A NEW ERA DAWNS

The turn of the year heralds a new era for the Friends. While the grass will still need cutting and the building (and railings!) maintained, our future role is to encourage the public to visit the mausoleum and ensure they have an enjoyable and informative time while there.

Last year we opened the track and car park to visitors on two weekends in late summer to gauge public response. Although these Open Weekends were only advertised locally, more than 150 visitors arrived over the four days, including virtuoso Northumbrian pipes player Kathryn Tickell, who made an impromptu music video for her YouTube channel in the crypt!

Apart from the visitors, the last-minute addition of a Donations Box at the car park added a healthy balance to our annual income, visitors being quite willing to donate after being shown around by our small team of guides. Thanks to John, Sheelagh, John, Ian, Nicola and Patrick for volunteering as guides. We do need more guides, and there are further details on page nine.

This year there will be six Open Weekends - twelve days in all between Easter and the end of September. The highlight of the season will be the Strawberry Afternoon on Sunday 28th June, when all Friends will be invited for afternoon tea with scones and strawberries, and hopefully some musical accompaniment. This day will also be open to the public, so there is an opportunity to encourage visitors to join us and become members.

We continue to respond to requests from groups for visits and talks. Later this year we will be engaged with the Borders Walking Festival, the mausoleum being included as part of a circular walk around Ancrum and district on 12th September. More details will be available in the summer edition of Newsletter. By that time we also hope to have a spoken commentary available for visitors via their mobile phones, if the technology works!

All in all, a year of new opportunities to build upon the success of the mausoleum restoration, to share our appreciation of this magnificent building with visitors, to encourage tourists to linger a while in the Scottish Borders, with its wealth of history and architecture. And, of course, to cut the grass and keep the place tidy!

David Freeman
Chair, Friends of the Monteath Mausoleum
**Open Weekends 2020**

Following the success of our trial Open Weekends last year, we are preparing a full programme of public access during the summer months this year. In line with commitments made to our funders, we shall be opening the site to vehicles on six weekends from April to September. Our aim is to have each open day staffed by members acting as guides, to assist the public and answer any questions about the mausoleum. The proposed dates are:-

- Sunday 12th April & Monday 13th April
- Sunday 24th May & Monday 25th May
- Saturday 27th June & Sunday 28th June*
- Saturday 25th July & Sunday 26th July
- Sunday 30th August & Monday 31st August
- Saturday 26th September & Sunday 27th September

If you would like to act as a guide, we have an Information Sheet available which can be sent by email or through the post. The duties are straightforward and guides will be asked to do only two or three sessions (am or pm) each season, although you can do more if you enjoy it! See page nine for details.

*Strawberry Afternoon - Sunday 28th June*

Strawberries, scones, tea, coffee and cold drinks will be provided in the marquee for Friends and the general public on Sunday 28th June. This is an opportunity for all Friends to meet each other, talk to the visitors and encourage new members to join us. Please make a note in your diary now, you will get an invitation nearer the time. Refreshments will be available to members for a donation. The general public will be asked to pay £6 which will include a year’s membership.

If you would like to help on the day, please contact us by email or at the address below.

The car park and gated track will be open to the public on the Strawberry Afternoon as usual from 10am until 4pm, with refreshments served from 1pm until 4pm. We are hoping to provide live music for entertainment during the afternoon, and a marquee in case the weather is poor.

If the weather is fine, visitors are welcome to picnic in the grounds and enjoy the views of the Scottish Borders. Access to the grounds is by a flat wide path from the car park, with hard surfacing suitable for mobility vehicles. There is a short steep section and a single step onto the enclosure lawns, for which we hope to provide a ramp. Access into the crypt is across a gravel path.

The site is open to walkers and cyclists at all times, see the website for access details.
Many of us who have worked at the mausoleum will be aware of the splendid acoustics inside the crypt. The parallel walls and lofty dome produce a reverberation which lasts for several seconds. This phenomena has not gone unnoticed within the musical community either . . .

**Kathryn Tickell** is the world famous virtuoso of the Northumbrian Pipes. Described as “the best living advertisement for English folk music” she has toured extensively, released over a dozen albums and was awarded Musician of the Year by BBC Radio 2 in 2004.

A chance visit to the mausoleum on one of our Open Days resulted in a spontaneous recording inside the crypt for her ‘Tune of the Month’ video on YouTube.

Kathryn says “Driving along the A68 I came across this amazing place, happened to have my pipes in the car...and it chanced to be one of the few days it was open to the public...
Loved playing in there - what acoustics!”

You can listen to the hauntingly beautiful “Air Moving” at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNJvypoKgc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNJvypoKgc) and visit Kathryn’s website at [https://www.kathryntickell.com/home](https://www.kathryntickell.com/home).

**Lily Caunt** is a freelance musician currently based in Manchester, however she draws much of her inspiration from her childhood spent in the Scottish Borders. Since moving away from home in 2009, she has studied at St. Mary’s Music School, the University of Bristol and the Royal Northern College of Music. Performance, teaching and outreach all form parts of Lily’s career and recently she has begun a project looking at site-specific performance, working with a composer to create new works inspired by landmarks in the Borders.

Lily takes up the story “Whilst researching for my new project, I came across Monteath Mausoleum. I was struck by its location looking over the landscape and the peaceful feeling. This amazing space sparked the imagination of Sam Buttler (the composer) and I. Together we worked to create ‘a ceiling full of stars’ a solo piece for alto flute which I recorded in the space in August 2019. The composition takes into account the unique acoustic and three second delay in the Mausoleum by using long, slow tones and silence. I was struck by the clarity you could get at ‘ground level’ while hearing this amazing sound travel upwards towards the stars. It was like playing with a live loop pedal! These recordings are currently being developed by Sam into an electronic track to accompany the piece, whilst I am working on expanding the project in the future.”

You can visit Lily’s website to see how the project is developing at [www.lilycaunt.co.uk](http://www.lilycaunt.co.uk) or Twitter @lilycauntflute. Composer Sam Buttler’s website is at [https://sam-buttler.com/](https://sam-buttler.com/).
**News**

**Keeping things tidy**

The Friends were given some unexpected help to maintain the land around the mausoleum during the autumn by students from Borders College, who were keen to practice their grass management skills. Some even came back on the Open Day to look inside the crypt.

We were contacted by Fiona Duff, who is the Landscaping course tutor at Borders College in Newtown St.Boswells, just a few miles up the road from the mausoleum. Fiona teaches the skills of land maintenance, including fencing, drainage, tree work, landscaping and grass management.

There is, however, a small problem. Fiona says “We do have some land available around the college, but you can cut the grass only so often, and if you build a fence, you have to take it down again”. So she has established a network of local churches, village halls, community centres and other non-profit organisations who have land which requires maintaining. It gives the students some interesting challenges, and is a benefit to the general community.

Naturally, we were delighted to be included in the scheme. One area which had not been cut in time for the Grand Opening was the rough land due south of the iron gates down to the perimeter fence. The students took to it with gusto, and after a few sessions had not only cut the grass, but pruned the bushes and given the whole area a good tidy-up. Some were so intrigued by the mausoleum that they returned on the following Open Day in September to have a closer look and talk to our guides.

Many thanks to Fiona and her team for all their hard work.

**Audio commentary for visitors**

We are hoping to introduce a new facility for visitors this year. Many historic sites now provide a spoken word commentary via a headset which customers hire for the duration of their visit. With the advent of modern technology, it is now possible to provide this service via a mobile phone.

Our plan is to make a spoken commentary available for download from our website (for a donation), so that visitors can walk around the site with their phone and learn about the history of the building and Sir Thomas rather than just looking at the Information Boards.

The technology relies on “QR codes” (more details on page nine) which makes the download of the spoken commentary much easier than searching through a website. Once downloaded, the track will automatically start to play as the visitor walks around.

A commentary has been written which we will be trialling at the mausoleum in the next few weeks. If it all works, we hope to make the facility available for the start of the visitor season at Easter.
To help visitors understand the history of the mausoleum and its restoration, the Friends have provided two new information boards at the site. It seemed a simple task to achieve but, as always, there were a few problems on the way.

As the restoration was nearing completion last Spring, we set about creating two large information boards, one for the car park and another for the mausoleum entrance. Most of the historic information we needed was to hand, thanks to our many diligent members who had researched the life and times of Sir Thomas over the years. We knew there was a portrait of our man somewhere in the archives, and after a great deal of searching and correspondence by Nicola, it finally came to light in the National Museum of Scotland archives in Edinburgh. We were allowed to copy it, for a stiff fee and only for a single use! Rather more generous were our photographers; Mark Field at Borders Aerial Photography who allowed us to use his iconic shot of the roof being restored, as did press photographer Phil Wilkinson, whose shot of the angels and the crypt interior is the best we’ve seen.

Impressed by the quality of the information boards at nearby Leaderfoot Viaduct, we were pleased that the makers, The Osprey Company, came in with a competitive quotation for the construction and printing of our boards. The original plan had been for the smaller board (which was written for younger visitors) to be sited next to the crypt doors, but when placed there it looked totally wrong, detracting from the imposing entrance. After a lot of moving it hither and thither, the final position by the iron gates seemed the best option, with the board being de-mountable, if necessary, for private functions or filming.

After the boards had been carefully placed and concreted into the ground, a visiting friend helpfully pointed out a very small typographical error in the main board at the car park. Undaunted, the Friends dismantled the board and returned to the printers. Fortunately they were able to amend it and return the board in time for the Grand Opening in July.

Subsequently, a further typo has been pointed out by a visitor (a retired English Teacher - of course), only this one we are keeping to ourselves. The next time you visit the mausoleum, see if you can spot it!
History

The Folly Flâneuse

We are always delighted when the mausoleum is mentioned on other websites, often by people who have come across us online, or have found the mausoleum while out walking. However, when Karen Lynch contacted us about her blog “The Folly Flâneuse”, it led to a remarkable discovery. . .

The architectural term “Folly” refers to almost any feature in the built landscape which is not a residential or other purposeful building. They became popular in the 18th century during the landscaping fashion of the great houses, with Capability Brown and others providing romantic landscape vistas, often with a fake ruin or castle on a distant hillside to complete the view. The Victorians loved follies, building hundreds of them all over Britain, many of which still survive today.

Karen Lynch is a great fan of follies, and started The Folly Flâneuse* website in 2018, visiting many of the follies in her native Yorkshire, gradually expanding the range throughout the country. Karen emailed us in September about including the mausoleum in her blog, and during the conversation mentioned a “sister mausoleum in England” which was intriguing. The blog about the Monteath Mausoleum can be found at https://thefollyflaneuse.com/monteath-mausoleum-ancrum-borders/ and is a very fine piece, well researched and with some excellent photos.

But more was to follow. During her research, Karen discovered that our architects Peddie & Kinnear had designed a similar mausoleum across the border in County Durham, which also had a star studded roof and angels guarding over it! Even stranger, they had used the same builders, Harkness of Hawick, for its construction. Was there a mirror image of Monteath’s mausoleum still lurking in the undergrowth in County Durham?

Alas not. The mausoleum at Windlestone Hall, near Rushyford, faired much worse than our own. The angels and stars were omitted from the final building, probably for financial reasons, although the building itself bore an uncanny resemblance to Monteath’s. The First World War devastated the economic viability of many great houses, and Windlestone was sold off in 1936, the mausoleum being partly demolished in 1957. After some unpleasant vandalism, the coffins were removed from the remaining vault in 1983, and the building flattened. The story is a reminder, perhaps, of how fortunate and timely our restoration of the Monteath Mausoleum turned out to be.

You can read the full story of Windlestone Mausoleum by clicking this link. The whole website is a joy for anyone who loves the oddities of British architecture and is well worth subscribing to the monthly blog.

Our thanks to Karen for allowing us to make use of her original research and copyright material.

* Flâneuse - a woman who strolls and sees (Fr.)
History

The Monteath Douglas Coat of Arms

Long before the Friends were established, author and historian John Wood made his own enquiries about the Monteath Douglas heraldry while researching his book ‘Monteath and his Mausoleum’. In a letter from the grandly titled ‘Lion Clerk & Keeper of the Records’ in Edinburgh, the origin of the coat of arms, or armorial, at the mausoleum, is not so straightforward . . .

“The Arms shown on the Monteath Mausoleum are somewhat strange. They are clearly meant to relate to Thomas Monteath (who) eventually inherited the estate of Douglas Support and thereafter became Thomas Monteath Douglas of Douglas Support. The Douglas’s of Douglas Support are descended from the Douglas’s of Mains and there are Arms on record in the Public Roster for both these families. I have, however, been unable to find a recording in name of Thomas Monteath Douglas of Douglas Support. The Arms of Douglas of Douglas Support were recorded in 1832 in name of Catharine, heiress of entail of the estate of Douglas Support under a Deed of Entail executed by Archibald Douglas of Douglas Support. These Arms show a quarterly arrangement of 1st and 4th, Argent, a man’s heart ensign with an imperial crown Proper; and on a chief Azure three stars of the Field for Douglas of Douglas; 2nd and 3rd, Argent, a fess chequy Gules and of the First between three stars Azure in chief, and a man’s heart in base Proper for Douglas of Mains, and in the centre chief point on an escutcheon Argent a woman trampling a snake under her feet and supporting a child in her Arms crowned with laurels, all within a bordure Ermine. The quarterly arrangement less the escutcheon and bordure is clearly which appears in the 1st and 4th grandquarters of the shield in the Mausoleum as does the crest which is an oak tree Proper with a lock hanging from one of the branches, and I take that to be the crest on the dexter (or left as you look at the carving). The 2nd and 3rd quarters appear to show the simple Monteath Arms of Or, a bend chequy Sable and Argent with a chief embattled showing what would appear to be medaels, which makes me think that this is a chief showing an honorable augmentation, a not uncommon addition to very notable soldiers in the Napoleonic period, and I do see that General Douglas of Douglas Support had a most notable career in India prior to his succession to the estate.”

“I am not sure which Monteath family is concerned in the paternal ancestry of Sir Thomas, and it is therefore a little difficult to give a very firm answer on those two quarters, but it is quite clear that the 1st and 4th grandquarters refer to Douglas of Douglas Support, and the 2nd and 3rd to Monteath. With regard to the crests, as I have indicated that on the dexter would appear to be that of Douglas of Douglas Support, and I wonder whether in view of the difficulty of deciphering the crests it is at all possible that the one in the centre shows a salamander in flames spouting out fire, as that is the crest of Douglas of Douglas. The family, of course, very closely inter-connected with the Douglas’s of Douglas Support, and thus the two left hand crests refer to Douglas of Mains and Douglas ofDouglas. The sinister crest, or right hand one as you look at it, I suspect is not a tree at all but is a ship, the lower portion, which looks rather like a coronet in fact being the hull and superstructure of the ship, and the “tree” being the mast and sails.” (edited)

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continued on next page
History

The Monteath Douglas Coat of Arms, continued ...

John also made enquiries of the College of Arms in London and discovered that there were TWO Grants of Arms, the original in 1841 (upon Monteath’s knighthood), and a second in 1851 upon his receipt of the Douglas fortune and consequent addition of the Douglas name to his own by Royal Licence. It is this second Grant which is depicted at the mausoleum.

For those readers who enjoy such detail, reproduced below is the descriptive part of the full Grant:-

Know Ye therefore that We the said Garter Clarenceux and Norroy in Obedience to the Royal Command in pursuance of his Grace’s Warrant and by virtue of the Letters Patent of Our several Offices to each of Us respectively granted do by these Presents exemplify unto the said THOMAS MONTEATH now THOMAS MONTEATH DOUGLAS the Arms following vizt Quarterly, First and Fourth in the first and fourth quarters DOUGLAS of Douglas vizt ARGENT A MAN’S HEART GULES ENSIGNED WITH AN IMPERIAL CROWN OR ON A CHIEF AZURE THREE MULLETS OF THE FIELD A CANTON OR for distinction and in the second and third quarters DOUGLAS of Mains vizt ARGENT A FESSE CHECQUY GULES AND OF THE FIRST (Argent) IN CHIEF THREE MULLETS AZURE AND IN BASE A MAN’S HEART GULES: Second and Third MONTEATH (see Grants 45/161) And the Crests of DOUGLAS vizt: ON A CHAPEAU GULES TURNED UP ERMINE A SALAMANDER IN FLAMES PROPER CHARGED ON THE SHOULDER WITH A CROSS CROSSLET OR (for distinction): And On a Wreath of the Colours (Argent and Gules) AN OAK TREE FRUCTED WITH A LOCK HANGING FROM ONE OF THE BRANCHES ALL PROPER: Crest of MONTEATH (see Grants 45/161): The Arms of Douglas of Douglas here set forth being with the consent of the Right Honorable James Lord Douglas of Douglas, as the same are in the margin hereof more plainly depicted to be borne and used for ever hereafter by him the said THOMAS MONTEATH-DOUGLAS and his issue pursuant to the tenor of the said Royal Warrant and according to the Laws of Arms.

Intriguingly, the Grant also included three mottoes, not shown on the armorial at the mausoleum, but depicted on the full coat of arms.

Above the Tree & Lock Crest to the dexter- QUAE SERATA SECURA (The things which are locked are safe)
Above the Salamander Crest in the centre - JAMAIS ARRIERA (Never behind)
Above the Tree & Sword Crest to the sinister- VIRESCO (I become green / I flourish)

There is much more about the heraldic symbols, mottoes and history of the Douglas branch of the family on the excellent Douglas Archives website. http://douglashistory.co.uk/history/thomasdouglas2.htm

Many thanks to John for allowing us to reproduce his correspondence.

The Medals

Somewhat ravaged by time and weather, Sir Thomas’s medals as they are depicted at the mausoleum (left) and as shown in the 1851 portrait at the time of his knighthood.
Would you like to become a Mausoleum Guide?

One of the conditions of our funding agreement is that we improve public access to the mausoleum. Six members helped us run the trial Open Days last year, which brought in over 150 visitors and a healthy income from donations over the two weekends. The public are keen to visit the mausoleum, and we would like a few more volunteer guides to add to the roster. The duties are not onerous; opening up the gates and welcoming visitors for a morning or afternoon session, then locking up at the end of the day is all that’s required. We provide an information sheet with background details of the history of the mausoleum and some guidance notes for volunteers, but you don’t need to be an expert, most visitors ask similar questions and they are often interested in how you got involved, or why you like the mausoleum. You also get a smart badge!

Feedback from volunteers last year was very positive, everyone enjoyed their “session” and some were busy all day! The guidance notes are available by email or from the address at the foot of this page. Guides will probably be asked to do two or three half-day sessions a year, but you could do more if you really enjoy it!

QR codes - solving an old problem

Having an organisation name like “Friends of the Monteath Mausoleum” means typing an awful lot of words each time. Even worse is the website address www.friendsofthemonteathmausoleum.org.uk which, for technical reasons, cannot have spaces or capital letters. Often when asked “what is your website address?”, the resulting blank look when the address is given ensures that only the most dedicated manage to reach our front page. Of course it’s possible to Google or Bing us, and that does help keep our name at the top of the listings (so please do it sometimes!), but now modern technology has a better answer.

Opposite is shown a QR code which will take you directly to our website when you scan it with your mobile phone. Most modern phones have a QR reader built-in, or you can download a free one from the App Store or Google Play. We will be making more use of these in our publicity material and on the information boards at the mausoleum to improve the visitor experience, so go on, give it a try!

NOTE: We do not collect data from these codes, they are created in-house and are password protected to prevent hacking. They are safe to use.

Something to Say?

We welcome contributions to the Newsletter from our readers. This edition contains several items by other contributors, making the editor’s job easier, and more interesting for our members. Photos or articles should be related to the Mausoleum, but the connection can be quite loose. Some history of the area? Memories of a happy day on Gersit Law? Other historic sites you have visited? Some local knowledge about Sir Thomas?

If you have something in mind, a quick email to us at friends@friendsofthemonteathmausoleum.org.uk or a note to the address below before you commit to paper, would be useful to help us plan the next issue.