833) and had seven children one of whom was George Dun. George Dun (1800-1874) was a Founder of the Abdie Curling Club in 1831. He was elected Secretary on Monday, 3 December 1832 and was responsible for the Club's first minute book written in his own hand.¹⁰⁵ He played in many matches throughout his many years as the Club's Secretary. In an incident that occurred during the summer of 1842, the *Perthshire Advertiser Newspaper* reported on Thursday, 7 July 1842: "Newburgh. An Ill-Looking Affair. On the afternoon of Monday last week, a circumstance took place in our immediate neighbourhood which has created a very unwanted sensation throughout the district, and, in the meantime, promises to be followed by very serious results. So far as can be learned, the matter stands thus: The Abdie Curling Club recently erected, near the Loch of Lindores, a small house in which to keep their stones during summer. The question being a novelty, and at the same time, low and of easy access to the top, two or three little boys occasionally diverted themselves by riding on the roof. On the afternoon of the day mentioned, three little fellows were amusing themselves in that matter, when the neighbouring farmer came suddenly on them and, catching hold of two, struck their heads together by way of punishment. One of them, by struggling, effected his escape; but the other, a weakly boy, came in, it is said, for a more severe castigation. Be that as it may, the latter, on reaching home, took to bed and was a corpse before night. An investigation has been made by the fiscal into all the circumstances connected with the case; but none of the facts thereby elicited have yet been made public. However, heavy recognizances, it is said, have been entered into by the offending party to appear when called upon. It is but justice to Mr. Dun, the individual referred to, to add, that he denies having harmed any of the boys in the smallest, and that there was no outward mark on the body of the deceased or any injuries inflicted."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² *Preston Chronicle Newspaper*, 25 November 1854, p.5 (Henry Buist Obituary)

¹⁰³ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 28 December 1854, p.130

¹⁰⁴ Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 8 February 1855

¹⁰⁵ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 3 December 1832, p.5

¹⁰⁶ *Perthshire Advertiser Newspaper*, 7 July 1842, p.3



Fig.24. Abdie Curling Club House, Lindores Loch, Abdie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Ali Rose © 2010 Ali Rose

George Dun served as Secretary of the Abdie Curling Club until he resigned on Tuesday, 6 February 1849.¹⁰⁷ In his letter of resignation dated Wednesday, 31 January 1849 he wrote: "I find I cannot be present at the Annual Meeting of the Abdie Curling Club on Tuesday next and beg to intimate that I hereby resign into your hands the office of Secretary and Treasurer which I have held for upwards of 16 years. I will be ready to hand over the effects of the Club to whom you may honour with the appointment at the same time I beg to state that being situated in the locality where the Club generally meets I shall be happy to render any assistance in my power in promoting the interest of the Club. Signed George Dun."¹⁰⁸

The Abdie Curling Club honored Mr. Dun's long service and recorded their best thanks for his valuable service.¹⁰⁹ George Dun died in 1874 at the age of 74 at the Grange of Lindores, Abdie Parish, Fife.¹¹⁰ He was buried in the Abdie Churchyard along with the rest of his family. Incidentally, at the top of his gravestone is the inscription of the year 1849 on it. This was the year he resigned as Secretary and Treasurer of the Abdie Curling Club.

¹⁰⁷ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 6 February 1849, p.102

¹⁰⁸ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 6 February 1849, p.107

¹⁰⁹ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 6 February 1849, p.102

¹¹⁰ Death Record of George Dun, 25 August 1874, Abdie Parish Records, Statutory Deaths, National Records of Scotland



Fig. 25. George Dun & Family Gravestone, Abdie Churchyard, Abdie Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2003 Michael T. Tracy

George Dun (1842-1930) would eventually take up his father's pastime of curling. After his father's death he inherited the Grange of Lindores in Abdie Parish, Fife and would farm there. He followed his father as Secretary and Treasurer of the Abdie Curling Club and in 1891 he was honored by the Club for his many years of service. In 1861, Mr. Dun is listed in the Annual of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club for the year of 1862. Along with Mr. Dun are listed his two great uncles, Henry Buist and James Buist as being "Occasional" members.¹¹¹

George Dun was elected as the Club's President in 1866. Westwood's Parochial Directory listed him as: "Abdie Curling Club, George Dun, Esquire, Grange, President."¹¹²

¹¹¹ Annual of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club for 1862. S. Forrester. Edinburgh: 1862. p.18

¹¹² Westwoods Parochial Directory for the Counties of Fife and Kinross. Cupar: A. Westwood, 1866, p.134

<p>124</p> <p>JOINERS. Byth, William, High Street Nairn, David, do Wallace, Thomas, Clinton Street</p> <p>LINEN MANUFACTURERS. Ascherson, William & Sons, High Street Anderson, William, jun., & Co., do Byars, William, Railway Road Wilkie, James, jun., & Co., High Street</p> <p>MANUFACTURERS' AGENTS. Buchanan, David, High Street Foot, James, Railway Road</p> <p>HANDY AGENTS & DEALERS. Cameron, John, Clifton House Nicol, James, High Street</p> <p>MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS. Lloyd, David, M.D., High Street Lloyd, John, M.D., do Peters, Robert, Albany Villa</p> <p>MIDWIVES. Foot, Mrs James, Railway Road Suttie, Mrs James, High Street</p> <p>PAINTERS & PAPER-HANGERS. Clark, Robert, High Street Hay, David, do</p> <p>SALMON DEALERS. Buchanan, David, High Street Dunn, John, do</p> <p>SHIP-OFFICERS. Barlow, John, High Street Cameron, John, Clifton House Dickman, John, Masson Road Edwards, Messrs A. & J., Newburgh Ewart, William, High Street Guld, William, Tevbank, Newburgh Lzell, Alexander, Clinton Street Mackenzie, John, High Street Pikethly, John, Cornhill Street Speed, George, jun., Shore Speed, George, sen., do Taylor, Alexander, Banklands Thomson, William, High Street</p> <p>SLATERS. Nairn, C. & H., Railway Road Norris, H. & E., High Street</p> <p>SOCIETIES & CLUBS. Abdie Curling Club, George Dun, Sec. Grange, President, Jn. Pitcairn, Sec. Kinaird, Sec. Caledonian Lodge of Oddfellows, John Paton, W.G.M., George Miller, Sec.</p>	<p>NEWBURGH.</p> <p>Lindores Lodge of Freemasons, John Lawrie, R.W., George Booth, Sec. Newburgh Curling Club, Thos. Robertson, Pres., Geo. Wool, Sec. & Treas. Newburgh District Gardening Society, Andrew Miles, President, David Lloyd, M.D., Sec. Newburgh Friendly Society, Robert Fin- layson, President, George Booth, Sec.</p> <p>STRAW BONNET MAKERS. Lloyd, Misses, High Street Paton, Miss, do</p> <p>TAILORS. Bathelger, Charles, High Street Bruce, John, do Craighead, Alex., (a Clothier) High St. Burgess, David, High Street Fotheringham, Alexander, Railway Road Harris, John, (a Clothier) Cornhill Street Simpson, George, High Street Watson, James, do Wilson, Wm., (a Clothier) High Street</p> <p>TEACHERS & SCHOOLS. Coutie, Miss, (Female) West Shore Road Coutie, John, High Street Inglin, Miss Jessie S., Madras Female School, Newburgh Miller, Thomas, Parish School, High Street</p> <p>VINTNERS. See also Innkeepers. Donaldson, John, Shore Laird, Andrew, West Fort Muir, Thomas, High Street Ramsay, Margaret, do Robertson, Mrs James, do (Street Smith, David, Caddick's Taverns, High Wallace, Arthur, High Street Winbar, Andrew, do</p> <p>MISCELLANEOUS. Anderson, J. F., Clock & Watch Maker, High Street Anderson, John, Skipper, Dundee and Newburgh Trader, "Athol," High St. Beveridge, Geo., Superintendent of Burgh Police, High Street Booth, George, Photographer, Newburgh Brahner, James, Plasterer, High Street Christie, Robert, Manager, Gas Works, Newburgh Chrystal, William, Depote Sheriff-Clerk and Town-Clerk, High Street Clow, David, Cabinet-Maker and Uphol- sterer, High Street Cochran, Thomas, Malster, Taygrove Curr, Wm., Corn & Flour Miller, Craigmill</p>
--	---

Fig.26. George Dun, President of Abdie Curling Club, Westwood's Parochial Directory, 1866

According to the *Dundee Courier Newspaper* dated Saturday, 12 July 1930: "Mr. Dun was a member of the Abdie Curling Club for many years when he was at the Grange of Lindores, officiating as secretary, and he was also a member of the Falkland Club. Abdie curlers showed their appreciation of his services by presenting him with a pair of curling stones with silver handles."¹¹³ The inscription on the handles reads: "Abdie Curling Club. To George Dun, Esq., 5 February 1891, as a mark of our respect for him as a gentleman and as a curler."¹¹⁴ George Dun died in 1930 at the age of 88.¹¹⁵

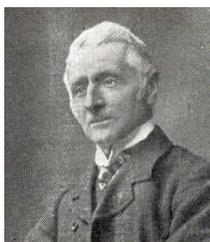


Fig.27. George Dun, Photograph Courtesy of Dundee Courier & Advertiser Newspaper, 6 September 1928

A further mention of George Dun was recorded on Friday, 2 October 1930 at a meeting held at the Newburgh Public Hall in Newburgh: "The Rev. H.Y. Arnott on taking the chair made sympathetic reference to the death of Mr. G. Dun an old member of the Abdie Curling Club and whose family had been identified with the club since its inception."¹¹⁶

¹¹³ *Dundee Courier Newspaper*, 12 July 1930, p.3

¹¹⁴ *Dundee Courier Newspaper*, 6 September 1928, p.1

¹¹⁵ Death Record of George Dun, 11 July 1930, Largo Parish Records, Statutory Deaths, National Records of Scotland

¹¹⁶ Abdie Curling Club Second Minute Book, 2 October 1930

The Abdie Curling Club Today

Established in 1831 the Abdie Curling Club has a long and distinguished history in curling and serving the community of Abdie Parish. The Club is one of only fourteen remaining clubs that eventually established the Grand Caledonian Curling Club in 1838. The Founders of this club wanted to continue this ancient sport of their Scottish forebears and took their sport very seriously. It was an honor to play a match on Lindores Loch on those cold, frosty winter days of so long ago. Gentlemen of Abdie Parish like Sir Frederick Maitland; James Ogilvy Dalgliesh who helped draft the original Constitution for curlers of generations to come; John Pitcairn of Kinnarid; James Walker of Woodmill; Henry Buist of Berryhill and sons George, Andrew and Henry Buist; George Dun of the Grange of Lindores successfully made the Abdie Curling Club into what it is today. The Abdie Curling Club has a unique and rich history that stretches from generations to the present day.



Fig.28. Abdie Curling Club House Interior, Abdie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Ali Rose © 2010 Ali Rose

The Abdie Curling Club – An Appreciation

I was most honoured and privileged to review and research the Abdie Curling Club's first recorded minute book (1831-1854) mostly written by my cousin Mr. George Dun, Esquire of the Grange of Lindores. The contributions of the Buist and Dun families of Abdie are well noted. These old minutes gave me a unique insight as to what these Gentlemen of Abdie did during their long winter months of leisure time as well as their friends and neighbours. The friendship, humour and genuine warmth among the members can be felt throughout this book. By reviewing these minutes and the matches played in the olden times, I was traveling back into Abdie's past. However what struck me the most was recorded in the Club's minutes of Wednesday, 31 January 1838. There, recorded for the pages of history is a song that the Founders of the Abdie Curling Club and members sung that evening at the Trafalgar Inn at Newburgh. The minutes stated that all who were present that evening wanted this song sung to

the tune of The Quaker's Wife, to be recorded in the minutes and printed copies for the use and benefit of themselves and absent members.¹¹⁷

16

Song
Tune – The Quakers Wife

<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>O that my muse were fit to tell The matchless charms of curling ! The happy glee our hearts that swell, As our stones up the rink are hurling The anxious hopes and throbbing fears Which haunt the lover's bosom, Are not more varied sharp and "keen" Than guide the curler's "besom"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>The Club determined had "a spiel" The Village School to play for, That poverty's deserving child Might feel the curlers favour. So quick their stones and brooms they get, And on the ice they muster, The snow is swept, the "tees are set," And round the "skips" they cluster.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p>With Buist fought George of Ormiston, And Higham, roaring gaily; Russel of Collessie Mill, And Anderson, the Baillie. The Secretary led Buist's second band – His name alone was conquer'd A Lyon's strength was on his side, Carpow brought up the rear guard.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p>Corn-merchant Nicol's a sample fair Of the average quotation; The second hope of Berryhill "Swept" past our expectation. And last came Wedderburn's young heir, A learner "keen" and "active;" To whom the swineish eunach race Will soon be less attractive.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9</p> <p>At length a shout that rent the sky, Of Buist and victory blended, With Higham at his highest pitch, Proclaim'd the contest ended. Alas! Upon Trafalgar's wave That shout was o'er slain and wounded And many a heart was cold in death That late with ardour bounded.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>Be mine the simpler task to tell, How the Abdie boys, ease scorning, Met, eighteen hundred and thirty eight, On January the twentieth morning. How merrily they laugh'd and jok'd, Tho' hill and dale around them Were white with nature's winding sheet Whosw thickest folds had bound them.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>Pitcairn and Buist of skill confess, "Directors" were elected, And man to man were all the rest, As merit bade selected. The Warriors' names alone I sing - Their daring deeds, to bind them. To history's page, defies my power, But there you'll maybe find them !</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>Parkhill he was Pitcairn's man, And Brown of the Central Bank too, And Moodie who late his joys began By quitting the bachelor's rank too. The second "rink" the more's the loss - Was led by the Dogg' rel Rhymier, Who in curling as in poetry Is only in his primer.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <p>Six – and – thirty was the game: Three hours we fiercely battled, And "shots" were hit, and miss'd and "drawn," And "hogs" and "roarers rattled" But as on life's deceitful "rink," Merit's "end" at best's uncertain, So e'en, on ice's smoothest face, Success may crown a "chance stane !"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10</p> <p>On th' ice the curler's "shot is drawn!" Bloodless "the broom sweeps o'er him;" No wounded saw we here to-day, With "beef and greens" before him. Then fill a bumper "up tee high," Our hearts we'll "closely mix them," Our brough's "THE ABDIE CURLING CLUB!" In it we'll firmly fix them.</p>
--	--

31

Lindores 30 January 1838

Fig.29. Abdie Curling Club Song sung on the evening of 31 January 1838 at Trafalgar Inn, Newburgh, Minutes of 31 January 1838, Used by Permission of the Abdie Curling Club, © Abdie Curling Club

¹¹⁷ Abdie Curling Club First Minute Book, 31 January 1838, p.p. 30-31

A song that has for 176 years presently, has captured the spirit and essence of the Abdie Curling Club. Truly, this Club steeped in its history can look back with immense pride at its past as well as Abdie Parish and the Kingdom of Fife can be very proud of the Abdie Curling Club for its accomplishments through these many years by their generosity to the benefit of their community. The Abdie Curling Club along with the Royal Caledonian Curling Club can also be equally proud of the traditions of the sport of curling that presently is played in over 50 countries throughout the world and enjoyed by millions of people. I am most humbled to be associated with the present members of the Abdie Curling Club and a member of this distinguished sporting club, the sport of my ancestors, and without whose support and help with this publication would, not have been possible. A great deal can be traced directly back to the Abdie Curling Club whose influence, and unique history, minute books, trophies and curling house make it not only one of the oldest, but arguably the most historic curling club in the world.

If you the reader ever get a chance to witness for yourself the beauty and tranquility of Lindores Loch in Abdie Parish, Fife, I urge you to visit the Abdie Club House on the northwest end of the Loch. If you look to the northeast of the old Club house on a cold winter's day perhaps you might catch a glimpse of some of the Gentlemen of ages past playing a curling match....



Fig.30. "End of the Day, 24 December 2010" Lindores Loch, Abdie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Ali Rose © 2010 Ali Rose

Acknowledgements

With special thanks and appreciation to all my fellow Members of the Abdie Curling Club and especially President Alistair Robinson; Past President Andrew Messenger; Secretary Keith Rose; Ali Rose for his wonderful photographs taken at the last bonspiel played on Lindores Loch on 24 December 2010; Treasurer Willie Monks for his photographs of the Club's medals; Club Archivist Gerry Watson who personally helped in the research and subsequent review of this publication and without whose assistance and guidance of the history of the Club throughout these many months, I am most grateful; Honorary Club Archivist and Pond Master James Stirrat for his help with the historical photographs of the Trafalgar Inn at Collessie; John McCallum for his aid with the history of the Buist family of Abdie; and Mrs. Joan Young, Administrator of The Royal Caledonian Curling Club for all her work with The Royal Caledonian Curling Club Annuals. Also to Dr. Iain Macintyre whose help with this publication is gratefully acknowledged. This work is dedicated to all the Members of the Abdie Curling Club, past and present.



Fig.31. Abdie Curling Club Members taken at their AGM at Cree's Inn, Abernethy, 2014, (Front Row, Left to Right) Keith Rose (Secretary), Jim Stirrat (Pond Master and 50 Year Member), Andy Messenger (Past President) and Willie Monks (Treasurer); (Centre Row) John Arbuckle (50 Year Member in blue sweater); Gerry Watson (Club Archivist in Abdie sweater) and Alistair Robinson (President) (On Right of Gerry Watson in horizontal striped sweater)



Fig.32. Abdie Curling Club Present Day Members in action on Lindores Loch, 24 December 2010, Abdie, Fife, Photograph Courtesy Ali Rose © 2010 Ali Rose

© 2015 Michael T. Tracy

Bibliography

Annals of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club. Edinburgh: printed for the Royal Caledonian Curling Club, 1846-1900.

Fair & Keen. A Brief History of the Abdie Curling Club. United Auctions, Limited. 1981

Grant John Gordon. The Complete Curler, being the history and practice of the game of curling. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1914

Kerr John. History of Curling. Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1890

Memorabilia Curliana Mabenensia. Dumfries: Published by John Sinclair, Dumfries; Henry Constable, Edinburgh; Atkinson & Com., Glasgow; and John Dick, Ayr. 1830

Smith David B. Curling: an illustrated history. Edinburgh: John Donald, 1981

Taylor James. Curling, the Ancient Scottish Game. Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1887

The Channel-Stone or Sweeping Frac The Rinks. In Four Volumes, Series 1-4. Edinburgh: Richard Cameron, 1883-84