The Lodge

When I was young it was known as the “Ardno Lodge” or locally better known as “Maggie Lukes”. The lodge looks small from the outside but was surprisingly roomy inside with a large kitchen.

The Grandmother Catherine Luke was brought up at Ardno Lodge with her sisters Margaret (Maggie) Julia and Marg and brothers Paul and Duncan, there were others in the family but Maggie, Julia, Paul and Duncan are the ones I remember. The Lukes came to Loch Fyne in the seventeen hundreds with three brothers settling in the area, Duncan at Cairndow and John in St Catherines, I do not know anything about the third brother, my father’s people are descendants of Duncan Luke Cairndow. Catherine Luke married and lived in Greenock where my father was brought up and served his time as a joiner in the ship yards. He told me as a boy he ran away once or twice to stay with his Aunts at the lodge, he was very fond of Loch Fyne and could not imagine staying anywhere else.

Our Sunday walk in the summer was to visit Aunts Maggie and Julia, of course weather permitting we visited in the winter as well. Julia had binoculars and would watch for us coming round Ardno point and put the kettle on the open fire. I can see the kitchen with Maggie sitting beside the fire, the large table set for tea with china cups, saucers and plates, mine was always blue and white, and of course homemade pancakes. There was a dresser opposite the fireplace with all the different jugs and plates, Julia gave me a jug, coppered colour with blue dots round the middle, my daughter has it now. Then there was the wee house, when it rained the man came out and when it was sunny out came the woman. I also remember the old cuckoo clock and the horsehair couch which was very prickly on bare legs!

Outside they had beautiful white fantailed pigeons which were a delight to see flying around the house and settling on the roof, there were also a few hens and a small Cairn dog. So one side of the lodge the burn supplied the water, carried into the house in pails, in summer when the burn dried up my father dug out and cleaned a fresh water spring at the top of the shore just below the road, at the time wooden steps went down to it. On the opposite side of the house from the burn was a vegetable garden with a hedge round it and above that the “closet” no indoor water toilets then!

To the back of the house there were fruit trees, plums and apples, Hamish remembers taking the plums! He also remembers the ceiling of a bedroom being papered with newspaper.

In the summer my father put a rowing boat out, I expect it was for visitors use. He told me, when he was very young his father carried him down to the shore to see the fishing fleet, the very last time the “sail” boats fished Loch Fyne.

They were not isolated as there was always someone passing by usually on foot or cycling, cars would be from the Estate or Ardno Farm.

Once when Maggie was ill, my mother, Jenny Luke and Jean McVicar look turns in cycling from Tighcladich to the lodge to stay with Julia.

The lodge was just part of our life.

May Borland (MacPherson)

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