

Dornoch

Heritage Society – Dornoch Heritage Society ended the year in style with a Films and Fun evening.

The highlight of the films was the old traditional Christmas entertainment of a magic lantern show given by society chairman Peter Wild.

A magic lantern is an unrefined version of modern-day slide projector using glass slides. They were very often hand painted in great detail. Showmen and conjurers travelled from town to town, their lanterns strapped to their back, performing in taverns, barns and homes, projecting on smoke, and interjecting spooky sounds to enhance the overall effects.

The spectacle frequently caused viewers to faint and it was often advertised that doctors should be on hand.

Slides with complicated gears and levers produced new optical effects. Slip slides, with images painted on two movable pieces of glass, foreshadowed the motion effects soon to become popular in the animated cartoon features of the early 20th century.

Starting with some exquisitely painted scenes from around the country, the show continued with some moving kaleidoscopes and concluded with the story of Dick Whittington, complete with audience participation.

Other films included the first voyage to St Kilda after nine months of isolation. Aboard the SS Hebrides from Glasgow, it stopped en route along the Western Isles. Shot in 1928, the original film was silent, but now has a soundtrack created by

David Allison, adding greatly to the film's atmosphere.

An interval of tea and mince pies followed and then the second half of the evening was devoted to a Guess the name of the object competition. With items ranging from the extraordinary crucifix fish to a desert rose and a foetal stethoscope, it was a memory provoking challenge. It was won by Andrew and Lorna Senior.

The next Heritage Society event is the ever-popular Taste of Burns on Thursday, January 21, at Dornoch Social Club. A few tickets are still available.