

Bachelors' Club for schools

The Bachelors' Club is an important building on the Burns' Trail. During Burns' time, the 17th-century building contained an alehouse, a dwelling house and, above it, a meeting room. On 11 November 1780, Robert Burns, his brother Gilbert and five friends established a debating society in the meeting room, which they named The Bachelors' Club. The aims of the club were to "forget their cares and labour in mirth and diversion, to promote friendship, and to improve their minds with meaningful debate" and they met every fourth Monday evening, electing a new president at each meeting. Robert was the first president. He was living with his family at Lochlea Farm near Tarbolton at this time, moving in 1784, after the death of his father, to Mossgiel, outside Mauchline. At Lochlea and Mossgiel, Burns wrote many of his best poems.

In the early 1800s, the old meeting hall was converted into dwelling places which were occupied until 1928. The property then lay empty but was cared for by the villagers until 1938 when The National Trust for Scotland bought the building. The Bachelors' Club was restored to its original dimensions and now contains many pieces of Burns' memorabilia and hosts a special Burns' Night celebration each year. A cottage (single end) and a small byre which contain artefacts from the time of Burns lie beneath the Bachelors' Club.

● education programme

The Bachelors' Club is an important primary resource for those studying Burns.

a site visit offers

- a tour of the property (designed for schools)

classroom resources

- guidebook

● practical information

planning your visit

- pre-booking is essential
- maximum class size: 30 with a ratio of 1 teacher/adult to ten children
- all age groups welcome (please consult first with the Property Manager)
- cost for school parties: children £1 - accompanying adults admitted free of charge
- Educational Membership of the National Trust for Scotland allows free entry to all NTS properties
- access: the cottage is accessible to wheelchairs users - but we regret that The Bachelors' Club is NOT accessible
- preparation: we encourage teachers to make a free preparatory visit

your visit

- please note: visiting teachers are responsible for discipline
- getting there: take either the A77 (south of Kilmarnock) or the A76 (Ayr - Mauchline road) to Tarbolton - The Bachelors' Club is signposted from these roads
- parking: coaches may park in Burns Street, opposite The Bachelors' Club (check with the Property Manager first)
- bags should be left on the coach
- on arrival: please report to the cottage (below The Bachelors' Club) with your class a few minutes before your tour is about to begin
- refreshments: there are no facilities for refreshments in the Bachelors' Club
- toilets: there is one toilet at the property

● for more information

Property Manager • David Rodger

Bachelors' Club • Sandgate Street • Tarbolton • South Ayrshire • KA5 5RB

telephone (01292) 541940

Regional Education Officer (West) • Debbie Jackson

telephone 0141 616 5117 • fax 0141 616 0550