

ARMADALE PUBLIC HOUSE SOCIETY LIMITED

A CELEBRATION
OF 100 YEARS OF
— THE GOTH —



— 1901, 2001 —

THE PROGRAMME

.....
CHAIRMAN

Mr Alastair Young

.....
GRACE

Mr Hendry Sinnet

.....
DINNER IS SERVED

.....
A TOAST TO 100 YEARS
OF THE GOTH

Mr Robert Hughes

.....
THE CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mr Alastair Young

.....
THE CUTTING OF THE CAKE

.....
A TOAST AND THANKS TO
THE STAFF

Mr Abraham McDonald

.....
DANCE TO THE MUSIC OF
COOL CITY

IN 1901, PROVOST SMITH OF ARMADALE imported an idea from the Swedish port of Gothenburg. In Gothenburg, in an attempt to curb the drinking of sailors, an experimental public house, run by a co-operative society, had been established. With a loan of £1,000, a substantial sum of money in its day, from local coal master, James Wood, the Armadale Public House Society was established in October 1901.

So successful was THE GOTH that its profits in the first 14 months paid for a local nurse, Nurse MacAffee, and her uniform and equipment.

This tradition of munificence to any worthy local cause and THE GOTH'S patronage of all local sporting organisations and cultural activities made the establishment famous far beyond the boundaries of West Lothian.

THE GOTH became a local institution and one which inspired other similar establishments where, like Armadale at the time, there was a mining community.

In its early years from 1901 until 1903, THE GOTH repaid its loan to James Wood and had also made over £400 in donations to other local bodies including the band, the bowling club and flower shops. Below you see the pioneering gentlemen of the inaugural committee.



ARMADALE PUBLIC HOUSE SOCIETY COMMITTEE 1901

Back Row: H. Friel, R. Smith (Sec), D. Kerr, J. Adams, W. Aikman (Manager), R. Wright, D. Love, T. Watson.
Front Row: J. Rankine (Vice-President), W. Douglas, M. Mallace (President), J. Simpson, R. Drummond, W. Love (Treasurer).

In truth, the original premises were little more than a temporary expedient, however they gave the committee, management and staff the opportunity of learning how to run THE GOTH and also in gauging its popularity and the custom it could look forward to in the future.

Monies were such that extensions were possible and, during this period, the present shop front was built. A large horse-shoe bar with two rooms proved a great success from the start.

As international tension grew during the years leading to World War I, THE GOTH maintained steady growth and when war eventually broke out, the armed services were first to benefit from the generosity of THE GOTH'S charitable concern. When peace was re-established Edinburgh Royal Infirmary also benefited and Armadale itself received its first ambulance in 1921.

From 1923 until the early 30s, THE GOTH'S success continued, as did its donations to local causes including Armadale Public Band, the Redding Pit Disasters, the Miner's Welfare Institute, the Old Folks, Widows and Blind People, as well as Armadale's old senior football club.

During the economic depression of the 20s and 30s, business was modest. Nevertheless, in 1924, to mark the the services of the Society's President, Malcolm Mallace or "Auld Malkum" as he was affectionately known, the famous tower was added to THE GOTH'S frontage and in 1927 an extension to the premises was formally opened.

(Through the years, the tower has gone on to become Armadale's most celebrated landmark, perhaps due to its resemblance of the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa in Italy and it has featured often on television.)

The meteoric rise of Hitler in Germany once again catapulted the world into World War II.

Work, particularly in the steel industry became more plentiful and this was reflected in local business with THE GOTH flourishing and profits rising.

In fact, in 1946 bar takings reached record figures. However, due to the shortage of goods and the high cost of market prices, so did taxation. This too reached record figures and, in 1947, THE GOTH endured its first downturn in profits. The state of the pound sterling, its subsequent devaluation and the general state of the economy did little to improve the situation.

Nonetheless, the committees of the succeeding eras carried on the fine traditions of munificence and donations to the public, even when great care had to be taken with all matters financial.



As the 50s began, a new era also began for THE GOTH which was now, to all intents and purposes, Armadale's Town Hall. At weekends, it was the town's centre of entertainment. Dance bands, pipe bands, accordion bands and folk bands all played at THE GOTH. The refurbishment of the hall also led to other parties such as women's groups, and arts and crafts groups regularly holding their gatherings there.

THE GOTH also played its part in the continuing social history of Armadale as the venue for weddings, christenings, parties and funerals. Proof of its unique place the hearts and minds of the people of the town.

During the 60s, THE GOTH entered into perhaps the most testing period of its history. The committee of this time had to steer THE GOTH through a difficult time, as its finances and resources dwindled seriously to the point where it could have disappeared altogether. Although, even in these hard times, THE GOTH never wavered in its tradition of offering help and assistance to bowling clubs, Gala Days and Barnardos Children's Homes and local hospitals, as well as numerous other local bodies.

In the 70s, the entire layout of THE GOTH changed, becoming the place we know today. The Glendell Lounge opened its doors and, to encourage a younger clientele, Couples' Evenings were introduced. (THE GOTH at this time had no real history of being frequented by the fair sex, so this was quite a step forward.) Consequently THE GOTH flourished yet again with turnover reaching a new peak.

In the 80s and 90s, things, as always, changed. With more people buying their homes instead of renting, the rising popularity of off-licenses, people going further afield for entertainment and an entirely new economic climate meant there was less money in everyone's pockets. Rising unemployment, not just in Armadale but throughout Scotland did little to alleviate the problems. At this point, The Glendell Lounge became reserved for functions only.

Despite difficult times, all succeeding committees have constantly striven to maintain a policy of prudent spending combined with generous donations, fine traditions, associated with THE GOTH since day one. (Even today, the Douglas and Love families who sat proudly on the inaugural committee are represented by their descendants on the membership role.)

Important as the members are, and there are currently over 180, it is the continuing patronage of the people of Armadale that provides the THE GOTH with its lifeblood. Without this, there would simply be no GOTH.

THE GOTH was, is and always will be a society with its heart and soul rooted in the town of Armadale. Its generosity not just to its members, patrons and the people of the town, but to deserving causes wherever they may be, is an example to any society.

Many changes have taken place over the last century. Armadale itself is a very different place. The seven mines that once thrived here have passed into history. The steelworks are no longer here. The brickworks are long gone. Yet THE GOTH still stands proud. It still makes generous contributions and donations to worthy bodies. It still has a special place in the hearts of its members and patrons, young and old. It still has a vital role to play in the life of the community.

Of the numerous societies inspired by our own society and established on the same principles, only THE GOTH in Armadale remains as it was when it first opened.

When THE GOTH was born in 1901, nobody knew what lay ahead. Now, as we stand on the threshold of a new century, who knows what the next 100 years will bring?

The current committee see it as our duty, and the duty of all who succeed us to ensure that, in the distant year of 2101, the town of Armadale still has an active and proactive GOTH.

Armadale is a richer place for its existence... and would be so much the poorer were it not here.



ARMADALE PUBLIC HOUSE SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2001

BACK ROW: D. Clark (Manager), J. McClure, J. Erskine, R. Hughes (Vice-President), C. Dundas, I. McDonald, B. Douglas, T. Gallacher, T. Corder.

FRONT ROW: A. McDonald, W. Love (Treasurer), A. Young (President), J. McKechnie (Sec), G. Moffat.

ARMADALE PUBLIC
HOUSE
SOCIETY LIMITED

DIRECTORS AND OFFICIALS
OCTOBER 2001

PRESIDENT.....MR ALASTAIR YOUNG
VICE PRESIDENT.....MR ROBERT HUGHES
SECRETARY.....MR JOHN McKECHNIE
TREASURER.....MR WILLIAM LOVE

MESSRS

ABRAHAM McDONALD (PAST PRESIDENT)
GAVIN MOFFAT (PAST PRESIDENT)
THOMAS CORDNER
CHARLES DUNDAS
BRIAN DOUGLAS
JAMES ERSKINE
THOMAS GALLACHER
IAN McDONALD

MANAGER.....MR DAVID CLARK
MR JOHN McCLURE



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