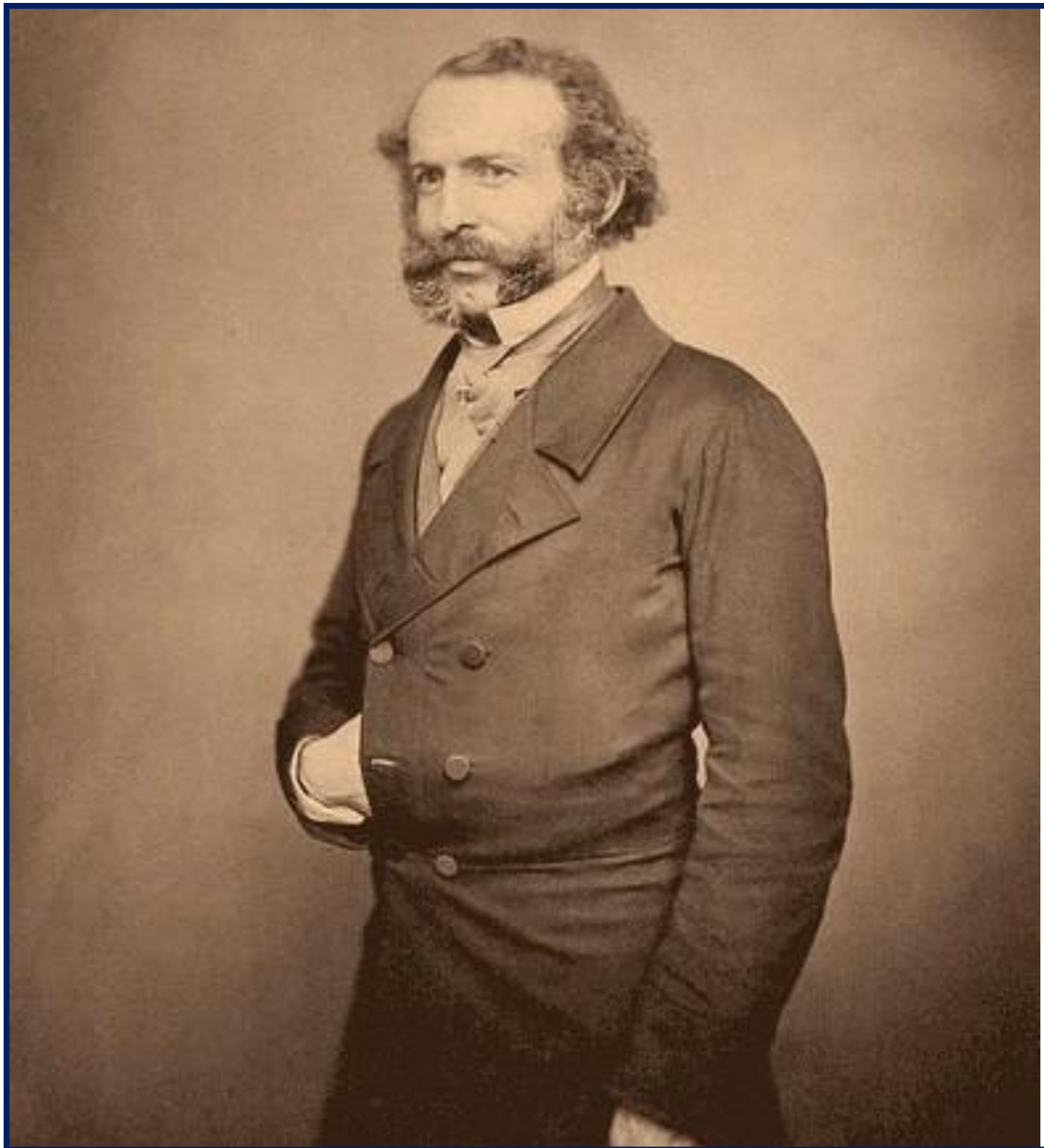


# AGLOOKA ADVISOR

New Year 2015

Issue No. 2



*The Newsletter of The John Rae Society*

*Registered Charity No. SC044463*

[www.johnraesociety.com](http://www.johnraesociety.com)

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The Orkney Heritage Society 'New Orkney Antiquarian Journal Volume 7' *Proceedings of the John Rae 200 Conference (2013)*, a 216 page paperback edited by Dr Sarah Jane Gibbon and James Irvine is available now priced at £20 from the Online Bookshop at [www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/ohs](http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/ohs) and also from the Stromness Museum, the Orkney Museum, the Orkney Library & Archive and local bookshops.

## A Word from the President



Hello and welcome to our second Newsletter, "The Aglooka Advisor".

As you will see, The John Rae Society has been extremely busy! This is wonderful, and I don't see the pace of work or development easing up. I'm not going to list here our achievements; you will see them abundantly written about within the leaves of Aglooka.

I must just say that I am wholeheartedly grateful to our team on the board. At our AGM we also made the management of the society open to committee members as well as Trustees. This was an important move as some folk feel being a Trustee is rather too much of a commitment initially. So I welcome those who have joined us.

I know that 2015 will be another momentous year for John Rae. There is an exhibition at The British Library of Arctic exploration, which continues into 2015. We are told that John Rae is mentioned, and is a favourite character of the exhibition's instigator.

The vastly important discovery of *The Erebus*, just where John Rae said it would be, has

amazed the world. So much will be found on the wreck to enlighten us.

As I write this, the St. Andrew's Day Ball is being held in Canada. Our Patron, O. Peter St. John will be there along with Ken McGoogan. I think that our John Rae will be high on the agenda of conversation! Perhaps we should even have a special 'John Rae Reel' invented for events like that? (Many a true word is spoken in jest). I can certainly think of a great John Rae cocktail based on Trawler Rum, Highland Park, Canadian Club, juniper gin, frosted glasses and stacks of ice! A 'Rae Strait' perhaps?!

For myself it has been such a thrill to be President in this formative period of the Society. I know that by revealing the past and understanding it we lay the foundations for a great future.

May I wish everyone a wonderful Christmas and an extremely Happy New Year? This most definitely includes our new patron Ray Mears.

*Andrew Appleby*



*"Christmas-day was passed very agreeably, but the weather was so stormy and cold that only a very short game at foot-ball could be played. Short as it was, however, it was sufficiently amusing, for our faces were every moment getting frost-bitten either in one place or another, so as to require the continual application of the hand; and the rubbing, running about, and kicking the ball all at the same time, produced a very ludicrous effect."*

*"Our dinner was composed of excellent venison and a plum-pudding, with a moderate allowance of brandy punch to drink a health to absent friends."*

*From The Arctic Journals of John Rae*

## Mary & Jane's 'Letter from Canada'

Dear Andrew,

We applaud you and the Board of Trustees of the John Rae Society for your interest, commitment and dedication to the goals and objectives of the society during its inaugural year. We are grateful that John Rae's legacy has been preserved by those who respect him and his place in history.

Without that, we would not have discovered our connection to him, to other descendants, and to Orkney. On behalf of our extended family we thank all those who are committed to the stewardship of John Rae's legacy including the John Rae Society, Stromness Museum, Orkney Heritage Society, and to Jean and Ivan Craigie for welcoming people who visit the Hall of Clestrain.

We were honoured to attend and participate in the service that commemorated John Rae at Westminster Abbey on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The inscribed piece of Orkney red sandstone on the floor of the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist is visually striking, dignified and modest. It



stands out in contrast to the style of statues, stones and inscriptions nearby. Its simplicity invites visitors to look further and research the person who earned this recognition.

If they do, they will learn that John Rae was a man of integrity with an intrepid curiosity and extraordinary outdoor survival skills. He was



a medical doctor, a Hudson's Bay factor, a surveyor, explorer, writer, and discoverer to the fate of the Franklin expedition and the last navigable link in the Northwest Passage.

They will learn that John Rae is a person admired for his courage, outstanding achievements and noble

qualities; in other words, a hero.

They will also learn that the attempt to discredit him in his lifetime by the British Admiralty, Lady Jane Franklin and Charles Dickens did not dishearten him. He remained loyal to what he knew to be true. Victorian establishment, however, was able to render him invisible in the pages of history, until now.

More significantly for us however, is the fact that our family deleted him from our own history. Why, we can only guess. We did not know that John Rae was our maternal grandfather's great uncle until 2009. While doing online genealogical research we learned of the family lineage. Since then we have met more relatives and heard their stories, travelled widely and made new friends. We feel an 'affinity of place' with the Orcadian landscape. It has been, and continues to be a wonderful experience.

All of which makes the stewardship of John Rae's legacy even more meaningful for us. There were people who were interested, who researched and archived documents, curated museum exhibits, wrote books, plays, poems, and songs, told stories, made documentaries and art, organized a conference, financed a statue, welcomed people to visit the Hall of Clestrain, established the John Rae Society, and initiated the installation of the stone at Westminster Abbey. We extend to them our sincere and abiding thanks.

*Mary Davey and Jane Hamilton*

## **John Rae Memorial Stone Dedicated At Westminster Abbey**

We all applauded the proposed dedication of a special Memorial stone to Dr. John Rae in Westminster Abbey.

Behind the scenes, efforts to get a memorial to John Rae in Westminster Abbey had been ongoing for some years. Professor Russell Potter from America made early approaches to The Dean and Alistair Carmichael, now Secretary of State for Scotland. Alistair dutifully continued the persuasion along with Trustees of Stromness Museum.

By surprise in early June Alistair announced to The John Rae Society that a memorial was indeed finally to be dedicated. The Dean, the Very Reverend Dr John Hall suggested 30th September - John Rae's 201st birthday. Alistair requested we raised the money for the stone, the Abbey expenses and an official reception at Dover House.

This began a momentous time for our Society, bringing together many folk from different perspectives in his story. It is with great delight that I can say this deed is creating harmony between those who may have earlier overlooked John Rae's achievements.



The Dean of Westminster, the Very Reverend Dr John Hall

Also clear is the great sympathy for Sir John Franklin and his whole, fated expedition. John Rae himself must have had the greatest concerns over what was transpiring in the Arctic

waters. I firmly encourage this greater joining of minds and emotions. The Dean of Westminster indicated in his dedication speech, that whilst this was to some,

quite controversial, the laying of the piece of Orkney red sandstone should mark a time of reconciliation.

It also became the responsibility of our Society to organize the finer details. This proved to be a major task full of steep learning curves. I am personally grateful to Janette Park of Stromness Museum for her invaluable help with the guest list. Anna Elmy worked diligently with me on sending the invites and constantly editing the guest list. This was a difficult task. We were really only allowed sixty to seventy attendees, due to very limited space in St. John the Evangelist's Chapel, where Sir John Franklin's memorial stands.

To the day itself. With expert help, Marjory of Soft Pink Flowers, Stromness, had found a wonderful florist near to Westminster. We had a wreath of subtly coloured roses intermixed with white and light yellow heather sprigs, and most important of all... thistles! The flowers were a lovely selection of English garden blooms.

At 3.30 p.m. as the Abbey was closing to the public, the invited guests began to gather at The Great West Door and at 4 p.m. the Service of Dedication commenced in the Chapel of St John the Evangelist.

Seeing familiar Orkney faces, people from foreign lands: descendants from members of Sir John Franklin's expedition, others connected to McClintock's search, writers, geographers, historians, personalities, such as Ray Mears... people with a passion for our Dr. John Rae... all gathered to pay their huge respects in this small, memorial-crowded, Chapel.

The Dean cordially welcomed the congregation to the Abbey and Reverend Fraser Macnaughton, minister of St. Magnus Cathedral read Isaiah 58: 9-14 (reproduced on page 8).

Ken McGoogan, author of *Fatal Passage* and one of our patrons read a reflection, which echoed Fraser's piece in sentiment and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Arctic experiences. It was both moving and appropriate.

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### THE DEDICATION OF THE MEMORIAL

The Right Honourable Alistair Carmichael, MP, Secretary of State for Scotland:

"I ask you, Mr Dean, to receive into the safe custody of the Dean and Chapter this memorial in honour and memory of John Rae".

The Dean:

"To the greater glory of God and in thankful memory of John Rae, and of all that he achieved and contributed, I dedicate this memorial: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen".

.....

A wreath of beautifully chosen English country garden flowers was then laid by Mary Davey, and a simple, yet delightful bouquet was placed by Jane Hamilton; great, great nieces of Dr John Rae.

The flower lady who was on duty at the Abbey said how charming the flowers were and that she was very proud to have looked after them for us.

Jennifer Wrigley then played on her fiddle her *Air for Dr John Rae*. This was greatly appreciated by all. The assembly felt it was such a moving piece and thoroughly fitting for the service as her playing filled the Abbey with an Orkney rhythm. We are all very grateful to Jennifer for making the trip to London to do this. Her recital was followed by prayers and a blessing.

Evensong was another wonder. Sigrid and I sat next to the Choir, whose singing resounded through the Abbey. This was a great moment for us all to reflect on what we had just experienced.



Jennifer Wrigley poised to play in the Chapel of St John

To be part of all this was such an honour. The whole service had been immensely moving.

Then to the Reception...everyone was tasked to make for Dover House...quite an amusing experience, as many, including myself did not know the way! "Follow Alistair", I called out. Plenty enough of the party didn't hear that. Then I spotted Liam McArthur. "Follow him," I called. Some did. Finally Neil Kermode came to the rescue. "Andrew, I know the way," he reported. "You and I can wait here on this tiny traffic Island, attract everyone's attention and get them to catch up. We can then guide them and ensure they arrive." The plan worked!

We were ushered up to the noisy, excited, throng overlooking Horse Guards Parade. I plugged in my computer and emailed what pictures I had to be shown in Orkney. After a time Alistair tapped his glass, welcomed everyone and thanked the many who had contributed to the splendid occasion. He made special thanks to Jennifer Wrigley for playing her most moving piece.

I was then asked to say a few words. I thanked our Board of Trustees for their immense support during the whole planning operation to the events, and wished them every success in the concurrent happenings in Orkney. I also had the honour of bestowing Honourable Life Memberships to Hugh and Erica Halcro-Johnston for tireless works connected to The Hall of Clestrain. Another duo of Life Memberships was bestowed on Sandy and Hilda Firth. I think it came as quite a surprise to them. I explained that it was his cleaning of

John Rae's grave over the years, which became one of the inspirations to form JRS.

Ray Mears and his wife Ruth were there and it was a pleasure for me to proudly announce that Ray had agreed to be our third Patron. A great cheer resounded, and I thought this the right moment to introduce the Orkney Cog that David Reid had organized. James A. Stewart, Alistair's parliamentary researcher, made no bad job of the traditional contents! A final presentation was to Alistair himself of a wee cog and a miniature of Highland Park, which he and I justly shared.

Harvey Johnston was called upon to read out his newly composed poem *Rae in the Abbey* (reproduced on page 8). This he did movingly to the sipping of the Cog.

I also say that we must heartily thank Paddy Casey of Casey Construction for his generous effort and gift of the actual block of red sandstone! Completely unbeknown to us, he'd quarried it from the Head of Holland, where much of the Cathedral's red sandstone came from. Several efforts and various blocks finally achieved a brilliant result, carved so caringly by an Abbey Mason.

Many fascinating introductions were made during the passing of the Cog. A Rae family tree was brought out. An ancient newspaper cutting referring to John Rae's expedition team was revealed. Facts were swapped and new friends made whilst the cog was refilled and passed again and again.

With great thanks to everyone concerned for a very happy occasion.

Andrew Appleby.

.....  
**Ken McGoogan: A Reflection**

LONDON, England – The ledger stone is brilliantly placed. It reads: "John Rae / 1813 – 1893 / Arctic Explorer." Newly installed in Westminster Abbey in the heart of London, it is situated directly beneath the elaborate bust of Sir John Franklin.

The effect is one of completion. Given the privilege of offering "a reflection" today at the commemoration ceremony, I spoke of how Rae had completed the work begun by Franklin. In 1846, after sailing south down Peel Sound from Parry Channel, the good Sir John got trapped in the pack ice at the north west corner of King William Island.

Eight years later, John Rae discovered not just the most salient features of the tragic fate of the Franklin expedition, but a channel to the east of King William Island – Rae Strait – that would prove to be the final link in the first navigable North West Passage.

After becoming the first explorer to sail the Passage from beginning to end (1903-06), Roald Amundsen explicitly credited Rae with having shown him how to sail beyond King William Island. Nobody would pass through Victoria Strait, where Franklin's ships got trapped, until 1967, when a Canadian icebreaker pounded through.



Ken McGoogan delivers his reflective tribute

All this and more I outlined to a standing-room-only audience - many of whom had come south from Rae's native Orkney - in the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist. Somehow, I confined myself to five minutes! Orcadian musician Jennifer Wrigley then brought tears to many an eye by playing *Air for Dr John Rae*, and two Canadian cousins who share an ancestor with Rae – Mary Davey and Jane Hamilton – laid a wreath and flowers by the new ledger stone. A CBC-TV crew captured all this for posterity - oh, and for tonight's news.

As one woman put it, looking around at the reception, "This is an occasion we will never forget."

## Rae in the Abbey

By Harvey Johnston

Along the shores o' Scapa Flow  
A boy wid oft times stroll  
He kent each floer and burd and beast  
And sailed wi' skiff and yole.

The knowledge and the skills he gained  
Back in his younger day  
Wid serve him weel when transposed tae  
The shores o' Hudson's Bay.

Cheust like the Cree and Inuit  
He'd grown tae understand  
Ye work wi' watter, wind and wave  
Tae live aff sea and land.

Wi' snowshoes, long strides and a gun  
Up North wi' dog and sled  
He learned the fate o' Franklin.  
Then shunned for what he said.

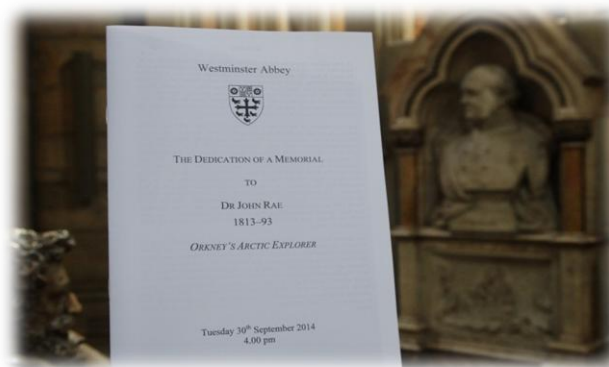
Yet on he strode tae find the strait  
Weel named on maps ye view  
The final strait Amundsen sailed  
The North West Passage through.

The man who walked six thoosand miles  
Broke through what none could breach  
Has found the page o' history  
The herdest place tae reach.

Wan hunder noo, and sixty years  
Hids taen, but here today  
In Orkney stone, in this great place  
We mark his name - John Rae.

### ISAIAH 58: 9-14

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in. If you refrain from trampling the sabbath, from pursuing your own interests on my holy day; if you call the sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honourable; if you honour it, not going your own ways, serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs; then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.



## A Year in Pictures



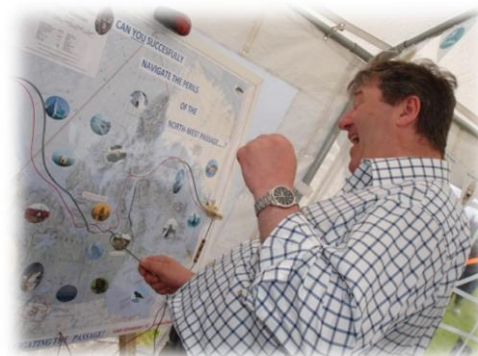
**April** - Cleaning John Rae's headstone



**July** – Graveside tributes



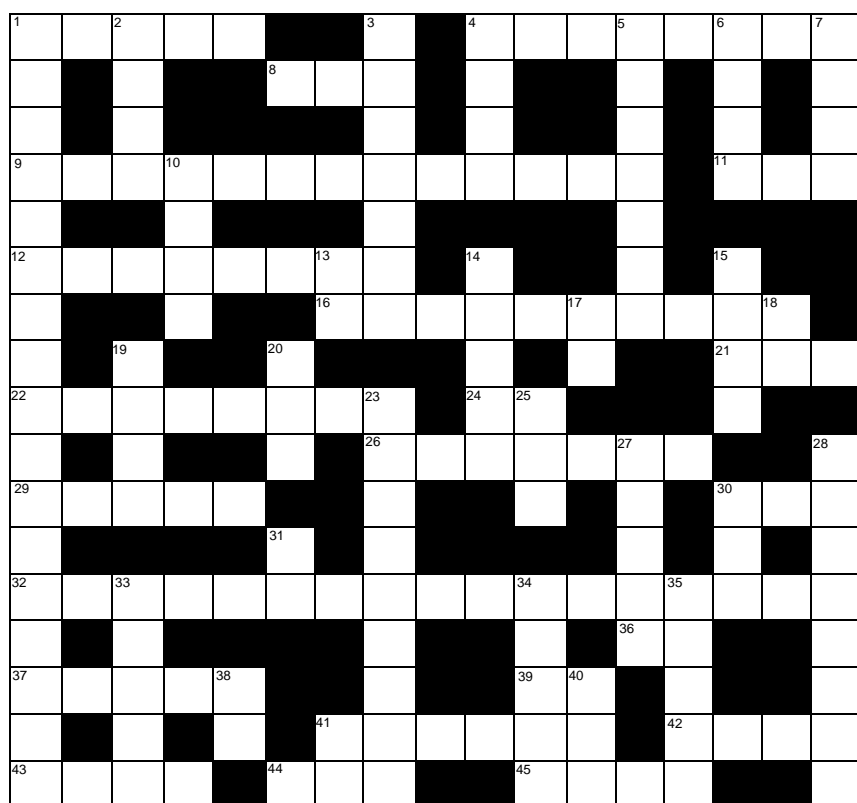
**May** – Assessing the condition of The Hall of Clestrain



**August** – Dounby Show with some weel kent faces failing the NWP Challenge ... and Andrew and Alistair with the Westminster cog.



## The John Rae Society Crossword



Name:- .....

Address:- .....

.....

.....

Tel. No.:- .....

The prize for the first correct entry drawn will be a £25 book token from The 'Orcadian' Bookshop.

Please send your entry to 'The JRS Crossword', c/o Orcadia, Bloomfield Road, St Ola, KW15 1SE or if you wish to scan your entry then email to: [info@johnraesociety.com](mailto:info@johnraesociety.com)

The competition closes on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2015.

### ACROSS

1. Traditional Inuit transport, used to hunt. (5)
4. Captain of the ill-fated 1845 quest. (8)
8. Wooden container for seamen's rum? (3)
9. Rae explored here by boat and foot and discovered a peninsula not an island. (4,2,7)
11. Once you've walked all day and built your igloo – have a short rest. (3)
12. Stone landmark meaning "someone was here" or "you are on the right path". (8)
16. Rae was expert at this skill on land and sea. (10)
21. Used for a cabin or canoe? (3)
22. Many routes through the Arctic were dangerous due to these. (8)
24. Minus a doctor it won't mend on the French. (2)
26. Off to the \_\_\_\_\_ with the HBC...! (7)
29. One of the recognised Aboriginal peoples in Canada – they trace their descent from mixed ancestry of First Nations and Europeans. (5)
30. Go backwards towards the stern. (3)
32. Where a stone memorial lies in sleep. (2,6,9)
36. The opposite to 38 down. (1,1)
37. Slender deciduous tree common in much of Canada's parkland and boreal forest. (5)
39. A name I call myself! (2)
41. Its pelt became a currency: one gun was worth twelve, twenty fish hooks one. (6)
42. To remove 41 across. (4)
43. A moose is the largest member of this family! (4)
44. Recognised call of distress. (1,1,1)
45. First word of 44 across. (4)

### DOWN

1. Where the crews of Erebus and Terror were lost. (4,7,6)
2. Traditional Orkney boat – young John sailed one. (4)
3. He who takes long strides. (7)
4. The stonehouse built on the 1846-7 expedition – "\_\_\_\_\_ Hope". (4)
5. Largest, northernmost and newest territory of Canada. (7)
6. Rae discovered the missing one. (4)
7. Established in 1873 to patrol the Northwest Territories after the dominion of Canada purchased the territory from HBC. (1,1,1,1)
10. Your hat is not real fur! (4)
13. \_\_\_\_\_ knighted: he remains so. (2)
14. Red, Mackenzie or Coppermine. (5)
15. The Arctic and Antarctic both have one. (4)
17. An experienced deck-department seaman qualified to perform routine sea duties. (1,1)
18. Until Rae's Strait was found: \_\_\_\_\_ way through! (2)
19. Igloos kept Rae warmer than one of these. (4)
20. Any of several cetaceans especially the Grampus. (3)
23. Made from hardwood frame and rawhide. (9)
25. Fur trading rival for HBC. (1,1,1)
27. Long strips of wood curved upwards at front. (5)
28. The classic adventure by Gontran de Poncins: "\_\_\_\_\_ Along the Inuit". (8)
30. Jack \_\_\_\_\_: common name for seaman of Merchant or Royal Navy. (3)
31. Institution who owned Erebus and Terror. (1,1)
33. Canada's arboreal emblem. (5)
34. In which Rae's report to the Admiralty was published. (5)
35. Peter Warren \_\_\_\_\_ was a fur trader from 13 years of age, an Arctic explorer and from 1828 a Chief Factor in the HBC. (5)
38. The Passage. (1,1)
40. Rae died in the Victorian one. (3)
41. Was the whiffy sailor from Bloody Orkney? (1,1)

## The Digital Scanning of Clestrain



*In spring 2014, Associate Professor Doug Pritchard of Heriot-Watt University visited Orkney as a guest of the Society. His task was to digitally scan and record a number of sites associated with Dr John Rae. Here Doug describes the technology and the scanning of the Hall of Clestrain...*

During the last week of April I had the privilege of dimensionally surveying the birthplace, memorial and gravesite of Dr John Rae. My area of research interest is in the use of advanced digital technologies to precisely record and visualize the built environment. Not only was the project an opportunity to return to the Orkney Islands and test out the latest survey equipment, more importantly, I had the unique opportunity to stand on the property of one of the most important figures in Scottish and Canadian history.



The foundation of the project is a device called the terrestrial laser scanner. The laser scanning technology has

the ability of thoroughly and objectively recording a site or building down to a sub-centimeter level.

Although considered state-of-the-art, the laser scanner is extensively used in the petroleum and gas industry as well as police forensics. From my research perspective, the laser scanner is ideally suited to record complex heritage sites - where the buildings are worn, shifting or in need of repair. The acquired data is like a 3D snap-shot, and can be used to assist in future conservation and restoration of a site in the creation of highly accurate architectural drawings. The same data can also be used to generate 3D images and animations for an exhibition or the web.

The scanning system used on the Rae project really is revolutionary. The Z+F laser scanner is

exceptionally fast, highly accurate and has an integrated high-dynamic range (HDR) camera. The Hall of Clestrain was thoroughly scanned inside and out over a two-day period - approximately 50 scans in total. It took approximately 15 minutes per scan, with the scanner acquiring an incredible 1,000,000 dimension points per second. This information is then integrated with the HDR photography to provide a nearly exact 3D architectural record of the building's current condition. The ability to 'capture' 1/2 a billion dimension points over two days would have been impossible even 10-years ago.



The image shown here is the 3D point cloud data. There are so many coloured dimension dots, that you

can clearly make out the architecture, from the windows to the mortar. Once post-processed, the 3D scan data will be forwarded to the Rae Society with the idea that it is used to conserve and promote the Hall.

The same technology and approach was incorporated at the Rae memorial at St. Magnus Cathedral. The laser scanner was used not only to record the memorial, but also the entire interior of the Cathedral. As a researcher, I believe that it is important to record the relationship between the heritage object or building and its adjacent context. Both the interior and exterior of the Cathedral were scanned - thankfully under perfect weather conditions.

Throughout the scanning of both sites I was joined by a highly entertaining television team from the Discovery Channel, Canada. Based in Toronto, they recently produced an episode on the Franklin expedition and wanted to follow-up with a broadcast on John Rae. The episode aired this autumn in the UK and internationally.

## Short Passages

### Ray Mears Becomes Our Third Patron



It is with great pleasure that the Society can announce Ray Mears as our third distinguished patron, joining O. Peter St John, the Earl of Orkney and Ken McGoogan, the Canadian born author and leading Rae expert.

Ray is internationally known as a bushman, author, TV presenter and survival techniques expert. Interestingly but not a surprise to learn is that Ray's early ambition was to join the Royal Marines - sadly his hopes were dashed due to poor eyesight.

In his series "Northern Wilderness" Ray devoted a programme to Dr John Rae, calling him "the greatest Arctic explorer ever" and "the man who found the final link in the holy grail of 19th century exploration: the Northwest Passage". However, as he reflects at the time of filming, Rae is still "an unsung British hero". During the programme Ray stands at the Hall of Clestrain and views the importance of terrain and environment to Rae's growing up in Orkney. "Oradians are islanders - they're exposed to the winds of nature and they have to deal with that with a degree of stoicism - and that stoicism is something Rae took with him to Canada and recognised in the native people he learned to travel with and trust".

We are indeed honoured that Ray has agreed to become our third patron. Could we ever get all three of our esteemed patrons together? Perhaps we need to envisage a day when the restored Clestrain is finally opened? In the meantime we greatly anticipate Ray visiting and perhaps delivering a public lecture on Rae and the Arctic....watch this space.

### Can You Help Support Clestrain...?

The Hall of Clestrain was built in 1769 for the Honeyman family; descendants of the Bishop of Orkney from 1664-76, Andrew Honeyman. The family later moved to the mainland and the Hall became home to their agent John Rae. In 1813 his son, the future Arctic explorer, John Rae was born. The Hall was once regarded as one of the most impressive buildings in northern Scotland. In 1952 while the Hall was still inhabited the roof was lost during a hurricane and the present owner moved out. Although replaced with a corrugated asbestos roof which saved the wallheads and general structure, there has been an inevitable and gradual decline. A recent inspection with a local surveyor highlighted the need for a large timber beam



carrying the principal floor to be further supported. This will be achieved by the use of a number of builder's 'acrow props'.

Clestrain needs your support..!

We would like to invite anyone wishing to "Support Clestrain" by sponsoring an acrow prop to get in touch. Each of eight props is offered at £30 and the name of each sponsor will be attached to an individual prop. We will be happy to offer sponsors the opportunity to view the site at a later date. To sponsor a prop please contact [info@johnraesociety.com](mailto:info@johnraesociety.com) or contact the President.

### A Cruise Through The Northwest Passage

Dr Colleen Batey of Glasgow University was invited by the Society to give a lecture on her recent transit of the Northwest Passage onboard the *Silver Explorer*. This took place at a well-attended St Magnus Hall at the end of



Beechey Island – Colleen at graves of *Erebus* and *Investigator* sailors

November. As one of the onboard lecturers considering Norse and Inuit relations as well as the development of early population movements across the Canadian Arctic, this was a unique opportunity to follow in the footsteps, more accurately in the wake of, early explorers such as John Rae. It was in fact a true adventure in a modern manner: considerable comfort onboard but major issues of thick ice meant that progress was only possible with the aid of a Canadian icebreaker, *Pierre Radisson*!

Sightings of polar bears and indeed a few walrus on the pack ice complemented historical landings particularly at Beechey Island, resting place of crew of both the *Erebus* and *Investigator* in the mid 1800s. Sharing hospitality and cultural presentations at Pond Inlet and Cambridge Bay were highlights in addition to a sighting of the Smoking Hills noted by Amundsen.