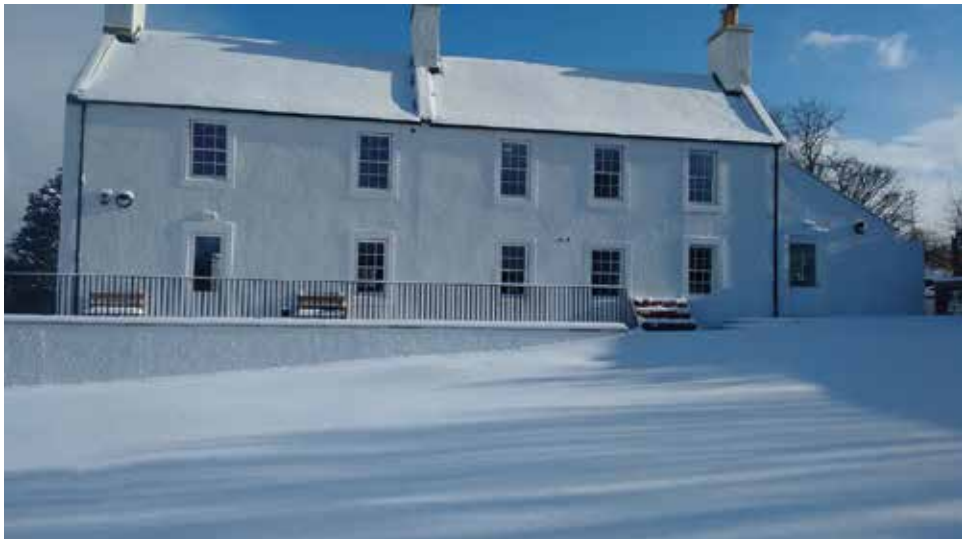
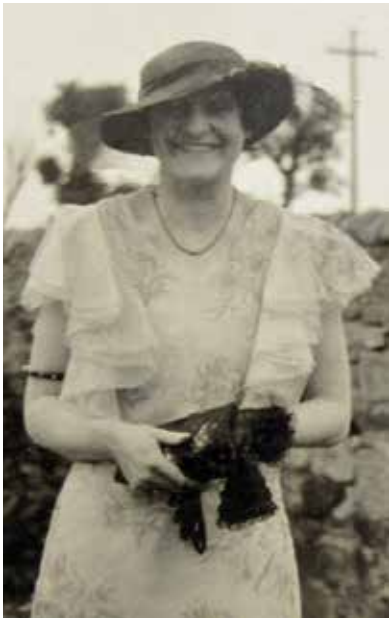
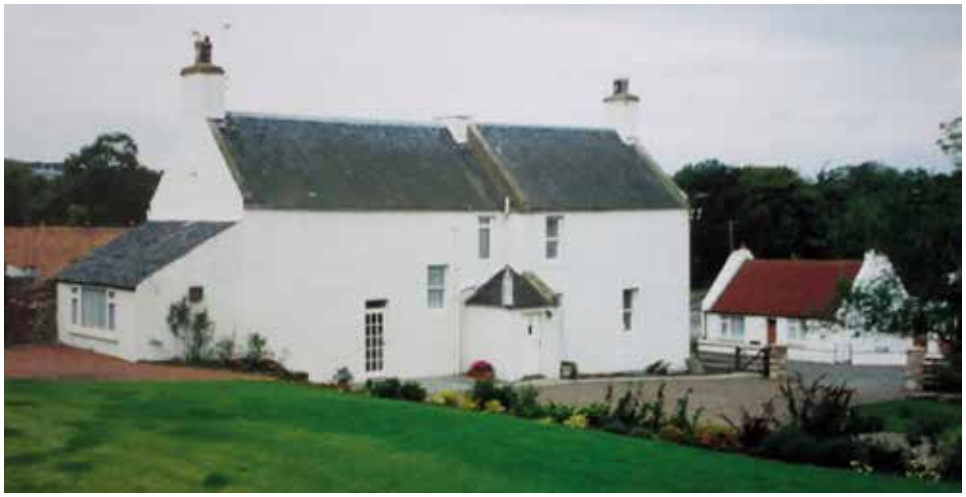
BRIDGEND FARM

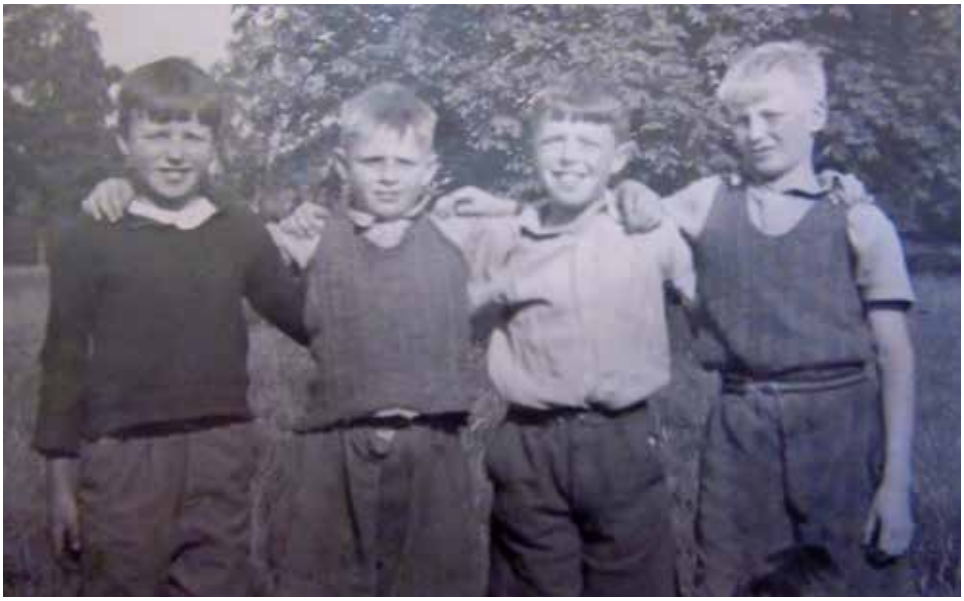
PLACE, WORK AND FOLK

A community oral history project
at Bridgend Farmhouse, Edinburgh





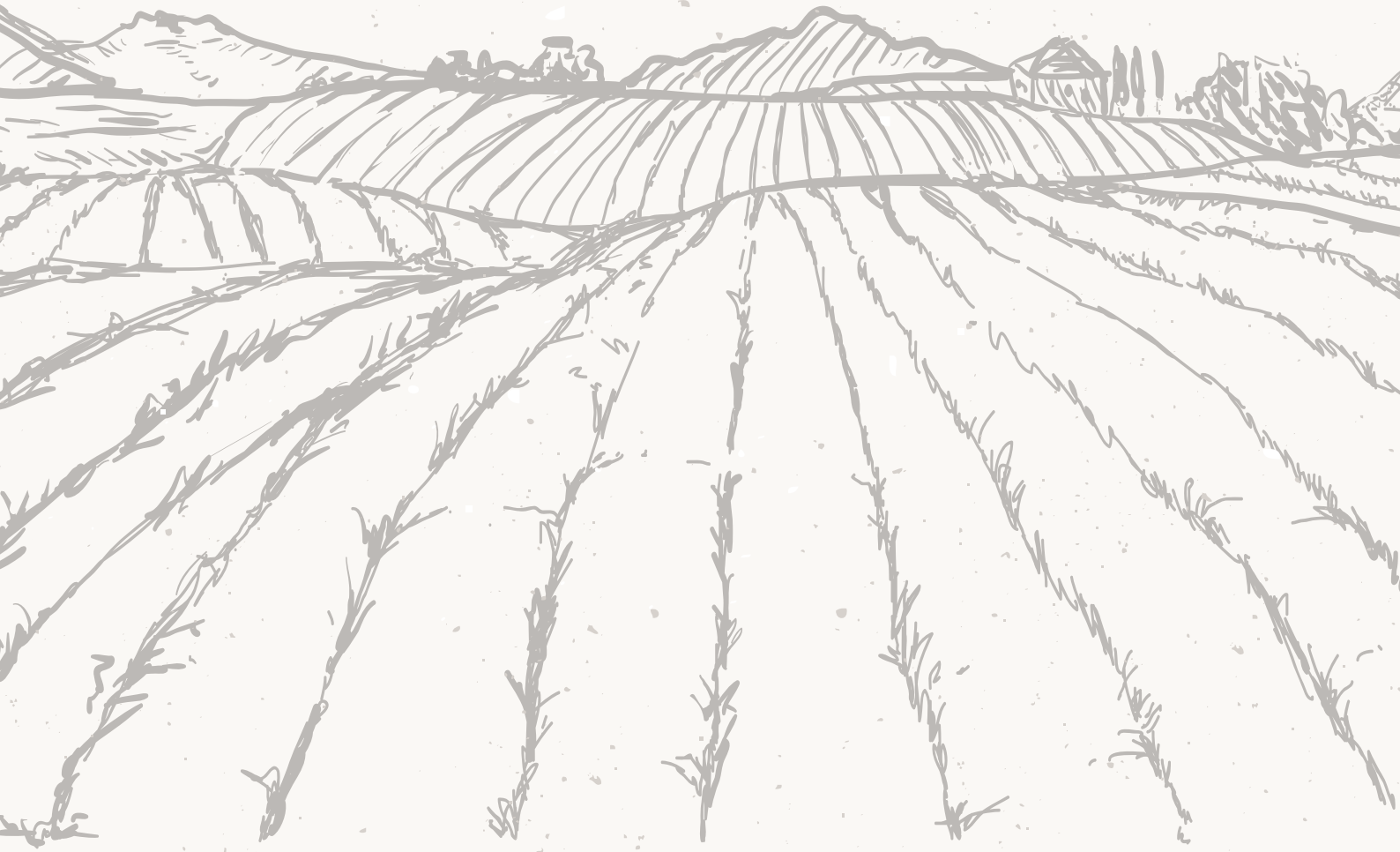




Place, Work and Folk: a community oral history project at Bridgend Farmhouse
Edinburgh 2017-19
Edited by Carol Stobie and Melina Maiworm
Graphic Design by Suzi Ridley

This booklet is dedicated to the memory of
the late George Henderson (1943-2018),
a treasured interviewee of the project and
an irreplaceable friend to Bridgend Farmhouse.

With grateful thanks to his family
for permission to include extracts.



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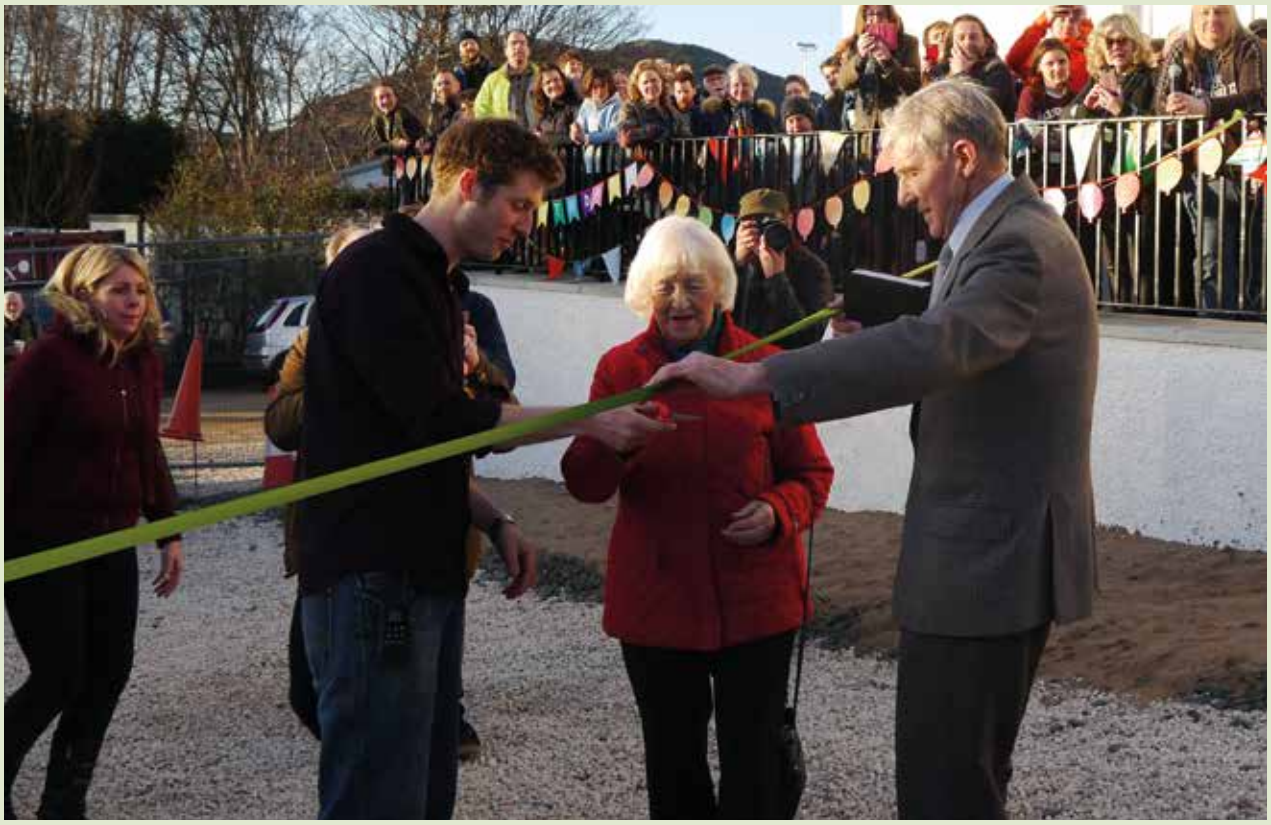
Foreword

Anyone who has visited Bridgend Farmhouse will know that it is a unique and special place – a sanctuary on the outskirts of the city. It forms a gateway to Craigmillar Castle Park, a woodland steeped in history, and with a biodiversity of wildlife. Bridgend Farmhouse has been at the heart of the local community since the late 18th century and in the year 2000 it was still a working farm, barely a mile from the city centre. The Farmhouse represented a rural way of life, one that is quite different from the lives of local people today. For older local people, however, it is a lasting reminder of childhood and a past way of life. It has many associations, such as running across the farmer's fields, the reek of the pigs, working at the nearby rose nursery, the old 'speedway' that the farmers built, and getting a lift in the farmer's bus to political rallies.

The Farmhouse and its historic setting inspired a small group of us in 2010 to form a charity (Bridgend Inspiring Growth) where people could work together to save it from dereliction and restore it for the benefit of the local community. In March 2018 we opened our beautifully restored Farmhouse as a community hub. It is surrounded by three housing estates (Craigmillar, Inch and Moredun) which were built from the 1930s onwards. Bridgend Farmhouse, the farmland, and the Craigmillar woods have featured in the lives of people who moved into the new developments and continue to do so today with the Farmhouse's new role. As such, the story of the Farmhouse and the life around it is intimately tied to the story of the development of those communities and the people in them, and weaves a history that shapes that whole area today.

We believe that gathering the living memories, stories and photographs of people who have known the Farmhouse is fundamental to the development and success of the new community hub. We have interviewed the farming families, Bridgend Cottages' residents and others from the local area to record their memories so that they are available to everyone. Their documented stories will act as a seamless thread, linking the past life of the Farmhouse to its present role as a centre for learning, eating and exercise. Some of our project values are based on the work of Patrick Geddes, who viewed the relationship between place, work and folk as essential to building a vibrant community. We aspire to maintain these principles in the future development of the Farmhouse.

It has been a joy for everyone who has taken part in this project to meet and learn from the farming families and local residents. We



Will Golding, with Doris and Harry Darling, the last owners of the farm, cutting the ribbon on Opening Day in March 2018

now have a legacy to pass on to community members who were involved in the restoration and those who are pushing ahead with new activities and enterprises. I hope you enjoy reading and learning about the history of the Farmhouse from this publication and I encourage anyone who is interested in sharing their own memories to contact us.

I thank our Community History Project Officer, Carol Stobie, for her skilful leadership; our Community Education students, Hannah Bradley and Melina Maiworm, for all their excellent engagement work; our multi-talented and ever committed film-maker, interviewer and photographer, John Nowak; our team of volunteers; and of course the interviewees who shared their memories and their own archive materials. We are very grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for supporting this project.

As Patrick Geddes wrote:

'A city is more than a place in space, it is a drama in time'.

Will Golding
Chairperson for Bridgend Inspiring Growth 2010-2018

Place, Work and Folk Bridgend's Community Oral History Project

In the autumn of 2017 we set out to capture the living memories of Bridgend as a working farm. It's been an extraordinary experience. We're thrilled, grateful, quietly proud of what we've gathered - and are still gathering.

The remarkable local activists behind the farmhouse restoration, led by Will Golding, had gained Heritage Lottery funding for the oral history project. We knew that thanks to them we had access to two crucial generations of first-hand account. Harry and Doris Darling were the last generation of farmers here, departing in the year 2000. David and Chris Binnie were the sons of the farmer prior to the Darlings, from the 1930s to the early 1960s, and they had grown up close by. Having these connections already available to us was beyond price.

Equally valuable was the connection existing with key members of the community surrounding the farmhouse, including Mai Smith and George Henderson, who provided a perspective on that world just beyond the farm and its interactions with Bridgend – a hamlet that was gradually surrounded by the growth of post-war housing estates in the south of Edinburgh. Other interviewees came forward over time, and with their help we have built an incredibly vivid picture of local life over some 50 years, up to the end of Bridgend's farming days.

Place, Work and Folk Project Officer – Carol Stobie

We've been lucky beyond belief. Volunteers emerged from the surrounding community, plus some from further afield through our call-out on the Volunteer Edinburgh site, showing a great interest in (and often awe-inspiring knowledge of) the local history. They included people with personal experience or family connections to the farm. As dates were arranged with crucial interviewees, we began to film and to record, and to build bonds and conversations which will last throughout the project and beyond. Volunteers are still joining us as I write, to research, transcribe and share the material.

Over twenty volunteers have been involved so far, and most were trained at an early stage by the magnificent Living Memory Association. Usually working in pairs, volunteers would visit the interviewee at their home and work from a core list of questions, adapting when interesting new lines of enquiry emerged from the conversation. We learnt how people had interacted with the farmers, whether as regular, legitimate visitors or as kids who had stolen plums, eggs or apples from the farm.

We heard tales of Aunty Jessie and the formidable Granny Binnie; of Cubbie the odd job man; of Paul, the prisoner-of-war who worked at the farm; of Granny Stenhouse who told folk she used to scrub floors for Mary Queen of Scots (she'd worked at the castle); and many other memorable local characters.

We learnt that practically everyone in Bridgend kept pigs in the back garden - or had other means of food self-sufficiency – and that rats were a problem for everyone, except for expert rat catchers like George Henderson and his brothers in their childhood days. Johnni Stanton and his pals would make their way across from Craigmillar, via the old fireworks factory, the quarry or the castle, looking for places to build a gang hut or to race go-karts. Later, there would be the speedway track created by Harry, a dashing figure on the local circuit. He didn't come from a farming family but became an agricultural agent and built up his networks that way before venturing into the field himself. He and Doris made a fine job of it in the face of many challenges over the decades, but later it became easier to earn a living from driving coaches than from farming, especially when vandalism became endemic around them. Meanwhile, Bridgend was swallowed up by the stealthy growth of the city around them, but never lost its identity.

Folk often begin by saying, 'I don't remember much,' but then as you sit down over a coffee the stories begin to tumble out faster and faster. Every one of the volunteers has felt moved, fascinated and even honoured by getting to know the folk they interviewed. Many have acquired new skills and confidence in the process of capturing these conversations, recording them on small digital voice recorders, uploading them to share, even learning to edit sound files and transcribe excerpts for this booklet. None of this would have been possible without the efforts of our extraordinarily talented and dedicated volunteers.

We've captured about 20 interviews with individuals (occasionally with couples, pairs of siblings or parent and child). We also conducted four group reminiscence sessions with older people, evoking lively conversations, maybe talking excitedly over each other at times and hard to hear in the playback, but stimulating new recollections and connections for us to follow up.

It takes many hours to edit and to transcribe oral history interviews, and we haven't finished by a long shot, but this booklet contains extracts from each of the interviews and gives a flavour of the kind of stories we captured. You'll want to hear more from each of them.

Our events and workshops have also been a way to meet new folk and stimulate other conversations and collaborations from Doors Open Days to summer workshops to the recent 'Our Changing City' weekend gatherings. (*See feature.*)

Extraordinary arts and crafts have also emerged (another vital section!). Some were intended from the start - traditional stone restoration, mosaic, animation - but others were complete surprises: a folk duo, a cork model of the farmhouse, farm animal collages, a poem… and more.

We've worked with primary and secondary school children, who have repaid our time tenfold in their creativity and zest – read more about that in Hannah's article. This booklet will also give guidance on how to use our archives to engage community groups, adult learners, schoolchildren and older folk. There is scope for further intergenerational work, for example.

We knew from the beginning that time was of the essence in capturing these memories before they're gone forever. The full force of that came home to us in autumn 2018 with the sudden loss of one of the dearest friends of the project, George Henderson, 'the Bard of Briggend', who had represented the last of the original Bridgend folk to be born and still live in this tiny village. We are so grateful to have known him and captured some of his tales. Even if there was more we'd have liked to do, his stories will never be forgotten and we hope to honour him with the outcomes of this project. A tribute to George has been written by our bereft volunteer, Doogi.

We've dedicated many evenings and weekends to this endeavour: emailed and rung and visited many, many folk, often worked into the small hours on the material gathered, and still meet every week on a Tuesday night at the farmhouse. It's been an honour, a privilege and a responsibility we have all taken very seriously. It's made us powerfully aware, more than ever, of the dignity and value that the oral history process gives to the folk we record. We aim to honour our contributors now with this booklet, with our film and audio archive, our mini-museum and many other treasures to be shared beyond the end of this project.

Most importantly, we have now acquired Doris Darling's recipe for Farmhouse Fruit Loaf, as served (to great acclaim) in the café in Doors Open Day. It's all been worthwhile just for that!

Carol Stobie
Project Officer, Place, Work and Folk

Volunteers' Voices

Pat Brechin

I have been a volunteer with the Place, Work and Folk Community History Project since it started in August 2017. I had recently retired from the City of Edinburgh Council, working in Community Learning and Development, and had been involved in adult education for over 30 years.

I live not far from Bridgend and was aware of the excellent work being undertaken to develop the Farmhouse as a community resource; volunteering with the History Project was of particular interest to me, as it would allow me to continue my contribution to adult learning. I have enjoyed immensely being part of the project, and seeing it develop over the last 15 months.

I have been involved primarily in interviewing people, both in groups and individually, who have had an association with the farm or the local community over the past 60 years or so, and feel privileged that they have been willing to share their memories with me. It has been fascinating to learn about Bridgend as a working farm; about Dickson's Nursery, which grew roses and trees; what the local area was like in the past; and about some of the interesting people who lived there.

There have been some fascinating stories. People have talked about their childhoods, the games they played, the pranks they got up to, celebrations and festivals, life in the past, and about their families and friends. They have shared the rich detail of everyday life, which has brought the past alive, and we have all learned an enormous amount from talking to these wonderful people.

I have also been involved in events such as Doors Open Day, the official launch of Bridgend Farmhouse, making mosaics and recordings with families, and chatting informally with interviewees at some of these events. It was so interesting to listen to them sharing their memories with each other and reconnecting with old acquaintances, and to see their enthusiasm for the new, regenerated farmhouse.

I have enjoyed and learned so much from being a volunteer, met some lovely people, and gained a valuable insight into the past of the local area. I have also really enjoyed being part of a great team of committed volunteers who have all contributed so much to the project.

Amy McVicar

I have been a volunteer with the Place, Work and Folk Community History Project since October 2017. My grandad used to work in the piggery when the farm was owned by the Binnie brothers and when my dad was young, whenever he had a school holiday or a day off, he would head straight to Bridgend Farm and spend it there. I have heard so many fun and exciting stories about the farm so when I heard there was going to be a group dedicated to the history of Bridgend, I was eager to get involved. Being a volunteer has given me the opportunity to learn more about the Bridgend community, to meet new people and to develop new skills.

The main aim of the project is to record people's memories of Bridgend Farm and to share their stories. Going out into the community and interviewing locals from Bridgend and the surrounding area is a large part of my work as a volunteer. At the beginning of the project we were provided with training sessions by the Living Memory Association on how to record and conduct interviews. We were also provided with separate training on how to edit the interviews as we would need to know how to do this before sharing them. I found both of these sessions to be extremely useful as I had no experience in conducting interviews or editing before I started as a volunteer but now I feel that I am able to do both and that each time I am given the opportunity, I am able to develop these skills even further.

At our weekly volunteer meetings we are given the chance to catch up with one another, share what we have been working on and discuss any upcoming interviews and projects. There is a great support network amongst the volunteers and help is always at hand if it is required!

I thoroughly enjoy being a volunteer for this project and for me the best part is getting the chance to meet with people so that they can share their memories with us. When we hear stories about Bridgend, we are reminded of a place that was strong in community spirit and a place that felt like you were 'out in the countryside'. I hope that with the reopening of the Farmhouse as a community centre, we are able to recapture this feeling and bring people together either through becoming involved in volunteer projects, attending events at the Farmhouse or simply popping in to have a cup of tea in the cafe!

Gavin H. Watt

When I joined the Bridgend Project over a year ago I thought what am I doing here? Not having much connection with the area or the parish of Liberton.

Then I began to get really interested when the agricultural and horticultural story of the area was revealed to me. Since early childhood my bus journey in and out of Edinburgh had taken me past the farm and the lovely old row of cottages had always stood out. Now the stories of families and folk connected with the farm and Dickson's Royal Nursery since the Second World War brought the community to life. I heard of dairy farming and the piggery. I could visualise plantations of tree saplings and fields of roses not seen here since the 1960s. To crown it all, I was present when we had a special meal outdoors at Bridgend where Harry and Doris were seated next to me. It was wonderful to meet them and chat with Harry about the farm and feel both his and Doris's pleasure at the great amount of interest in the farm and their appreciation of the transformation of the derelict farmhouse into a living used building again.

I could now read the landscape gone since the nursery closed and the Darlings sold the farm to the Council. All through listening on Soundcloud to folks like Margaret Lowrey and George Henderson and all the other wonderful people who have shared their precious memories of growing up working and living at Bridgend and around Cameron Toll.

But for the campaign to save and restore the old Bridgend Farmhouse these enchanting and important contributions to saving very personal and rich life stories could have been lost.
So often small communities are swallowed up and their history lost. Edinburgh is a very historical and beautiful city but this can mean it overshadows the stories of villages outside its old boundary. Hamlets such as Summerhall and Echobank have disappeared leaving little trace, but Bridgend has survived and this will not happen. The heritage of the community will live on due to the wonderful contributions given by so many and the volunteers who interviewed them and recorded their memories of this small community, so full of detail and revealing a hidden history of folks' lives which has been saved for us all to enjoy.

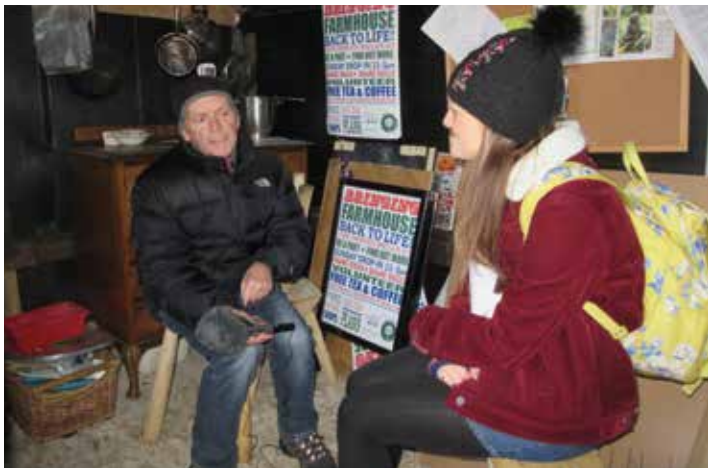
Oral History Training at Living Memory Association, November 2017

Volunteers visiting the Museum of Rural Life

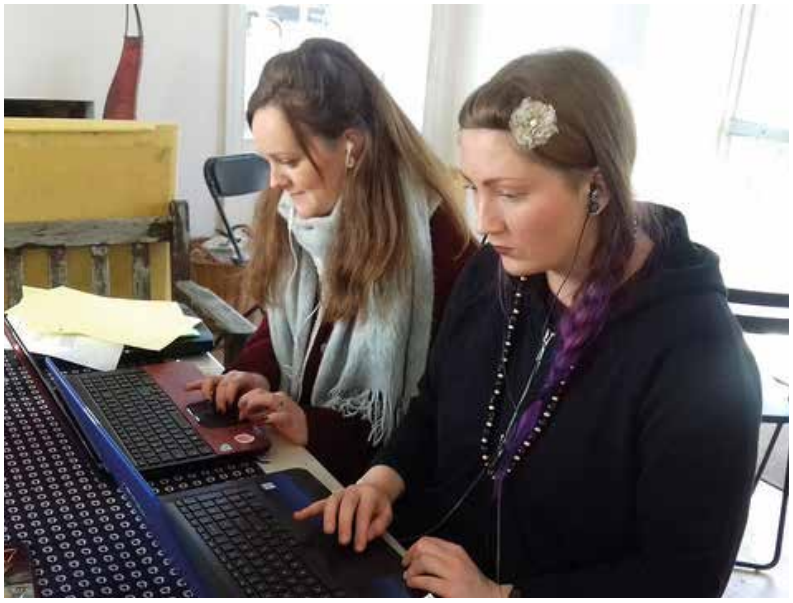
New and veteran history volunteers September 2018

Pat Brechin with Doris Darling on Opening Day, March 2018

Early meeting of history project held in the workshops



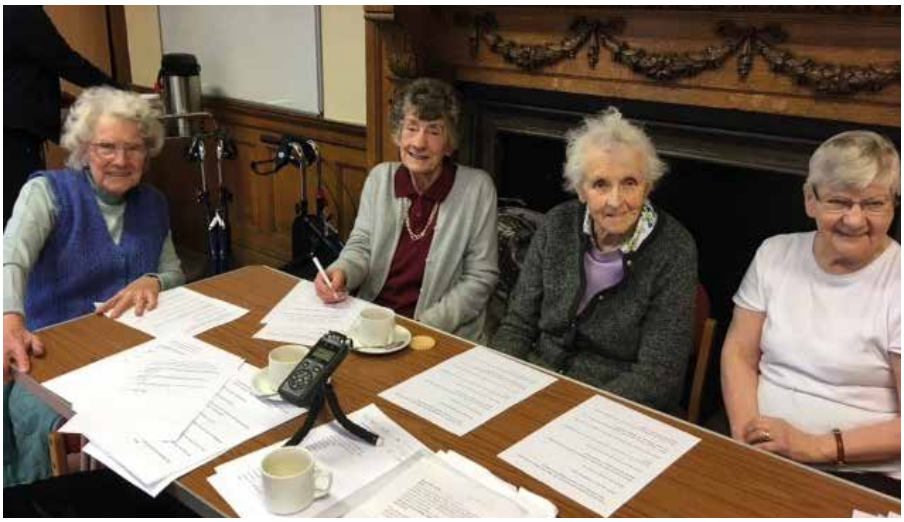
Amy interviewing her father, Kenny McVicar



Audacity Training for volunteers. Hannah Bradley and Amy McVicar learning how to edit audio files

The Value of Oral History and Reminiscence Work

The benefits of oral history work have been well recognised since the 1980s, which saw the start of community history projects and reminiscence work. These aimed to record the voices of ordinary people, give them an opportunity to talk about their lives and memories, and in doing so, to capture and preserve valuable social history records.



Reminiscence session with Golden Years Group at Inch House

The Living Memory Association (LMA) was set up in 1986, as an umbrella organisation to promote reminiscence work and support projects involved in this. It is still an excellent resource and was invaluable in offering training to Place, Work and Folk staff and volunteers in the early stages of the project. The LMA describes the value and benefits of oral history and reminiscence work as including:

- Being an enjoyable experience
- Helping reduce isolation and loneliness
- Recognising the value of older people's lives and building feelings of self-worth
- Passing on family and cultural history
- Providing eye witness accounts of history

The Place, Work and Folk project can attest to these benefits. People we interviewed often said that they did not think their memories would be of any value and it was wonderful to see how proud they were of these memories once they realised how important and interesting they were to others.

The story of Bridgend Farmhouse and the local community might have been lost had it not been for so many interviewees being willing to share their rich memories. They have recognised the importance of these in building up a picture over the decades of the working farm and the surrounding area.

People enjoyed coming together – either being

interviewed as part of a group or coming to events at the Farmhouse and meeting others who had also shared their stories. There have been some wonderful exchanges about people's different and shared experiences, and of different times and how things have changed. People also brought in photographs, which have been displayed alongside recent photos of all those who shared their memories.

It has been wonderful to see participants in the project enjoying the experience, recognising that their lives and memories are part of an important record and knowing that these will be preserved for the future as an integral part of the Bridgend Farmhouse project.

Pat Brechin

Interviewees

Johnni Stanton

Johnni is a former actor and producer with the Craigmillar Festival Society, who grew up in Craigmillar and knew Bridgend Farm well in his youth.

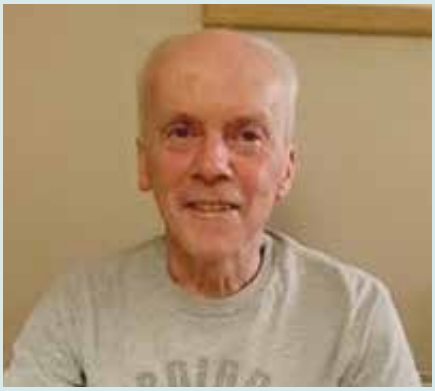
'This was my territory. It was for the imagination and I loved it.'

Mai Smith and Margaret Ramage

Mai and Margaret are sisters. They used to live in one of the Bridgend Cottages, which used to belong to their Granny Bisset.

'After the war we went back to the flat in Morningside, the four of us, and so every weekend, every school holiday was spent at Bridgend with our rations. So my mum and dad had to bring all rations to Bridgend and we came by tram from Morningside to the top of Lady Road and then walked down. We lived permanently in Bridgend in 1956 when my Granda by that time had died and Granny had angina and worried about being alone. We bought the cottage from the Gilmours for 250 pounds in 1956. So from 1956 we lived permanently there but before that all our time was spent there – even if we had a half day!'
Mai Smith

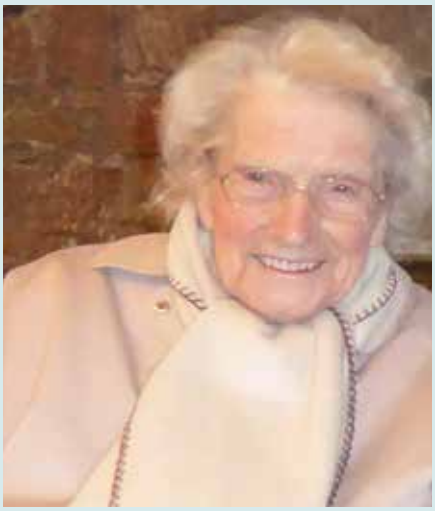
Kenny McVicar



Kenny grew up in the Inch. His dad used to work on the farm when it was owned by the Binnies.

'My dad was Bill McVicar and he was the driver who went around and collected all the food for the animals, looked after them and fed them, took them to the markets and stuff like that.'

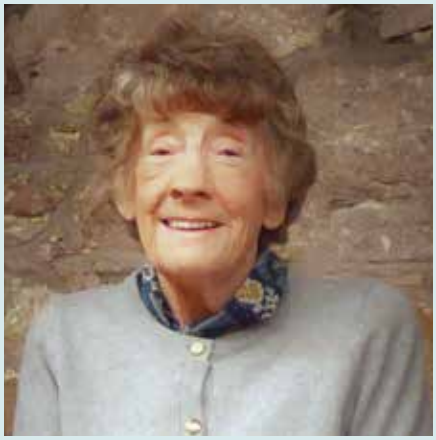
Margaret Flynn



Margaret is a member of the Golden Years Group at Inch Community Centre. She was one of the first tenants in the Inch housing estate and has lived there since 1951. She was the secretary of the Inch Community Association Women's Club (later Inch Women's Club).

'I used to hire Harry Darling when he had the coach… I used to hire the coach to take my clubs on trips… day trips and evening trips. We had a good lot of members and we could afford to do a day trip but at that time we used to have evening trips that we took them on. That was Inch Community Association Women's Group.

We had whist drives and social evenings and speakers. I was the secretary for I don't know how many years. I think it started in '52. It was always held across in the school… in the annexe in Walter Scott, opposite the shops. We had a room there. We paid a membership to the association as a club. Altogether it ran for 53 years or something.'



Margaret Colburn

Margaret is a member of the Golden Years Group at Inch Community Centre. She has lived in the Inch all her life and she worked in the Co-op in Walter Scott Avenue.

'I really started at Chesser Avenue, when I was 16. I got 13/6 a week, 10 shillings and 3/6 war bonus. That was my wages. You worked till 6 at night. When I come here I worked at this one, at Walter Scott… I was on the desk. We still sold tokens – you had grey ones and yellow like in war time… milk tokens, and you ordered coal there.'

Winnie Callaghan

Winnie is a member of the Golden Years Group at Inch Community Centre. She has lived in the Inch since 1952 and her son Liam helped on the farm when he was a boy.

'I think I was about 25 when I came here… about 1952. The son that I'm going to talk about who went to Harry Darling's, that's my eldest son… he is now 67. He spent most of his life over there at Harry Darling's – and Doris. When they had the farm they had a lot of animals there, I remember that.

'He helped them with the animals and all the bits and pieces that went on about the farm. He lives in Ireland but when he comes over here on holiday his first visit is out to Harry Darling.'

Betty Hercus

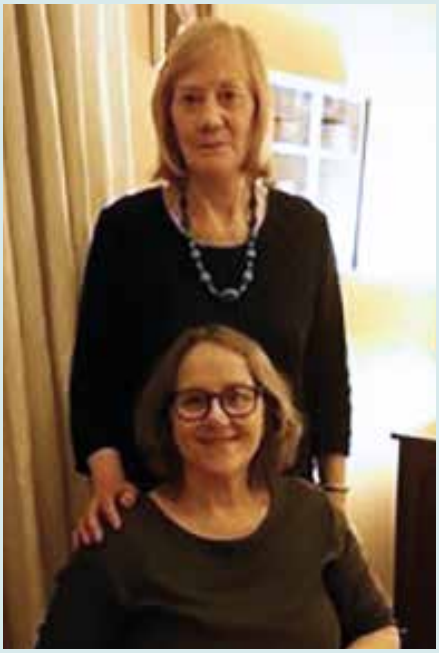
Betty was brought up on a farm and moved to the Inch in 1984.

'It was about 1984 when I moved up here. It was more or less about finished about then, the farm. I remember them moving the cows from the farm to the field, just up past the wood I think it was.'

Annette MacBeath

Annette has worked at Inch Community Centre for the last 18 years, 13 of those as a youth worker and the remainder offering janitorial cover.

'We had a friend who had a cottage at Bridgend Cottages. We used to go on long walks round the back and through all the fields, it was lovely, long autumn walks. I can remember walking there, I was up and down a few times visiting and walking about that area.'



Lizzie Stenhouse and Jeanette Summers

Lizzie and Jeanette are grand-daughters of 'Grannie Stenhouse', a well-known member of the Bridgend Cottages community for many years.

'We used to visit our grandmother who lived in Bridgend and she'd been there for, probably since… the teens, because our aunt and our dad were born in the '20s and he was one of the younger ones. So obviously we used to visit there a lot.'

Frances McCormack (née Campbell)

Frances was brought up in Bridgend Cottages and lived there till she got married at 22. She has memories of the farm and the Bridgend community.

'The one where the opening is down to the post office – the left hand side was our one. I lived there till I got married when I was 22. But my parents were still in the house … till my father died and my mother got older.'

'Then we go down to the (farm)house, and there was Jessie Binnie who did all the dairy stuff. I don't think she ever married. She was a daughter of the original George Binnie and she did the dairy, and the dairy was – you know where the house is … the house connects with the byre and that was the bit she was always working away in.'

Rosslyn and Anne McDonald

Rosslyn and Anne are relatives of Doris Darling, and visited the farmhouse regularly over the years.

'I first knew Bridgend when I got engaged to Doris's brother in March 1969. And that was the first time I had been.

'So we went there to meet her, I had never been there before. It was an interesting house, you went in through – what was then – the kitchen, which had been the dairy, back in the day. And then you went down into the sitting room.'
Anne McDonald

'We got married at the end of 1969 so possibly that year we maybe didn't go every Saturday but we went pretty regularly, and then once the children, once Rosslyn appeared on the scene – in 1972 we moved here – it was only a 10-minute run in the car, down to Bridgend.'
Anne McDonald

'So we just have really good childhood memories'
Rosslyn McDonald

Bill Cook

Born and brought up in The Inch, Bill later became a Labour Councillor for the Ward. His family had moved from the Greenside area of Edinburgh to the Inch when it was first built.

'Several generations of my family lived in Greenside. I think I've… counted five generations, five distinct generations including my older brothers lived in Greenside. So… after the war my dad was still in the Navy, and continued in the Navy until 1958 and my mum, she always worked – from my earliest memories ma mum always working even though she had a very big family. So, there was seven of us and I was the fifth one and I was the first born in the Inch. I think we moved in, the family moved into the Inch, in 1952.

'And it was transformational, I've said this before, transformational for many of these people. It's a very special place.'

Margaret Lowrey

Margaret worked in Dickson's Nursery in 1950-51 during the school holidays and in 1953-55 in the office. She met her husband Charlie, a nurseryman, there. Her memories are of the nursery and the people who worked there.

'When I first went to the nursery I was at school, so I actually had a summer job there, weeding – they had squads of people doing weeding and all that kind of thing. When I left school I went and worked in the office there… I was supposed to go to Moray House at that time but I had already met my husband and I wanted to get married. So I worked in the nursery. He was still there before he went away to the Air Force to do his three years' national service.

'The rose fields were beautiful… If you'd gone up Old Dalkeith Road in those days on the top deck of a bus… rows and rows, hundreds and hundreds of beautiful roses.'

Jessie Kennedy

Jessie moved to Bridgend Cottages in 1983. Harry and Doris owned the farm then.

'Somebody told me this house was a police station at one point, or said that a policeman lived here, but that would have been before the woman who lived here before me.'

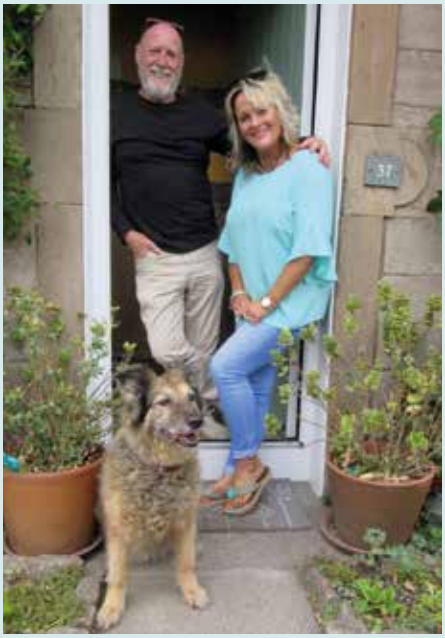
Iain Macintyre

Iain was brought up from age eight, and still lives, just north of Cameron Toll, which was 'the edge of my world'. He has childhood memories of the area.

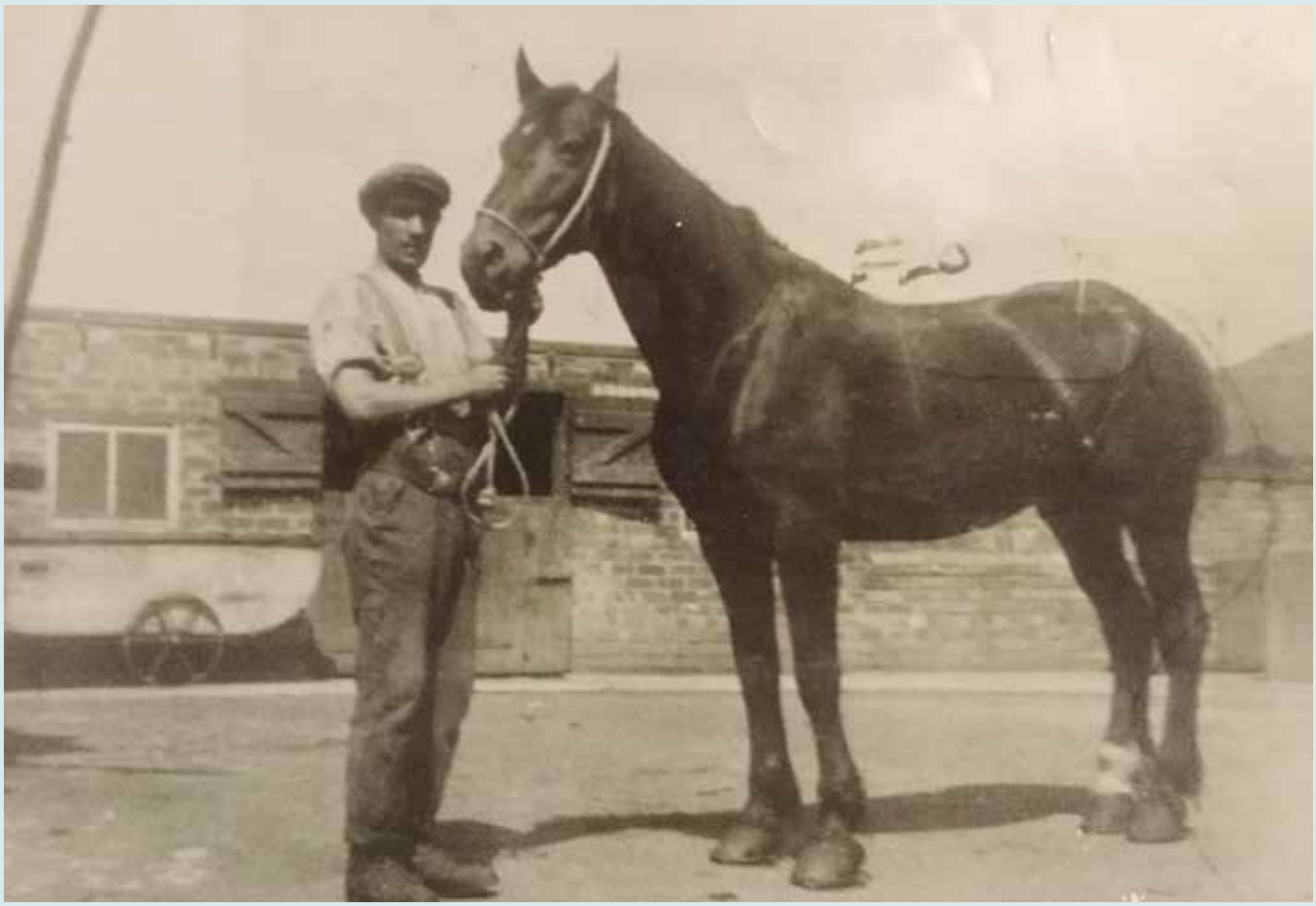
'As a primary school boy in 1953, I lived in McLaren Road which is just off Craigmillar Park and Lady Road. Bridgend was sort of right on the edge of my world. We didn't really go on foot much beyond Old Dalkeith Road.

'This was the community at Bridgend, the one thing I can remember about that was the farmhouse itself, which was as you know an imposing looking building'.

Dougie Barnett and Amanda Montgomery

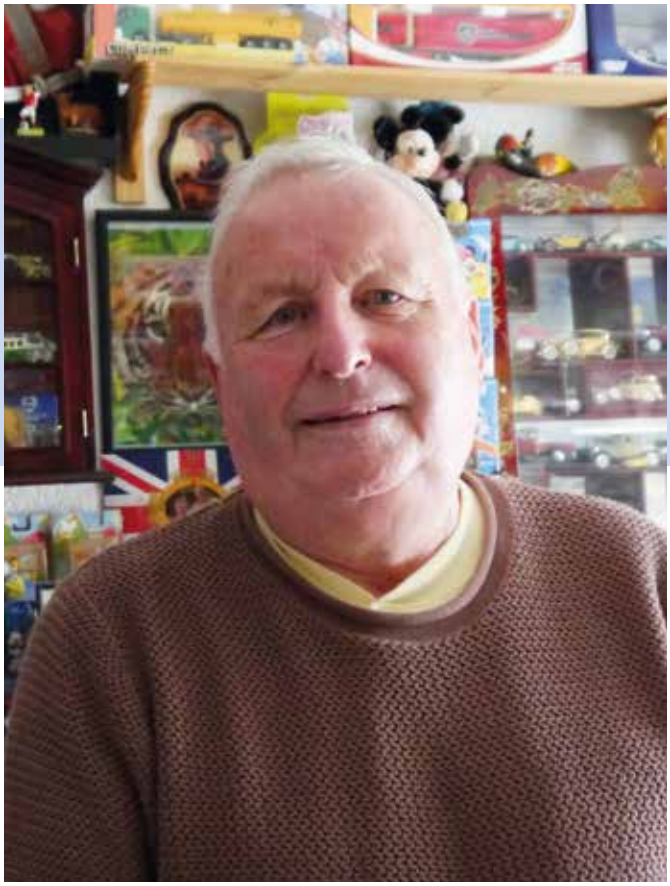


'When we first moved here in the early 1990's, it was lovely. In the morning when you woke up because the field that is now the allotments, Harry kept cows in that field. So, although living in the city, when you woke up hearing cows mooing in the field, it was really relaxing and a different from experience from living in the city. It's very much a feeling of living out in the country.'



George Henderson

A key informant for Bridgend's history and an early supporter of the restoration efforts, the late George Henderson shared unique and vital memories of the community in which he was born and remained all his days. George was born in 1943 at 17 Bridgend Cottages.

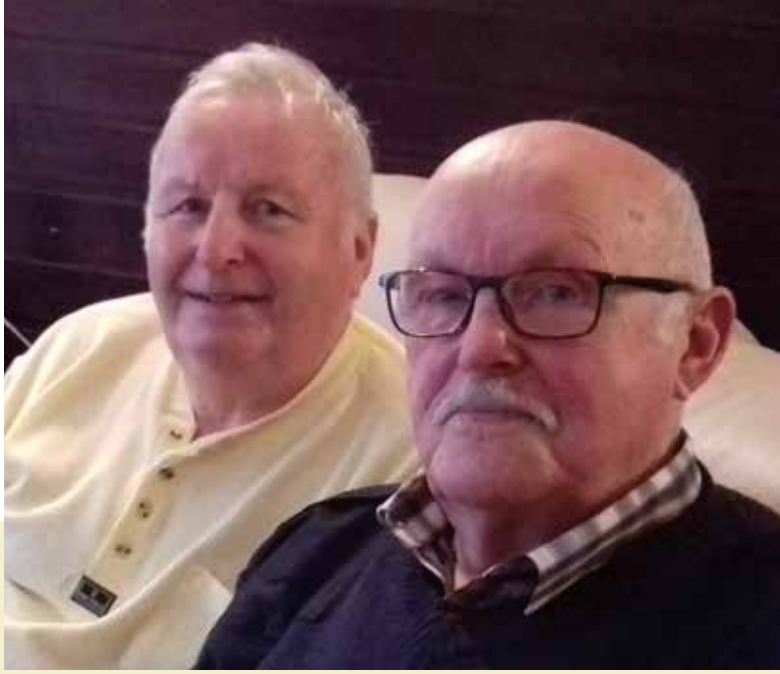


'My first job was when I was still at school. I was 10. Jim [his brother] was 11. We used to get up at five o'clock in the morning and you'd go right down to where the white house is. The Co-op was there and you'd get a barrow and you took two cases each of milk in the barrow and go and walk away down to Hay Drive, deliver to all the stairs there, come back, get another two cases, go all the way back and go and do it again. It was seven days a week, 10 shillings each. It was some job that. I had to come home, get my breakfast, get ready for school like. And then my dad had got the pigs, so after you came back fae the milk we had to feed the pigs. We only had about 30 pigs so then you are smelling o brock and you have to go to school. And you'd see boys sniffin ken, that's how I got so clean to be quite honest with you. I didnae like feelin like you were smellin o pigs.'

'We used to go rat catching every Saturday, me and my cousin George Black. It was funny cause my dad was terrified of rats and mice. Cause when he was young, I think he was seven, well him and Chris Binnie, I think they were always together, well Chris Binnie got a rat and killed it. He threw it and it landed on the top of my dad's neck and it went doon his back. Ever since then my dad had been terrified of rats. When he was still living and I was at my work and Rena (George's wife) said 'Dad, there's a moose doon the toilet'… It was just a wee thing but he said, 'just wait till George comes home,' and he just shut the door. And it was a moose, just a wee thing… and he was terrified.'

'They used to say rats were one of the bravest animals going. See, if you caught a rat in a trap, it would eat its leg off. And if you catch a rat in a trap and it's deid, another rat will come along and eat it so there's no evidence.'

In Memoriam: George Henderson (1943-2018)



George Henderson with his brother Jackie Henderson

Some two years ago, I first spoke with GH from behind a Heras fence surrounding the semi-ruined farmhouse. Curious yet cautious when strolling his wee dug roond by the allotments, he'd ask me what our plans were, and his approval it seems was soon won when he so graciously gifted me Tom Speedy's (1894) book on The Inch area:
"Aye, s'aboot time summin wiz done wi' thon hoose. Av mony's a guid memory o' the auld farm, so I like whit yees are daen," he'd say, pointing a finger through the fence.

Later, we filmed him, then recorded a valuable memory session in his 'toy room' – stacked with a model car, van, and lorries collection (GH drove local brewery wagons). We learned how he'd lived his entire life at Bridgend Cottages: how 1950s fun for wee bairns was building then demolishing "stooks" (haystacks): how as a youth he was a burn-fishing, rabbit-catching, rat-hunting, fruit-pinching 'wee tearaway': and how with age, there was little he and brother Jackie didny ken about the Gilmour's Inch-Craigmillar landed estate before council housing appeared on this once rustic rural landscape.

Between them, the two brothers mapped out almost every estate cottage, lodge, farm, nursery, etc., with pre- and post-War occupants, from Cameron Toll to Little France. And so wife Rena, his Gilmerton lass and life-long partner, son George, daughter Kirsty, and close family, may find comfort in knowing that nearby schools will have these preserved memories to anchor young minds to a sense of place, and time, and folk, and continuity.

A sturdy, fizzing with life figure, his homespun local knowledge and unique presence is gone, and a micro-epoch ends with his passing ... A MacDiarmid poem fragment to end with, as I imagine lobbing a lit torch onto a blazing hay "stook" in tribute to the youngest of the four 'Hendo Boys', to the last continuous 'old school' Cottages' resident, and for me, 'the Bard o' Bryggend'.

We look upon ilk other noo like hills,
Athort a valley . . .
And the great darkness o' your death comes up
And equals it across the way.
A livin' man upon a dead man thinks
And ony sma'er thocht's impossible.

Doogi

Interview extract with George Henderson

Doogi: You know what I call you George?
George: What's that?
Doogi: The Bard of Bridgend.
George: Well, Frances calls me the Bairn of Bridgend.
Doogi: The Bairn?
George: Cause she used to push me in the pram.
Doogi: So, you've gone from the Bairn to the Bard.

The Binnie Family at Bridgend
David and Chris Binnie

Aunty Jessie

Early Days

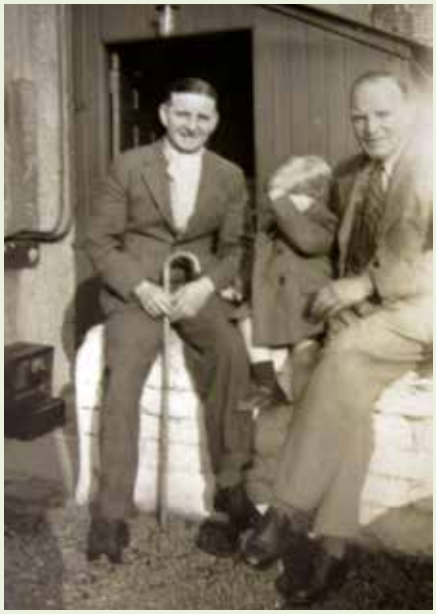
George Binnie, David and Chris's grandfather, bought Bridgend House, as it was known then, in around 1905 and, with his wife Margaret Davidson (married 1896), started dairy farming, with approximately 40 milking cows. They had six children – Robert, the oldest was killed at Arras in 1917, during the First World War. Then there was George, Tom, Margaret (Peggy), Jessie and, lastly, Chris Binnie was born in the Farmhouse in 1907. When he married Ethel they moved to a house in Cameron Park, near Cameron Toll. That's where the boys, David and Chris, were brought up. Granny, Margaret, Uncle Tom and Aunty Jessie continued living in Bridgend House after grandfather George had died in 1939 and Chris Binnie took over running the dairy farm.

David and Chris Binnie's Memories

Children in Inch Park, 1950. Including Chris (top row second left) and David Binnie (top row far right).

When we were very young we can remember when, in Granny's time, Father would take the horse and coach and go for a day out into the country to beyond Cockpen, near Bonnyrigg. It was a real highlight for them to go on these outings in the horse and carriage and Faither would be sitting there all dressed up. Granny Margaret was a big lady – a very demanding lady. Jessie, her daughter, was essentially her carer and she also looked after the house. When Granny died in 1959 – funeral arrangements in those days were different – one of our memories is of her coffin laid out in the front room of the house for those who wanted to pay their last respects. She is buried in the Binnie family lair in Newington Cemetery. And when the family members moved out of Bridgend House in the mid-60s, Jessie moved to a flat up in Dalkeith Road.

The company was known as George Binnie Ltd and as well as the piggery at Bridgend had two butcher shops down in Leith – one on Tolbooth Wynd and one in Great Junction Street. They mainly serviced the trawlers at Granton and Leith as well as the local community. So there was a link with the farm because we were involved with dairy cattle and pigs. We kept hens as well but they were for domestic use. The dairy cattle grazed in fields where the Inch housing estate was built and also on open ground behind the cottages on Old Dalkeith Road, on what is now the University playing fields. We called those fields 'The Meadows'. When we were very young, in the late 40s and early 50s, we remember the cows coming off the fields at milking time and going along the road up Old Dalkeith Road to the farm. In those days there was hardly any traffic. They would go into the farmyard and right into their own stalls in the byre. They knew exactly where to go. At that time, they were milked by hand by Jimmy Burnside, the byreman, and Willie Cuthbertson – 'Cubbie'. We two boys would stand on the corner and control the traffic as the cows just wandered along at their own pace. The milk was supplied to Edinburgh and Dumfriesshire Dairies, who took it in large cans to the milk processing place in Gorgie or Slateford, where it was put into bottles and sold to the public. What was left we used ourselves.



Chris (Father), David and Uncle Tom, 1944

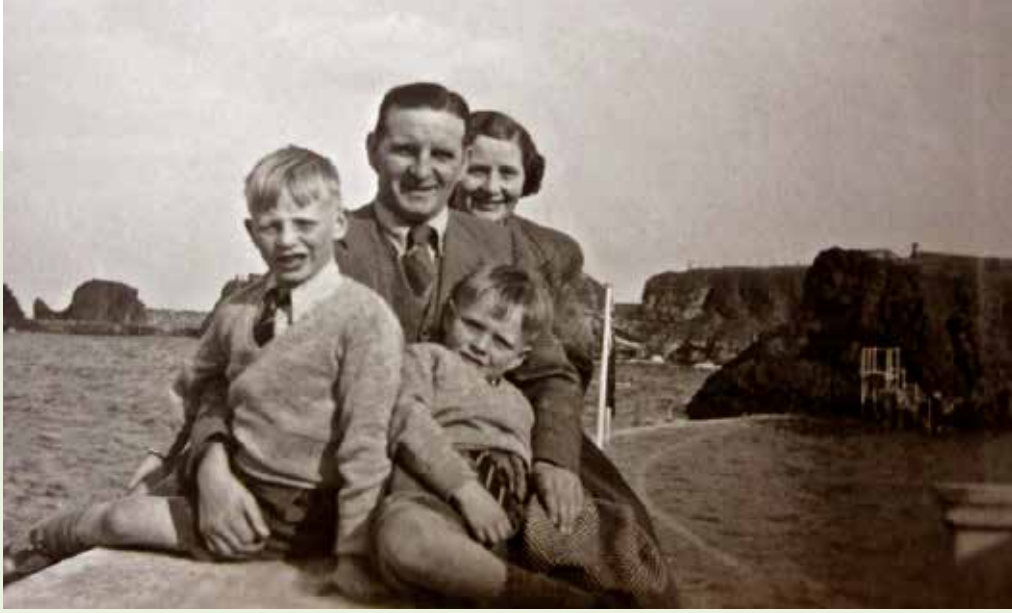
David and Chris Binnie

The farm had a piggery but it didn't breed pigs. Father would buy them from Gorgie Market. Tuesday was for cows and Wednesdays were for pigs. He would buy what we called 'store pigs' – young ones – and feed them up. In those days the feeding was all food waste or swill, as it was known, and we had collections from domestic premises as well as schools kitchens. We even picked up from the Cally Hotel. The feed had to be cooked before the pigs had it and there was a huge furnace near the bothy that created the steam to boil it up in large vats. The cooked swill was then ladled out into a tank and left to cool before being fed to the pigs. When the pigs were fattened up to a certain size they were sold to a group of bacon factories somewhere in the south west of Scotland.

The meat that was for re-sale in the butcher shops was usually bought at Gorgie Market – live bullocks, killed and dressed in the abattoir next door. They had to be a certain weight – half a ton. Pig and lamb meat were sourced from a butchers' supplier.

In the early 50s the dairy herd had to be done away with because of the legislation that brought in tuberculin testing. The whole place had to be washed down and the herd replaced. We went from hand milking to automated milking. The milk parlour was adjacent to the byre and on occasion cheese was made there.

The cows' eventual demise was because of the unavailability of grass and feed when Edinburgh had encroached on Bridgend. In the early days Cameron Toll was almost a stop-off for the horse and cart to get some water out of the fountain to carry on its journey. After the dairy cows, father then focused on pigs. He converted the piggery into new, big Danish style pigsties. We remember him going out at night to check the pigs, and when he opened the piggery door the rats were running everywhere. We were strong on Staffordshire bull terriers and they were the greatest ratters in the world. We had three or four dogs. The favourite was a young bitch called Sally and there was Monty and a cross-breed called Bruce which was a cross between a lion and a dog.



Family outing to Dunbar, 1950

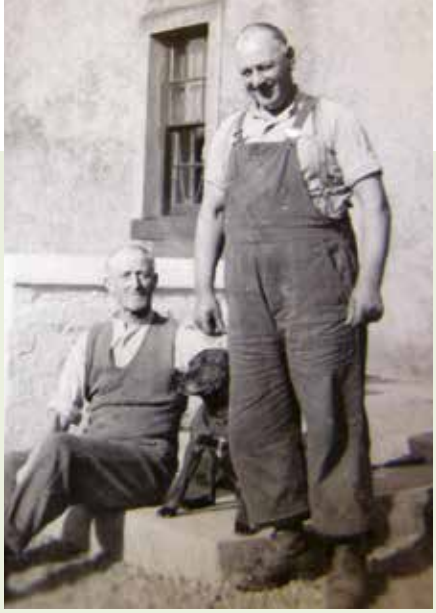
They – the Bruce dog in particular – were kept mainly as guard dogs.

We used to be bothered by jackdaws and crows coming to eat the grain and we would try and catch them using a trap made from a garden riddle propped up by a stick, to which we attached a long bit of string. We used to hide behind the hen house and wait until a jackdaw went in after the grain we put there. We pulled the string and down would come the riddle and with a bit of luck we would catch the jackdaw. But more often than not we caught one of the hens.

Next to the farm was Dickson's Nursery. It was a real nursery. They had buildings where they brought the plants on from seed. Not like the poly tunnels of today. They had horses and carts and we used to do a swap deal with them – they got manure and we got turnips. At Halloween we used to grab a few turnips and make them into lanterns. It was hard work. You tied a bit of string round it and put a candle in and hoped for the best. Guising was done in the Cameron Park area and we tried to have a little poem or something ready. There was no 'Trick or Treat' in those days and when guisers rang our doorbell, Mother used to make sure they did their party piece before they got their reward. On Christmas Day Father was usually milking the cows and everything was delayed. But the turkey – that was from the shop – was quietly cooking away in the kitchen. And then we all sat round the big table – Granny, Tom, Jessie, Mum and Dad, and us. We would also get a visit from our Aunty Margaret and her husband – the Tweedies – after they had their Christmas meal. They would come down from Lasswade Road to say hello and wish a Merry Christmas and there was an exchange of presents. War time and after was tough, so Christmas presents were few and far between. We were lucky and because of the family business we always had food on the table.

The garden at Bridgend was huge. It was rich in fruit trees and vegetables – cabbages, cauliflowers, raspberries, loganberries and gooseberries. We had a big summerhouse which was a tremendous asset to have. We used to use it for playing cards and games. There was also a small air-raid shelter. That was halfway up the garden. And there were two hen runs – they were quite substantial – fed by one henhouse. There also was a toilet in the garden for the workmen.

We went to James Gillespie's Primary School. To get there in the morning we walked through Newington Cemetery to Newington Station and then on up to Salisbury to catch a tram up to Marchmont. The local Bridgend children mainly went to Prestonfield Primary School. Later we went on to George Heriot's School. Our pals the Strachans went to the Royal High School which at that time was on Calton Road.



Cubbie, Jimmy Burnside and Monty, 1930

Others would have gone on to Darroch or Jimmy Clark's.

From Cameron Park we used to go holidays to different places – Dunbar, North Berwick, St Andrews, Blackpool, Scarborough. But father was always reluctant to get away. He was working all of the time. He did join us on some of these holidays. The family car was originally a Wolseley and was replaced by a Standard Vanguard, bought brand new. It was a funny old car with a bench seat in the front and a column gear lever. In these days you could take your car to Forsyth's or Jenners in Princes Street and stop at the door. A commissionaire would come and take your car away and park it for you. And when you came out and were ready to go back home, they brought the car to the door.

We went to Prestonfield Parish Church which was at the bottom of Dalkeith Road. It was the nearest church to Bridgend. It is no longer there as it has been demolished and the site has a care home on it now. We went to the usual Sunday School, Bible Class and Youth Fellowship. The Binnies had a pew – in the old days when nobody else was allowed to sit in it. And it had a sign on it, 'This Pew belongs to Mrs Margaret Binnie'.

We used to spend a lot of time in the Inch Park with our pals – playing football and cricket. It was fantastic. You could go into the Braid Burn with a sack and pull out what we called 'baggies'. They were fish – red breasters…sticklebacks. We used to take them up to the farm and keep them in jam jars. This was when we were at James Gillespie's Primary School. The park was a fantastic playing area. There was a wee wood in there and we had a speedway track where we ran our bicycles. The park was well used. You could be away all day … you might only come home for something to eat and the parents were quite happy with this. Once a week would be a pipe band that used to march up and down – there wasn't a bandstand in the park. The Parks Department had a nine-hole pitch and putt course that sat where they have the market garden now. And you didn't have to pay if you knew the 'Parkey'. He was in charge of the pitch and putt.

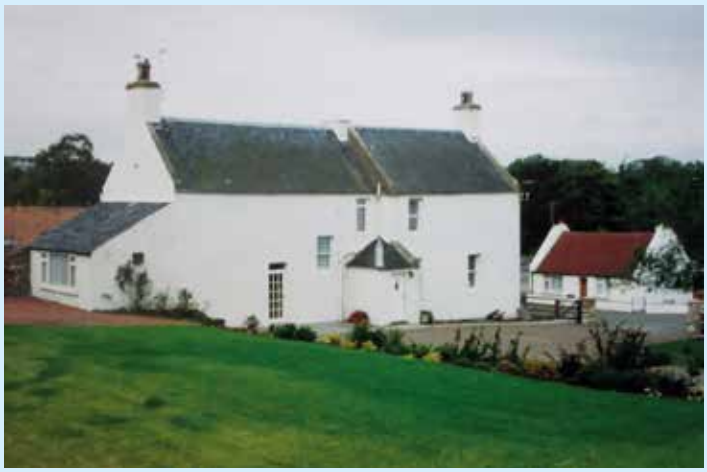
Next to the car showroom that sits on Old Dalkeith Road near Cameron Toll, going towards Bridgend, there are a number of new-build houses. That area used to be a field where a cousin of our Granny, Tom Davidson, operated a farm similar to what they did at Bridgend. His lorry driver was John, the Hendersons' father. When there were roadworks, nearby there used also to be a security man – the 'Watchie', that's what he was called, who stayed overnight in a wee hut. We have memories of sitting with him when he would boil water in an old golden syrup tin on top of his brazier to make his tea to have with his 'pieces'. And we would come home reeking of coal smoke from sitting round his fire. That was his job…night watchman.

And again, the parents were happy for us to do this.

Last of the Farmers
Harry and Doris Darling

Early Days

When Harry left school he started to work in a farm out by Currie and a year later he moved on to another farm at Addiston Mains and then after another two years he moved to Newhouse. During these early years he learned a great deal about ploughing and cultivation. He tells the story that after only a week at Newhouse, unexpectedly, he was asked to enter the ploughing match at Hatton Mains. He went there with a good friend of his and they both entered the junior section. Harry recollects that they had a very good day – his friend came second and Harry got third. It was just at the change over time from plough horses to tractors and working at Newhouse put him in good stead for future years when he started contracting on his own round the farms in Midlothian.



Bridgend Farmhouse in 2000

Harry and Doris' Memories

We started at Bridgend back in the early 1960s when we heard about land known as 'The Royal Nurseries of Craigmillar', owned by James Millar, that was becoming available for ploughing. The nursery sat on land next to Bridgend House and steading. It was also known as Dixon's Nursery and Mr Alexander who owned the business was about to retire. They were looking for someone to take over the land for about five years and no

Doris Darling feeding the cattle

Harry and Doris Darling, early 1960s

more as they were aiming to get permission to go ahead with building. John Bisset, who lived in the Cottages - he was Head Gardener in the Nursery - he wanted to continue running some of the greenhouses. Millar's wanted someone to look after the land while Mr Bisset would look after the glasshouses producing tomatoes, plants, window boxes and things like that. However, not long after – it was about a couple of years - Mr Bisset decided to give up the glasshouses.

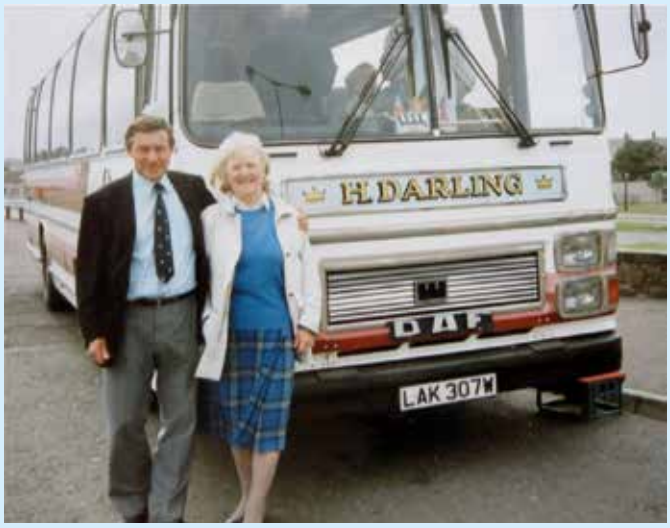
At that time, we travelled back and forward from Gogar where we lived. We had a nice house. And we took the women who worked for us over to Bridgend in the van and took them home again at the end of the day.
We had become friends with Chris Binnie and gave him straw for the pigs and emptied his midden for him. We had a good rapport with Mr Binnie but it didn't pay to work the land at Bridgend and live at Gogar. Mr Binnie came up with the idea that we could move into the farmhouse. Rather than rent it, we asked if he would think about selling it. So we bought the house, which suited us fine. We went in just before Christmas 1965 and had been working the land before then since 1962. When we first went in it was a rotten long drawn out harvest… it was so wet.

We were told that we would have the land for five years as Millar's could apply every five years for planning permission. This was a bit unsatisfactory, not knowing what was happening but the land was so good we stuck it out – it was really good – you could grow anything at Bridgend. It was easy land to plough. It lay mainly between the Inch housing estate and Craigmillar and we called it

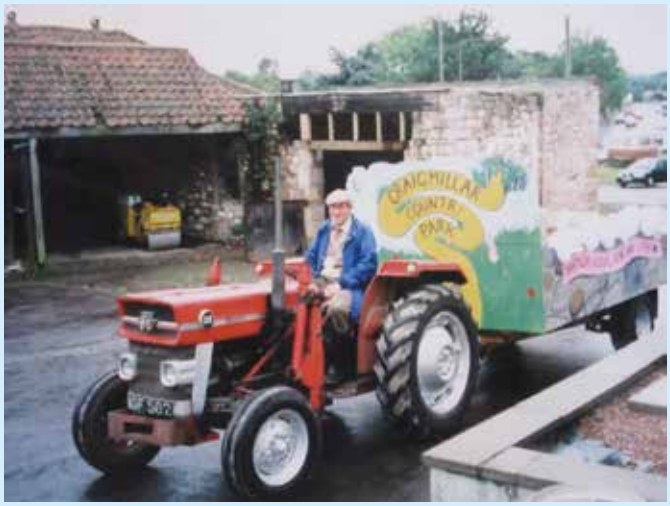
'No-Man's Land'. We can remember when you would get a shower of rain and, in the heat about April time, the steam would be coming off the land. We planted seed barley and you could just about see it growing.

It was never Bridgend Farm when the Binnies had it - it was Bridgend House. We had a good friendship with Mr Binnie and we think he was quite pleased we were next door to him. When he came to sell the piggery, we were interested in bringing the two together. That's when Bridgend became a farm again having the steading and the land all as one. It all worked very well - and we were only ten minutes from Princes Street. We had to make the best of it from then on. We made a road round the back so we could take the farm implements round the steading and up to the land. We also decided we would like to paint the house white and were advised that lighthouse paint would be best – the paint they used on lighthouses. So that's what we did.

Mr Binnie had kept milking cows but we had a herd of Aberdeen Angus beef cattle which we were quite pleased about. Where the cemetery is now, that was where we kept the cows. The grazing land was good and we also found that if we seeded the grass fields round about the



Harry and Doris and the hire coach


Harry Darling on the red tractor

steading it helped to keep the youngsters out of the fields. Aberdeen Angus make quite good 'watchdogs'. They put their heads down and people are not sure what they are going to do. It was like that for a few years and there was not much trouble. The trouble really was at the outer edge. It was so vulnerable and people would come in and set fire to things and the big blow came when we lost our big shed. Luckily our lorry was out but we lost a bit of straw and some implements. After that we had to leave our grain outside. We went on like that for a year or two.

We did a lot of 'shopping' turnips through to Glasgow and took a lorry load through once, maybe two times a week depending on the demand for them. We were going away with a load once and Chris Binnie said, "Finest turnips I have ever seen going away from Bridgend".

We grew barley. It was the easiest thing to grow and we grew good barley that we sold to the brewery. We stuck it out at Bridgend – you couldn't get a nicer land to work on. Through in the West they stick to grass as they have a lot of rain. But in the East you can grow almost anything. East Lothian we know is good farming land and Edinburgh is excellent – the black soil round about Edinburgh.

We also grew hay. Our neighbour at Craigour dairy was always looking for grass silage to feed their cows. So we came to an agreement and re-seeded the land at Bridgend with grass which we were able to use for silage. That worked out very well.

We had lots of vandals. We had as many as ten, maybe more, stolen cars in the fields at once. We had to get them off the land and we pulled them on to the road with the tractor – through good crops. But the Council dump objected and asked me not to put any more cars on the road until they had taken them away.

It was a funny kind of farming in the town. Bridgend was the last farm before you hit Princes Street. We were only ten minutes from the City Centre… Three miles from Princes Street. We are delighted the way things have worked out. It's all trees now – forty thousand deciduous trees in the country park.

Bridgend of Craigmillar
A Brief Introduction

There is no start date for Bridgend as a named area, hamlet or village. It was a part of Drumselch forest but this, along with most of early Scotland, was a boggy shrubland unfit for farming until it was drained. The area was used as a hunting ground, being home to deer, foxes, boar and other animals.

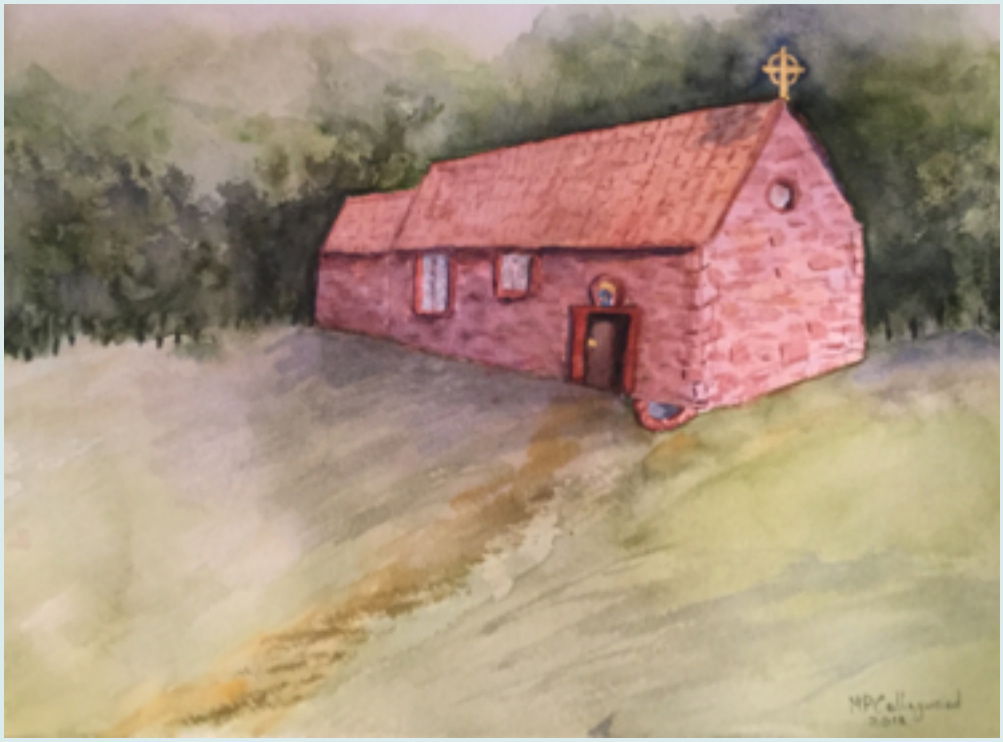
Bridgend was a part of the Craigmillar estate best known as belonging to the Preston family from 1374. Before that time a few owners can be identified but all required the king's consent for ownership – which could be withdrawn. In 1120 David first gifted some land and houses to the Abbey of Dunfermline who then acted as landlords. The houses indicate that there was a village at 'Craigmellor' in the 12th century and pottery from an archaeological excavation at Bridgend in 2014 suggest that there was habitation there too, although no record has been found.

Oral tradition states that Bridgend had a hunting lodge built by or for a king. Sir Simon Preston built a stone tower house at Craigmillar in the early 1400s marking their status. This was originally an L-shaped hunting tower which, over the years, grew to be the Castle and which remains today, but he did not build a hunting lodge. Inch House, directly opposite Bridgend, was built as a stone hunting tower sometime in the 1400s probably by the Forresters of Corstorphine taking advantage of the vast numbers of animals in the area. This was also known as 'the King's Inch' although no specific king has been linked to it.

'Bridgend' obviously suggests that there was a bridge at the area but when it was first erected is not known. The Braid and Pow burns crossed the area and later a manmade lade was added. The route of the burns has changed over the years: a map of 1763 shows two distinct branches crossing the road at Bridgend but its medieval layout is unclear; the name suggests only one – undoubtably wooden – bridge. The road through the area (today Old Dalkeith Road) has always been an important route north to Edinburgh and south to Newbattle Abbey and a bridge would be important for travellers and the landowner. Bridges often had tolls and caused delays to travellers, encouraging both habitation and trade at the bridge. Chapels were often built at bridges to encourage prayers and donations.

Religion in 15th and 16th century Scotland caused people to fear that after death their souls would suffer because of sins during their life, and having the right funeral and prayers after death was very important. Sins could be reduced by donating to the church in life and building a church/chapel could reduce suffering after death. In 1518 a later Sir Simon Preston built a chapel at Bridgend for the 'souls health of James 3rd and 4th'. This helped him in life by ingratiating himself to the child king James V and his court, and in death by reducing his purgatory. He built a second chapel of similar design for his use at Craigmillar Castle in 1523 which still stands.

The chapel at Bridgend was ornate inside. It was used for normal services with prayers said



The Bridgend Chapel as it might have looked in 1518. By kind permission of the artist, Dr M P Collingwood.

for the two kings several times daily by the appointed priest, with the locals and travellers adding volume. The chapel had a short life as the Reformation in Scotland in 1560 outlawed papal supremacy and the mass, and led to the destruction of many chapels or at least of their religious elements. The chapel at Bridgend at some time became a stable, labourer's dwelling, cattle shed and pig shed before becoming the roofless ruin it is today. The archaeological excavation in 2014 found 15th century pottery, floor and roof tiles and a well, which predates the chapel, but could only conclude that the remains were probably the chapel.

The first part of the farmhouse at Bridgend was possibly built in 1750 as this date appears in the plaster on what was the external wall of the first house and is now in the attic of the current building. The estate map of 1792 shows no other dwellings but does show the stables – the former chapel. The house was about half the size of the current building, the extension being added about 1830.

The farm was successful, although it moved from crops to milk cattle to pigs to the non-dairy herds and again pigs while some of the land became the Royal Nursery with prizewinning roses, and many of the trees it grew were exported to Scandinavia. The area grew; hovels were replaced by houses, then more houses. The road got busier as housing estates were built around but Bridgend Farmhouse and hamlet continue.

Dr M P Collingwood
Greater Liberton Heritage Project, September 2018

References:

White Rev T 1792; The Annals of Liberton
Ordnance Surveyors' Notebooks 1852;
Historic Environment Scotland

The Bridgend community

'It was lovely. It was a very rural place and a very, very quiet place … a very rural area. Everybody was curious. They kind of knew each other or they knew of each other. The people at Bridgend knew the people who worked in the Inch. Some of the Bridgenders worked in the Inch, some of them worked for the nursery … they had tied houses. Dickson's Royal Nursery was just behind the farm, where the cemetery is. They had an office in Charlotte Square.'

Frances McCormack

'I was married in 1962 so really only lived there permanently for six years but it was really just like a village and Bridgend was a village years and years ago, a hamlet – just a single street.'

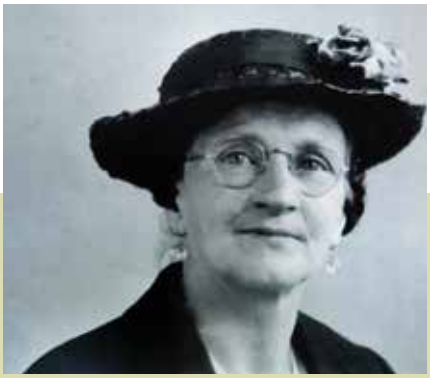
Mai Smith

'I knew the original tenants in that group of houses [Bridgend Cottages] – straight up Dalkeith Road as you come in…the first block of houses. Auld Mrs Henderson lived there. I think she lived in the house next to the burn. My middle laddie, Tommy… he'll be 71 this year… he fell over the wall into the burn and scraped his knee… and Mrs Henderson took him in.'

Margaret Flynn

'It was definitely not such a busy road; it was much quieter. The road got really busy after the hospital was built. The park was much the same. I do remember Cameron Toll getting built and it getting flooded – water flowing right through the main mall part! Then down Old Dalkeith Road into Cameron Gardens. We've been nearly flooded a couple of times but never because there is a wee bit of a camber in the road. Before the flood defences were in, the houses at the park entrance got flooded umpteen times – once the flooding came up past the windows, people were out in boats in the Inch Park, it was really bad but it's never been quite as bad as that. It still feels quite rural but not quite as rural as it was.'

Jessie Kennedy



[On their Grannie Stenhouse, 'who 'scrubbed flairs for Mary Queen of Scots'…]
She spread that story far and wide, eh! She was telling other folk she used to scrub for Mary Queen of Scots as well. She was what you would call a wind up, you know what I mean. She would tell you stories but you wouldn't believe them, but she used to hang out at the gate and when someone would pass by she would nab them and unfortunately there wasn't a pavement on the other side so you couldn't run away frae her [laughs]. And the puir postman, they were like, oh no there's Grannie Stenhouse. She just wanted to talk to people, you know, she just wanted to have a blether…. She was just full of fun and mischief, she wasnae really a serious person … No, she wasnae serious at all.

Lizzie Stenhouse and Jeanette Summers

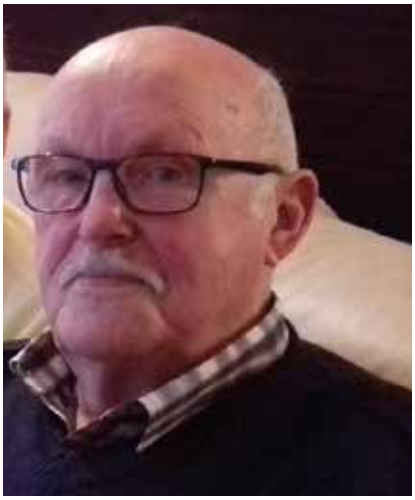
We used to get the bus from Granton, get the 8 or the 14, and walk down Lady Road and pass the Davidson Farm. The Davidson Farm was owned by my Dad's Uncle. His father was sister of the wife of Tom Davidson. So my grandad … and my dad, they both worked on the (Davidson) farm. It was mostly pigs, Liz, eh?

'I must have been about 8 or 10 before we even got gas into the house – we had electricity, but that's all – the light. No cookers, washing machines or what have you. We had a boiler, an old boiler down in what we called the scullery, and when my mother did the washing, she had to light the fire underneath the boiler and boil the clothes.

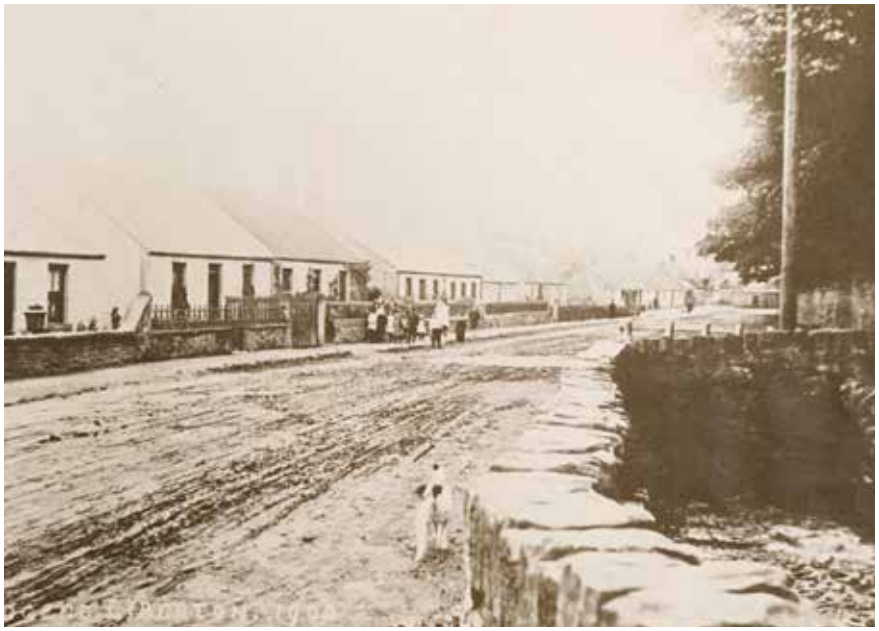
'And there was no hot water – if you wanted hot water, you had to boil a kettle or a pan. A scrubbing board to wash…
'It was a row of cottages, that was it. When my mother wanted a half loaf or a packet of tea, I had to run away up to Dalkeith Road.
'It was the same with buses – you had an SMT bus that came once a day. All you had was the row of cottages you see now, and the garage – Ross' Garage at the end of the street.'

Jackie Henderson

Mai Smith



Jackie henderson



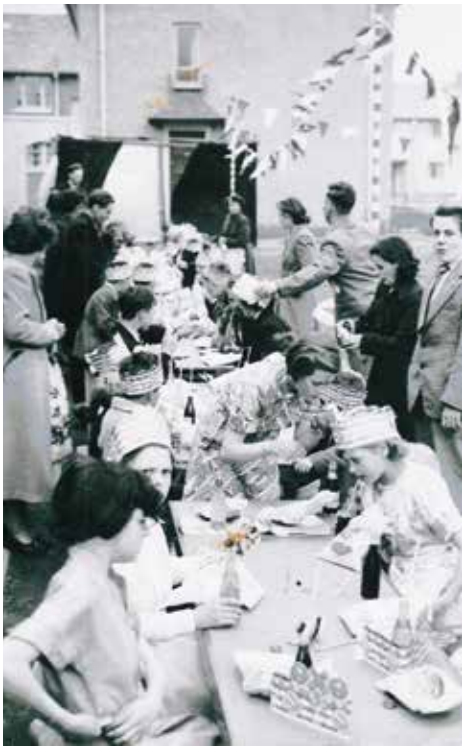
Growth of the City around Bridgend
The Inch Estate

1950s aerial view of the Inch

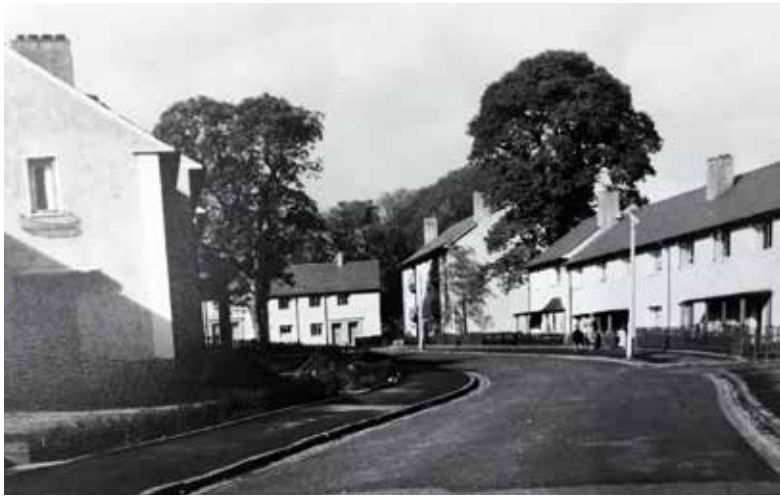
Post-war Edinburgh saw large numbers of families moved from the neglected inner cities to new 'peripheral' housing estates, including the areas around Bridgend.

'The Inch was unique as a housing scheme, there is absolutely no doubt about that. The story of the Inch really started during the war in the 1940s. In 1942, the then Secretary of State of Scotland, Tom Johnston, he set up the Scottish housing committee and this housing committee was tasked with establishing what type of house working-class people wanted and make recommendations of the types of houses that should be provided. And the recommendation was for, fundamentally, Garden City type housing. Where there would be large open spaces, recreational facilities, houses would generally be terraced or small tenements or flatted houses.

'And the specification that the report that was issued in 1944 touched on was not just the types of houses, settings of the houses but what would be in the house. So, I mean, our parents lived in our kitchen in Greenside, and that was literally a room and a kitchen and the parents generally slept in the kitchen and the children would



Coronation Day in the square at Balderston Gardens 1952



Dinmont Drive, 1950s

sleep in the one bedroom. Those houses had no, no amenities, no hot water, outside communal toilets, they were basically slums. In 1961, the Evening News described Greenside as having the worst slums in Edinburgh. The Scotsman in earlier years had said stark observations about Greenside. So, these people, like my family, they moved from room and kitchen to a house that had a Living Room, Dining Area, a Scullery, three Bedrooms, a Bathroom and a Hallway. The thing that surprised me when I was researching this was the fact that the hallway was part of the specifications of the houses that was published in 1944. So, it wasn't just the settings of the houses, it was the types of houses and the facilities within the houses. So, it was really, really quite different for our family.'

Bill Cook

My bit of the street… they come from all over, Leith and everything. We all moved in within about a month of each other I think. When I moved in they were putting tiles on the floors across the road. They were brand new houses. That was in 1951.'

Margaret Flynn

'You had the Inch Park, absolutely fantastic park and it wasn't just the park land that you had, you had organised recreational facilities there. So, you had Glenallen Drive and the Inch House, you had tennis courts, bowling greens, putting greens and in the area opposite Bridgend, that strip running parallel with Dalkeith Road around by Glenallen Drive, you had Pidgin Park. You had the Inch burn, I mean it was great, if you weren't in the Inch Park, you'd be in the Libby Dans, Liberton Pans, up Blackford Hills or the Braes. So, it was a splendid area in terms of countryside.'

Bill Cook

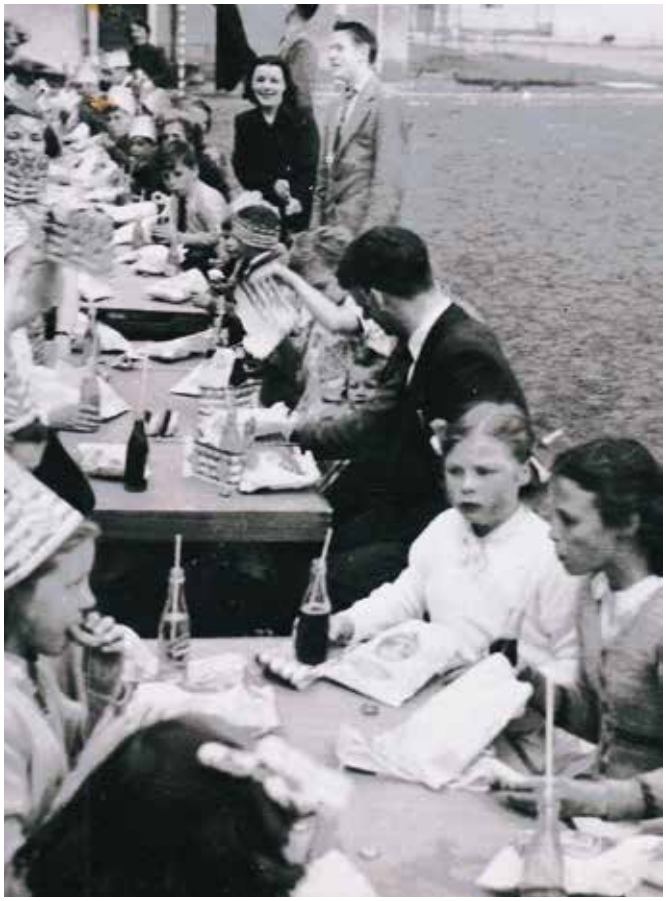
'I was lucky to live in a good stair with loads of good neighbours who all looked after each other and had loads of good pals and it was just a big open place like the park. There was always somewhere to go just for wee laddies and wee lassies to run about and enjoy themselves. It was a nice place and it still is – with nice gardens and people looked after it, it was a good place to be in.'

Kenny McVicar

'There was a lot of community activity at that time. One perhaps indication of this, in the summer months, I've mentioned you had tennis courts and bowling and that. There were a whole load of people that would come to Inch Park in the evening. You know, it was buzzing, buzzing in the summer months. You had community events generally during the summer months, on a Saturday morning, sometimes a cauld Friday evening or even a Tuesday evening. Not three times a week but regularly you would have bagpipes and bands in the Inch Park or they'd have country dancing or they'd have puppet shows – I remember a Punch 'n' Judy Show.'

Bill Cook

Bill Cook



Coronation Day 1952

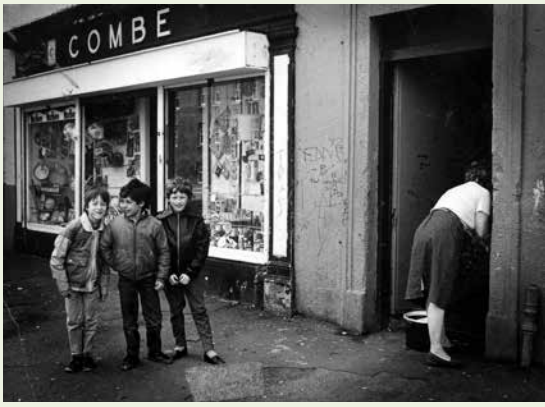
Coronation Day

'We did up the houses for the Coronation at that bit of the street. We had a different design at each house. My neighbour organised it… and she had her own treadle machine going and all the scraps of material and we had the men up on the roofs and we had flags across the street from chimney to chimney. Each doorway was decorated separately. There were 16 houses in that bit. Each one had a different design… did their own thing. We had a party for the bairns in the afternoon with races and prizes. My neighbour, Eva, she brought a radiogram out into the garden, plugged it through the window, so we could have dancing in the street. We had races… my husband said somebody tripped him in the egg and spoon. We had some good times.'

Margaret Flynn

Craigmillar Memories

Although Bridgend looks across to the Inch Estate, it is officially part of the Craigmillar area, another major 20th c Edinburgh housing estate. It was also vital to record the perspective of those who grew up there and made their way to the farm - for various purposes! Johnni Stanton, actor, producer, writer and stalwart of the legendary Craigmillar Festival Society, proved to be a rich source, contributing to our interviews, our schools work and even composing a poem in our honour, which he read at the opening of the restored Bridgend Farmhouse (reproduced later in these pages).



'We would see the farmer chasing the foxes saying "stay away from my chickens". Eggs, Sunday breakfast… we didn't have fridges back then – we're talking about 1960 – 65. I was born in '51. I grew up in Craigmillar at Greendykes, Niddrie – Craigmillar itself and it's when I moved up to Craigmillar in 1959 that the twins were born – my younger brothers – and we sort of gravitated to playing all around the area. Below the castle were fields and in the fields were turnips, tatties, cabbages – things like that, and because we were pretty poor, when your mother says, "Here's 10p, away and get me a fourpit of tatties" – a fourpit is 4 pounds or something like that – I'd save my ma the money, you know, "spend that somewhere else". So we always tried to liberate our food whenever we could and the farmers werenae very keen on this, so we used to creep aboot up and doon the field to pinch the produce.'

'The main prize was getting in to the hen coop and it just seems like the farmer seemed to know somehow when to come out the door. We didnae look to see what he looked like, we were off! And he'd see you, because we were kids acting stupid so we were offski and he'd chase us – had the gun a couple of times but probably up in the air [to give you a fright?] Yeah – it bloody did!'

'The guy who designed Craigmillar was Ebenezer MacRae. He wanted people to get a better life so he designed it with big back greens and the

open spaces for the kids to grow up strong and healthy.

He also designed all the old lampposts. There was just space everywhere, even if it was the fields, and at the back of the houses we had huge back greens that we shared.'
'We used to have back green concerts – don't know if you've heard of them – you'd go oot and the washing rope was up, right? Put the sheets up and you would use them as stage curtains. So you'd go behind it - "who's coming oot now?" and you'd do your wee bit, you know? And Johnni was always there, whether it was dressing up as a woman, that kind of thing, you know? Or anything – I was always into singing, I always used to sing. I loved my singing. I love music and that was my way in to acting and drama and everything else.'

'The day that the people who owned the big house in the area, Peffermill house, woke up and found all their daffodils had been cut down mysteriously at 6 in the morning, were also wakened to the sight of two wee boys going round the streets with boxes of daffodils and selling them – that was enterprise! So that's what we did. You had to make your own play up in those days and I can imagine a lot of other kids were in the same position, it just depends how clever you were to get on with it. I was very energetic and we used to chop up trees and then come down and sell them for logs for the fire because coal was expensive! It was the nature of us. We didn't know it at the time but it became that.'

Backgreen 40s-50s

One of the great discoveries of the project was Margaret Lowrey, who was able to share first-hand experience of working at the long-lost Dickson's nursery, which once covered a vast area behind the farm but closed decades ago. Margaret was generous enough not only to record her memories in an interview with us but also to write this piece for us, vividly bringing that magnificent place back to life.

Dickson's Nursery

Dickson & Company, Nurserymen and Seedsmen

Outdoor squad at the Nursery

Dickson's Nursery (as it was familiarly known) was situated between Peffermill Road in Craigmillar and Old Dalkeith Road – carrying on up there, well beyond the Inch housing estate, and covering an area of around 80–100 acres.

As far as I know, the firm dated back to the late 19th century. There was a huge variety of plants grown here, but the two main sources of income were: forestry and roses.

Grown here were swathes of young trees – Scots pine, Norway spruce, Sitka spruce and many more. The main customer was the Forestry Commission and thousands of young trees were sent all over the country during the winter months. Indeed, many of the thick forests you see whilst driving through the countryside today could well have started as young 18-inch high plants from Dickson's.

Another good customer were the Skibo Estates up north in Caithness. Skibo Castle had famously belonged to Andrew Carnegie – the 'lad o' pairts' from Dunfermline who emigrated to America around the mid-19th century, worked hard and became a millionaire. He was a great philanthropist, introducing museums and libraries in many places – and bought himself a 'wee' castle as a holiday home here.

Roses were a great feature of Dickson's. They were the charge of one Jack Summers; a quiet man, whose knowledge of his subject was prodigious. Practically the whole area bordering Dalkeith Road from Bridgend up to the trees opposite the Inch was a sea of gorgeous colour and scents all summer.

The two main types were Hybrid teas (HTs) and Floribundas. The latter were smaller, many-headed blooms, multi-coloured and on bushier plants. Both types were available in rambling or climbing form as well, so customers could nearly always find what they were looking for.

The HTs were my favourite – names like Ena Harkness, deep red and beautifully scented – Lady Silvia, a sweet pink – Speks yellow and hundreds more. Most of these are not grown now, being replaced by newer types, and obtainable almost all year round because they are grown in pots. Frankly, nothing beats bare root plants, but nowadays people want instant gardens. Very few people want to view the rose in summer and wait until the winter months to plant and the following summer get the first of the virgin blooms. Roses were 'budded' every summer on briers imported from the continent – usually Holland – and it was the second summer before the full glory of the scents and hues was fully appreciated. However, for serious gardeners, it was worth the wait for the blooms would give pleasure for years to come.

So by now, you'll have realised the nursery year is roughly two parts. October to February is the time when roses, shrubs, herbaceous plants etc. were lifted and sent to customers for planting; likewise forestry, all being sent off to their final home.

In summer, the forestry was laid out in long seed beds – maybe 50 yards long by a yard wide – the plants around one to two inches in height. These had to be kept weed-free, so these beds were weeded all summer – a rotten job on a hot day with the soil being dry and crumbly – but beware if you accidentally pulled out a tree with the weeds. Easily done if one was not careful.

The nursery ran a very good apprenticeship scheme, and during my time there, four young men were in training – (one of them was my husband-to-be). National Service was compulsory for all males at 18, but apprentices were granted a year's deferment and went at 19.

There were two main working squads – outdoor and indoor. The outside people had a small core of regular staff plus seasonal extras for such times as weeding, planting and lifting.
The indoor squad was mainly the greenhouse people, run by Jock Bisset and his assistant Alec Smart – who was also skilled in wreath and bouquet making (he actually made my wedding bouquet!). Herbaceous plants and shrubs were the responsibility of one Andrew Smith, and a wonderfully skilled man he was, as many of the colourful borders around the grounds would illustrate.

The apprentices spanned both types of work, both indoor and out. It really was a most expansive course – forestry, roses, shrubs, grafting of fruit trees like apple, pear, plums etc. – a very full three years and worthy of the Diploma of a Nurseryman gained in the end.

I must not forget to mention Alec Stobie – a WWI veteran, who ran the outside squad in the early 1950s, and Willie Flunkhart, our German tractor driver, who had been a POW, but married here and remained in Edinburgh. These two, plus the greenhouse boss, lived in the present-day Bridgend Cottages.

The head office of the firm was in Charlotte Square and was run by one Bill Chapman. Funnily enough, although he also lived in Bridgend, I never met him. All correspondence with him was by telephone to the nursery office, over various orders, invoices etc. that I was in charge of at the sharp end.

And so, finally, after a long successful business spanning more than 70 years, Dickson's finally closed down in the 1960s being superseded by the ubiquitous 'garden centre'. These have been very successful because they seem to fulfil what everyone appears to want nowadays – and not just in gardens. Everything has to be instant, and because of this a fine old firm like Dickson's went to the wall.

Margaret Lowrey

Treats, Childhood Fun and Animals: Interview Extracts by Theme

Food and Drink

'Harry was a turnip merchant at one point and he used to buy a field of turnips, and Doris and another couple of ladies would go out and shaw the turnips and bag them and he took them to market. So it really all went – they would all be bagged up – they weren't at Bridgend – there were fields dotted around the Lothians somewhere, you know.' **Anne McDonald**

'Mum always made her pancakes – she was the pancake lady. Everybody that went said, "Are you making pancakes?" and she's cooking them and they are standing there and saying, "Oh right, I'll have that one," and they would go and come back and say, "Can I have another one?" She was a great pancaker!' **Margaret Ramage**

'And I used to bake with my Granny every Sunday, and she would say, "Right this is what we are doing," and I can remember it came to the custard tart ones and I said, "Oh, I can't do that!" and she said, "Of course you can!" So I did everything that was in that book apart from the steak pie. Her favourite was Victoria Scones and that was just done in one big scone that was divided and then baked. It was a kind of sweet scone and that was her favourite.' **Mai Smith**

Childhood and Youth

'We were kids, we went everywhere.'
Johnni Stanton

'I can remember it being a happy childhood. We were out playing all the time, climbing fences.'
Annette MacBeath

'From a very early age – probably – certainly seven or eight, off to the Inch Park, if you weren't playing in the scheme itself. It was covered in play areas, you'd even play on the road, you know, there wasn't the same problem with cars. You'd play football on the road, you'd play football in the square. You'd go down to Niddrie Park and

play football. You'd climb trees. You would go up to Blackfords and you'd literally climb up the side of the quarry, or inside the old quarries and climb up the slop. You were doing that from a very young age and it was potentially dangerous but there was something about… we knew what the dangers were. And not to say we didn't get hurt or injure ourselves occasionally but there was a sense you were trusted to do that. You knew about dangers and strangers and all this. So, there was no feeling of insecurity or anxiety that way. You were just off to the Blackfords and your parents wouldn't worry either, in fact, they'd be more worried if you were sitting in the house. So, you know, there was that difference if you like.'

Bill Cook

Halloween and Guising

'Halloween – people came round and they would say, "Please to help the guisers". It was not Trick or Treat… a Scottish thing… and they all had to do a wee turn to get their whatever – money or sweeties or apples and oranges.'

Frances McCormack

'Yeah, it always involved dressing up and you usually did it in a little group. You always had something to offer like a song or a wee poem when you went round the doorbells, and you knew which doorbells not to ring; you know there were some grumpy people that would not be very receptive. And yeah, it was usually looking for sweets, but often getting nuts or apples. It was the big thing, because sweetie rationing of course stayed on after the war later than most other things. And I can remember again when sweetie rationing came off – I think about 1953, thinking "This isn't right, that you can actually buy sweets without coupons, no of course you should have coupons to buy sweets," because that was all we knew. So yeah, sweets were a big thing when you went guising. And dooking for apples with your hands behind your back was something we always seemed to do at Halloween.'

Iain Macintyre

Games

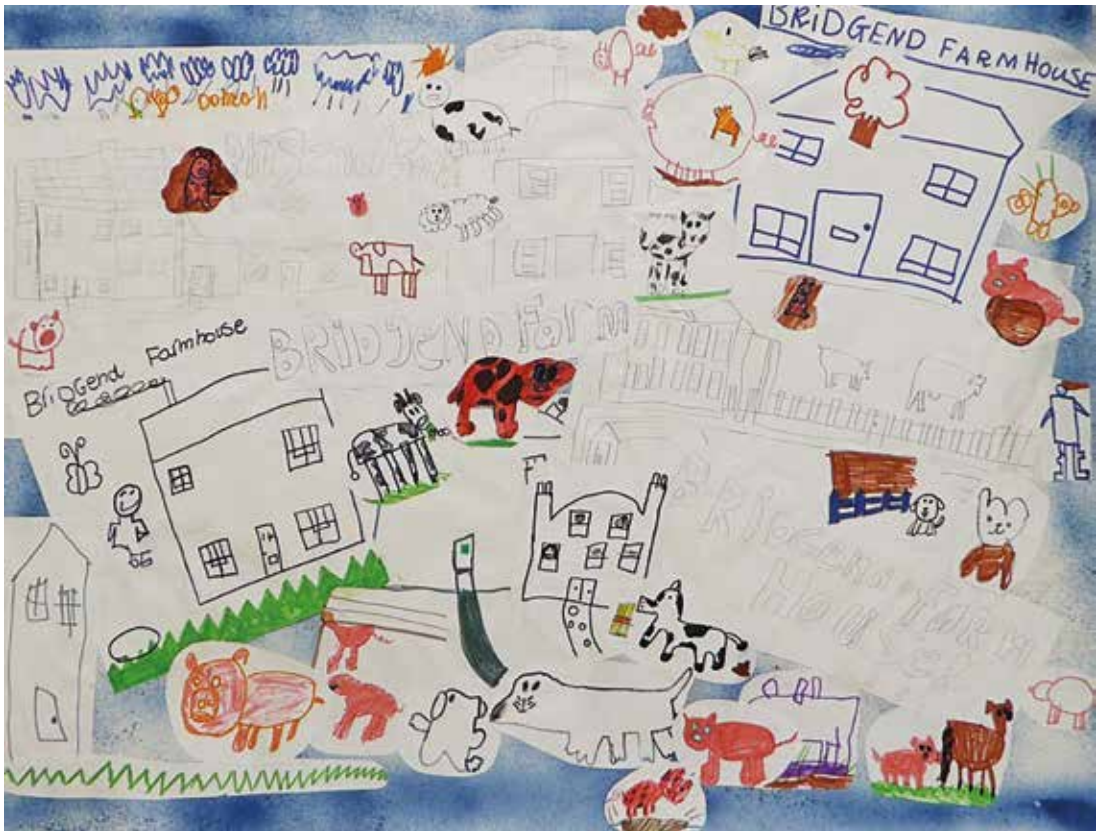
'Our memories were playing. I remember peevers, skipping, marbles – we called marbles bools.'
Mai Smith

'You know a funny thing, I still remember the counting out rhymes that we used to do – all lined up and you had to do that…and somebody who was bossy got to do this, and they would go along… Arra chicarra chicarracarroni, rum pum pineyallo allo whisky, Chinese schooner…and if it landed on one of your fists…and if it landed on two fists, that was you out.'
Frances McCormack

'We used to play peevers, all the games we could play. We used to whistle on each other when it was time to come out to play.'
Annette MacBeath

'Leevoy…that was a famous game…" Let's play leevoy and get as many as you can" … because there were children, but sometimes they weren't always available. " Let's get a game up" …I think it was one where you had to get to the den while a person went out looking for you and you had to go and hide.' **Frances McCormack**

'We all made bows and arrows at the time... played cowboys and Indians and (also) played Japs and commandoes... (and) Best Man Fall Dead... somebody is the sniper and... they can use any weapon in the arsenal to kill you... you are the person that gets killed... and they tell you what they're using so you know how to die and you act out the best death scene... you can make it go on a long time. It was fun.' **Johnni Stanton**



Images Niddrie Mill Primary School children, inspired by Bridgend Oral History.

Cycling

'Children, I think, had a lot more freedom than they do nowadays, comparing my childhood to the days of my own children and grandchildren. We were outside most summer evenings and weekends and we'd cycle quite extensively. And certainly, we'd cycle up Old Dalkeith Road because it was an easier hill than it was to cycle up Liberton Brae or Kirk Brae. Because they are both kind of steep to negotiate, so the Dalkeith Road way out of Edinburgh was a better option for somebody on a bike.' **Iain Macintyre**

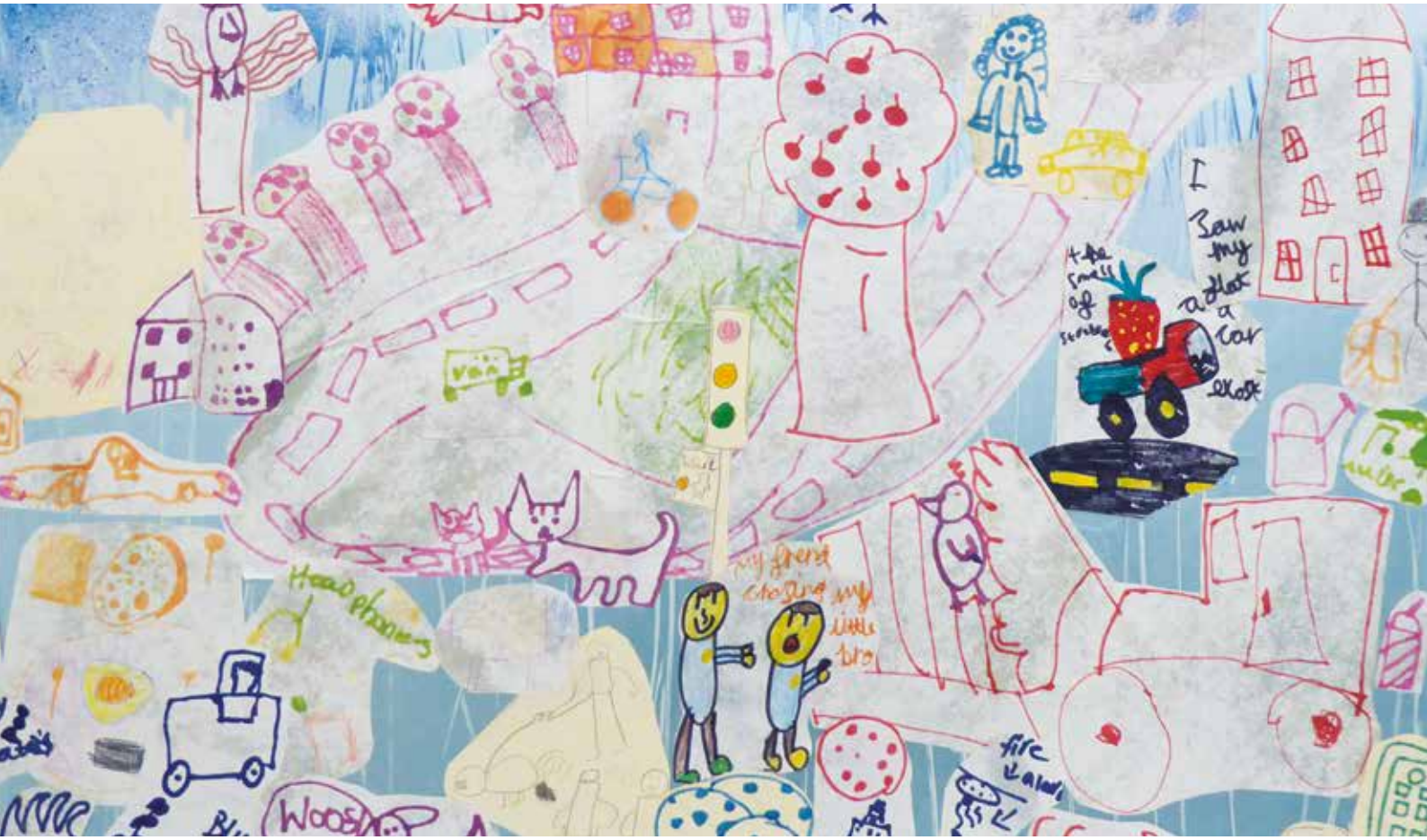
Animals

'The cows were inside in the winter and then they came out in the summer, and they came down from the byre - you'll know where the byre was – it was right opposite the house. And they toddled down, along the main road, past our house and into the field which is now playing fields… they were milked twice a day I believe…and the man (that) looked after the cows was Willie Cuthbertson, called 'Cubbie'. He used to come down for them…I think about 3 o'clock. They were milked at 3 o'clock, but the curious thing was, they ambled down and instinctively they seemed to know when it was time to come back and they came up to the gate…and Willie would shout to them "Hoi, hoi, hoi, hoi", and they all came "bom bom" and that was them up and they went back up the main road past the end of our house. '**Frances McCormack**

'In those days when I first knew it, they [the Darlings] had pigs. But it must have been the early 70s when they got rid of the pigs. They sold the pigs; the bottom fell out of the pig market, so they sold the pigs and they concentrated on the cattle.' **Anne McDonald**

'Cows are very curious creatures, and the cows were usually in the field at the back of the house. And there was one occasion where Doris and Harry were away for the weekend, and we went to stay in the place and look after it. It was summertime so we didn't have to feed the cows or anything because they were in the fields at the back, but it was quite funny – I went out in the morning to let the dogs out. It so happened that I had a housecoat exactly the same as Doris's housecoat. And I went out this morning with the dogs, and the cows all looked up and went "Mmm." So they came over and they had a look, and I went, "Sorry, ladies, I'm not Doris". Because she knew them all by name – I knew some of the names but I didn't know them all by name. But they were so curious, that anything different, they come and have a look, you know.' 'Well, there was Belle, there was Rose, Shirley, Mamie and Selina… ' **Anne McDonald**

'Well first thing he did in the morning was to feed the pigs then they got let out into a bigger pen. Then they mucked out all the pig sties, that was a big job in the morning, and they took that down to the midden and piled it up there. The pigs got



More artwork inspired by Bridgend Oral History - Niddrie Mill Primary School children.

fed and watered and then they were left. He then went out in the vans every day collecting food – that was a big, big job. Then bringing it back and putting it into big huge vats and boiling it up and making it like a big soup and then when it cooled they used that to feed the pigs the next day.'

'I remember a big dog called Bruce and I was scared of it! It was like a big Doberman type one but it was like a guard dog but my dad used to play with it and it was kept on a big chain but it got let off at night so nobody could come wandering in.'

'Over the back they had horses that used to come in now and then with the farm and they were kept in the fields so we always had to go up and feed apples and stuff to the horses.'

Kenny McVicar

Creative Outcomes

We've been delighted to see various works of art and traditional crafts directly inspired by the Place, Work and Folk stories, from photography to poetry, mosaic to music, podcast-making to oatcake-baking, animation to limestone pointing, drawing to cork modelling… we may never see the end of it. There is scope for more – why not drama, comedy, the revival of seasonal customs?...

Higgat Greys performing at Bridgend Farmhouse on Bonfire Night, November 2018

The Folk, the Song and Community Memories

Higgat Greys, the EH16 area's only apparent male folk-song duo, were formed at Bridgend Farmhouse in April 2018. We recall the exact spot on the terrace where, just for the fun of it, Henry (an honorary Lothian Irishman) and I hollered a traditional Donegal ballad at each other. Then, with Tradfest (Edinburgh's annual folk festival) rapidly approaching, and Bridgend confirmed as a venue, we pondered if we could find a five-song act in time for this event. Determined to go for it, our sole initial intention was to 'fly the Farmhouse Volunteers' flag' by participating at Tradfest...but first we had to gather material.

Almost by accident, and inspired by Carol Stobie's Community History Project, we were soon approaching things from a distinctly Place, Work and Folk (PWF) angle.

For some time I'd been searching for authentic old Lothian farm-workers' songs, without real success. These no doubt existed, but it appears few, if any, had entered popular consciousness, or survived the bombardment of 20th century radio & TV. However, highly suitable alternatives were stumbled upon when, as potential soundtrack material for his forthcoming Farmhouse film, I recalled sending a batch of music to artist and fellow PWF member, John Nowak. Among these were three songs composed about, or featuring, Lothian place names, and all were located within a 3 to 10-mile radius of Bridgend Farm. Eureka! After some serious rehearsing, we were soon taking an historic trip down the nearby Esk Valley to the Forth shoreline via a song trilogy extolling the local mining and fishing industries. With verses directly citing Musselburgh, Prestonpans and a host of former Lothian coalfield villages, it's noticeable that all three were 'protest songs':

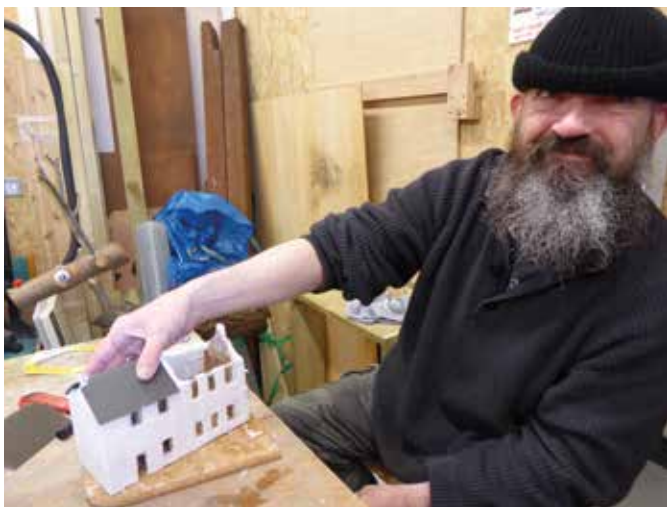
'Fisherraw': a humorous cry against the Kirk's wrath at pregnancy outwith wedlock (c1690s?)
'Dreg a Buckie': protesting the loss of small-scale family fishing to big corporate 'factory fleets' (1980s)

'Midlothian Mining Song': a 19th century account of the hazards of the Lothian coalfields, to which we have written an extra verse. After performing this recently, a local coal-miner's daughter approached us and pleaded for its lyrics for her aged mother.

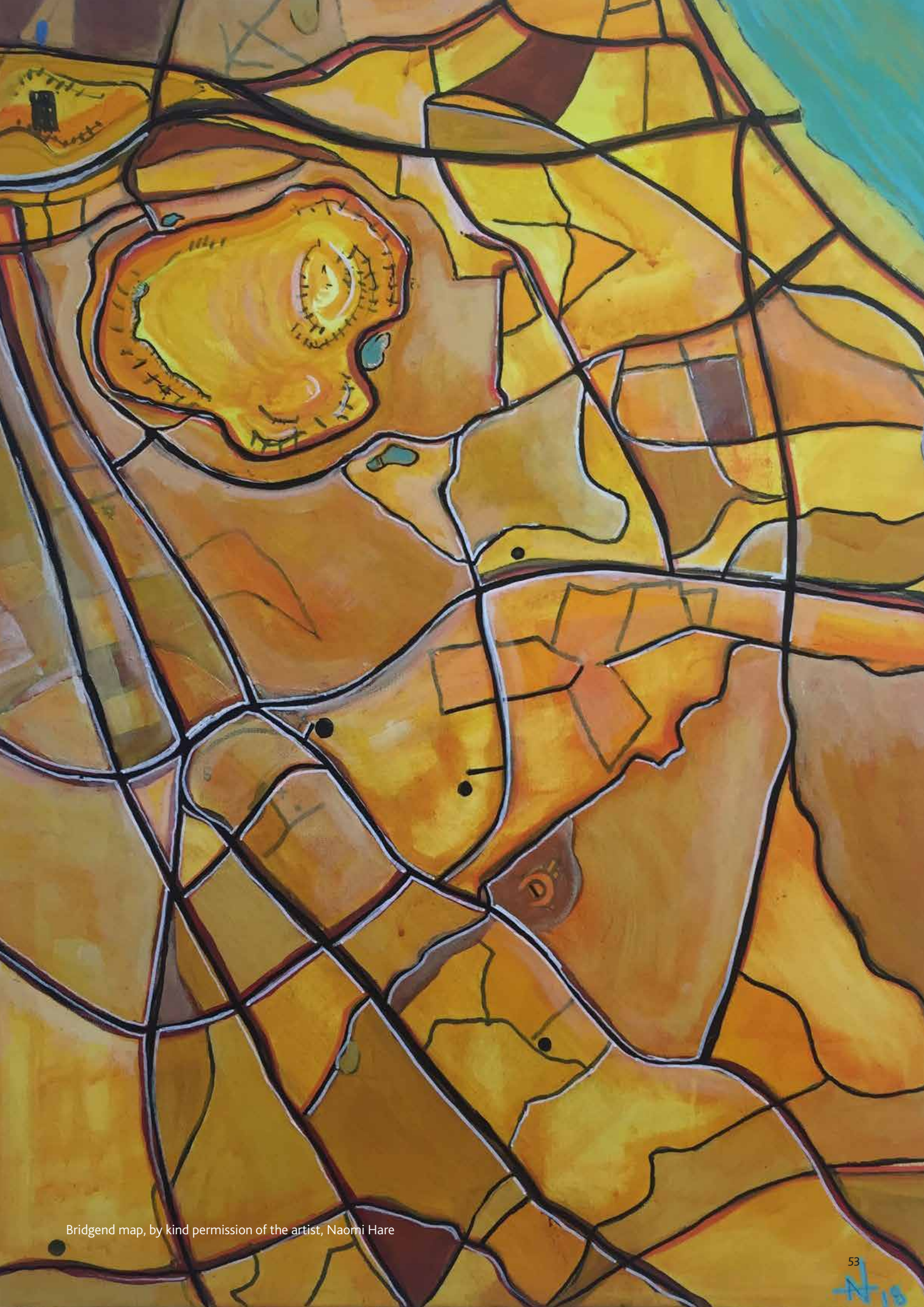
(We'd love to hear from the ladies!). To these we added our Donegal ballad, and a Ewan MacColl classic, and Bingo! Higgat Greys were born. Home based at the farmhouse since April, we have now expanded to a current eleven song repertoire with more in the pipeline.

To sum up, Higgat Greys were a creation of PWF, of our idyllic home turf, of volunteer 'folklorists' collecting community memories – and nearby folk songs! So although we still seek old Lothian farm songs, plus anyone interested in Scots/Irish singing, the PWF/Farmhouse Volunteers' 'flag flew that day at Tradfest'!

Doogi (song research & curation)
Henry (announcements & tonalities)



Euan MacMichael with model of farmhouse made from cork:
'I like recreating historic buildings in miniature, and I was inspired by the history project. I made this at the arts and crafts drop-in sessions at Bridgend.'



Bridgend map, by kind permission of the artist, Naomi Hare

Time and Bridgend
A Poem by Johnni Stanton

Johnni Stanton reading his poem at Opening Day, March 2018.

(an encapsulation)

Furst wis the huntin' lodge fur guests that came
Tae the Castle, the Lords Preston's stately hame

Wi' pomp an' revelry or a place ae God's peace
Craigmillar wis a place whaur silence hud lease
Fur a Queen ae tragedy wi' plotters and wi' daith
Mary, Queen ae Scots and her destiny wi' her faith
Yet the Prestons held sway 'midst history's verve
Great days wi' the Stewarts, they aye hit a nerve
An' Bridgend their huntin' lodge, valet tae land
Tender't tae animals as yince was its grand plan
Bestowed tae the monks as a chapel fur worship in
Fur local peoples and through years tae bide in.
Then came the fairmhoose back in these auld days
Amid a' the fields, the burns, hills an' purple haze
Wi' hoarses an' coos, chickens, goats an' sheep
An' a rooster a-crowin' risin' ye up fae yer sleep
Efter the Risin's, the Restoration, an' ootae hist'ry
The great an' the good left us, there's nae myst'ry
Fur a wee country, Scotland shair made a big noise
Wi' it's coal, steel an' industry, an' inventive boys
But Bridgend slept through the agricultural days
Waitin' an' preparin' jist tae coin an auld phrase
Inhabitatit by people whae held as a hame, a trust
Generations came an' went an' time wore a red rust
There still is a Lord, Baronet Gilmour if ye please
The faim'ly did nowt fur a land weel oan its knees
But the people hud power, in this democratic land
Wi' their voices, imagination an' still workin' hand

Cam' forth wi' a renewal tae see wir Bridgend bestow
Usin' the land's great power tae mak a'things grow
Whaur crops yince grew in feilds ae alluvial soil
An' the masses arrived fur 'twis here they wid toil
Roarin twinties brocht housin' schemes tae the poor
The hungry thirties brocht back yet anither world war
The forties meant recovery an' agriculture flourished
Animal husbandry dwindled an' a land no' nourished
Feilds went unsown, an' left fallow fur so long anaw
And then cam' the millenium tae gie new life tae us a'
A new country park, allotments and an' place fur a kick
An' a herd ae red deer that move aroon' jist in the nick!
Along came some brainy folks an' *ping* they hud a plan
Sayin' it's no' whit ye can do, it's tae do whit yese can!
A wee bit here an' a wee bit there, jist a wee bit everywhere
Workin' thegither wi' a real community spirit if yese dare
A revival ae sorts but wi' social inclusion richt at its hert
This is shairly a guid plan, said the volunteers fae the stert
Wi' a pockle ae cash fae this charity and investment fae that
See how the charity scarecrow kin grow awfy big an' fat
An' Bridgend fermhoose goat a facelift, a new coat a white
A disabled and elderly lift installed tae get upstairs a'right
Workshops ootside and pebbles in front that suck ye doon
Ye'll still be tryin' tae leave by the light ae a hunter's moon
The place noo is burstin' wi' new ideas by the bazillion
(Eh, Hilary an Will, we're gaun tae need anither million!)
Projects galore and people gaun in an' oot ae new doors
(Better make that two million tae cover three new floors!)
A wee bittie exaggeration but we're no' far oaff the mark
Inside or ootside, we'll huv wir projects rinnin' in the dark
After decades ae slowin' doon until Bridgend finally stopp't
Renewal hus brung aboot a hoose an' a new kindae crop!

c2018

Johnni Stanton

Place, Work and Folk Mosaic Project

Bridgend received funding from the National Lottery to employ someone to specifically develop a project for the Farmhouse, based on its community history within its living lifetime. Part of the initial proposal was for a Place, Work and Folk Project whereby volunteers gathered together to compile a recent history of the farmhouse from the 1940s onward.
Part of the remit for funding was to include a 'Modern Mosaic' artwork which would be designed and created by various community groups and children from the locale which would be situated on an outer stone wall which surrounds the farmhouse.

After a consultation with the Greater Liberton Historical Project (GLHP), they generously gave the group access to their background research of the history of the farmhouse within its community throughout the ages, which gave birth to the idea that the timeline would be a suitable subject for our mosaic.
Gill Curran then set about interpreting the historic stages of the timeline using 19 specific references provided by GLHP, starting in the 11th/12th century, turning these into graphic images which would become the basis for the mosaic. Because of their generosity, we were able to access authenticated imagery to further develop the timeline in a more credible manner.

The next stage was for Gill and Lynne Colombo to facilitate a mosaic workshop as part of the summer family programme of activities at Bridgend, opening up this activity to members of the local community. We had access to plenty of broken plates, cups and ceramic tiles, sea-glass and broken crockery from the nearby Craigmillar Park, which would then be snipped into small pieces and arranged on lightweight waterproof board. This initial workshop was a taster and a way to introduce the plan for the timeline to the children. The workshop was very successful and generated a lot of interest from people wishing to further take part in developing the timeline.

The regular Bridgend Volunteers at the Wednesday drop-in session began to get smashing, snipping and gluing, but the first completed mosaic element was a beautiful pig created by a gentleman with a learning disability who was part of a satellite mosaic group included within our project.
We began to further develop and expand a programme of classes over the next few months to extend the opportunity to add to the project, to include local schoolchildren. To this end, we invited young people from a local school, Castlebrae Community High School, to come to the farmhouse and engage with us in a combined project for the Place, Work and Folk history group.

They came for an initial meeting, to get a feel for the site and to do some further research

which they would then take back to their classroom and develop in their own time. They decided that they would like to work on a site-specific piece and then also create pieces which would be mosaic elements to include in our project. They would do this as part of their school curriculum for their Creative Industries class.

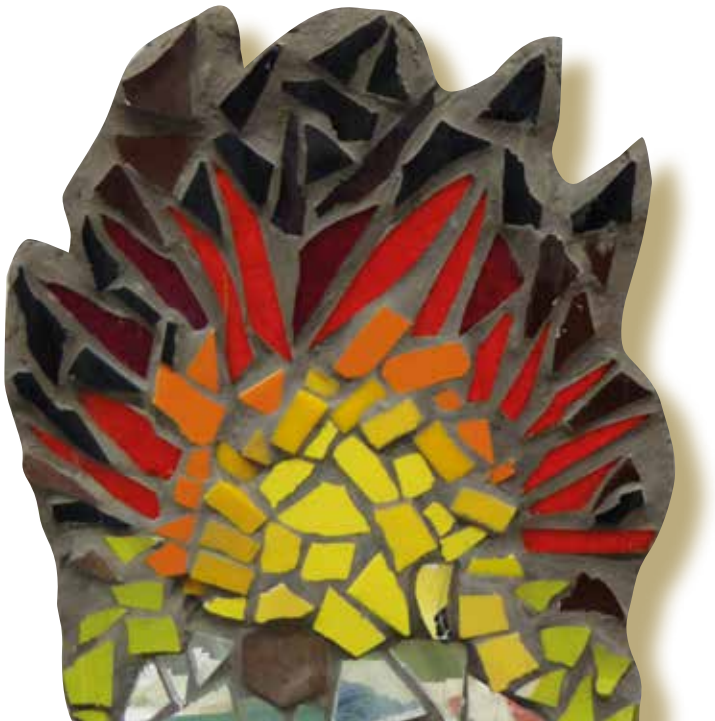
Further classes were arranged to take place over a period of several weeks and Gill went to the school to provide further guidance with the production of the mosaic elements which will eventually result in 10-15 pieces for the timeline.

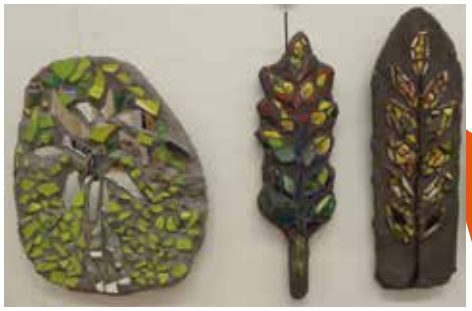
At the conclusion of the project, it is intended that the timeline will be in situ by Spring 2019 on an external wall at Bridgend. It is also intended that there will be a formal launch to commemorate such a large undertaking and all the participants will be invited to be part.

Gill Curran and Lynne Colombo

Creative Industries students (and eventual mosaic-makers!) from Castlebrae Community High School visit Bridgend with their teacher

Gill Curran and Lynne Colombo, volunteers and mosaic workshop leaders.





Tales, Oatcakes and Community Empowerment: PWF Events and Workshops

The Place, Work and Folk project has held numerous events and workshops – here's a glimpse of them. They have all proved enormously beneficial and productive for the project.

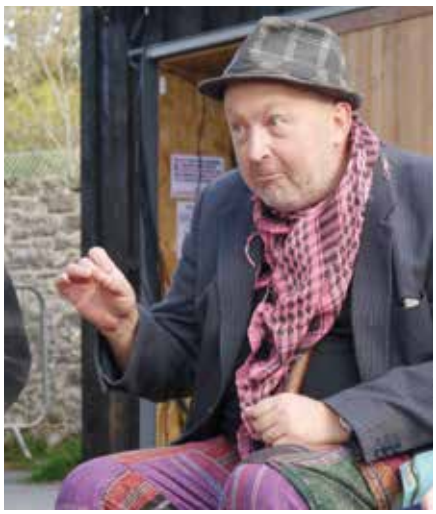
Interviewees at Open Doors Day, September 2018.

Doors Open Day 2017 happily brought us several of our first and most treasured volunteers, and provided some eye-opening initial lines of enquiry. We heard that, early in the twentieth century, sewage from the good citizens of Edinburgh used to be spread across the King's Meadows between Peffermill and Bridgend, on what is now a well-fertilised football field.

We dressed up outrageously and openly touted for new history business at Bridgend's colourful Halloween event. Walks into Craigmillar Castle Park, making the historic link with our old friend Craigmillar Castle, were led by the wonderful Ben McCallum of Edinburgh and Lothian Greenspace Trust.

The extraordinary opening (over a thousand folk, we hear) of the restored farmhouse in March 2018 saw the ribbon cut, with much emotion, by the Harry and Doris Darling, along with our Chair Will Golding - an unforgettable moment. That day saw the unveiling of our feverishly-assembled history exhibition (thank you, John), an eagerly-attended talk by Bridgend's eminent architect Malcolm Fraser on his Roman Road researches, the public debut of the Higgat Greys (see Doogi's article) and a lively Farmhouse Memories seminar which staged a reunion of farming families the Binnies and the Darlings with Bridgend Cottages legend Mai Smith, and evoked some mischievous questions from the late, much-loved George Henderson.

At Tradfest, another sun-blessed day in Spring 2018, the Higgat Greys performed again, to great response. History folk served in the café, conducted farmhouse tours and signed up new potential interviewees.



Storyteller, Tim Porteus, at 'Growing Stories at Bridgend', October 2018

Craigmillar Storyteller Heather Henderson, at 'Growing Stories at Bridgend', October 2018.

Staff and volunteers at Doors Open Day, 2018

Summer featured our first venture into creating a summer programme, in a series of exciting and unpredictable PWF workshops. Serendipity featured again, with a group of Italian students turning up in our Family Memories workshop (led by Hannah Bradley and Carol) to share food stories; a crowd of mums and kids (in search of ice-cream on a hot day) finding themselves charmed into our Podcast workshop (with Mark Carr and Carol); and many others becoming converts to mosaic-making (with Gill Curran and Lynne Colombo), oatcake-baking (with Carol) and the fine art of animation (with Mark Carr and Hannah Bradley - see 'Super Pig' and 'Animal Madness at Bridgend' on YouTube) merely by wandering onto the premises. Others became restorers of our ancient stone walls, under the guidance of expert traditional lime-pointer Tim Le Breuilly.

Since then, our Bridgend Mosaic Timeline (see featured article) has come on by leaps and bounds, thanks to an October Holidays workshop, recent work with Castlebrae Community High School pupils and some inspired participants at the Our Changing City event. Then it was time for Doors Open Day once more - this time with a finished building to show visitors. This year's event was led by Place, Work and Folk with a late-50s/ early 60s vibe through our costumes, music, exhibition with featured audio and quotes, plus a display of period household and childhood items kindly lent by Edinburgh City Museums. Many of our interviewees came to sample the classic afternoon tea, but the biggest hit was Doris' Farmhouse Fruit Loaf, as served back in the day!

Were we finished yet? No. Then it was the Scottish International Storytelling Festival 'Growing Stories' event, in partnership with Bridgend Growing Communities. Why? Because stories are at the heart of what we do. The apple theme was provided by storytellers Tim Porteus and Craigmillar's own Heather Henderson, who gathered all ages round the fire in the garden for some very special tales. Tim later ran a workshops for parents keen to gain storytelling skills.

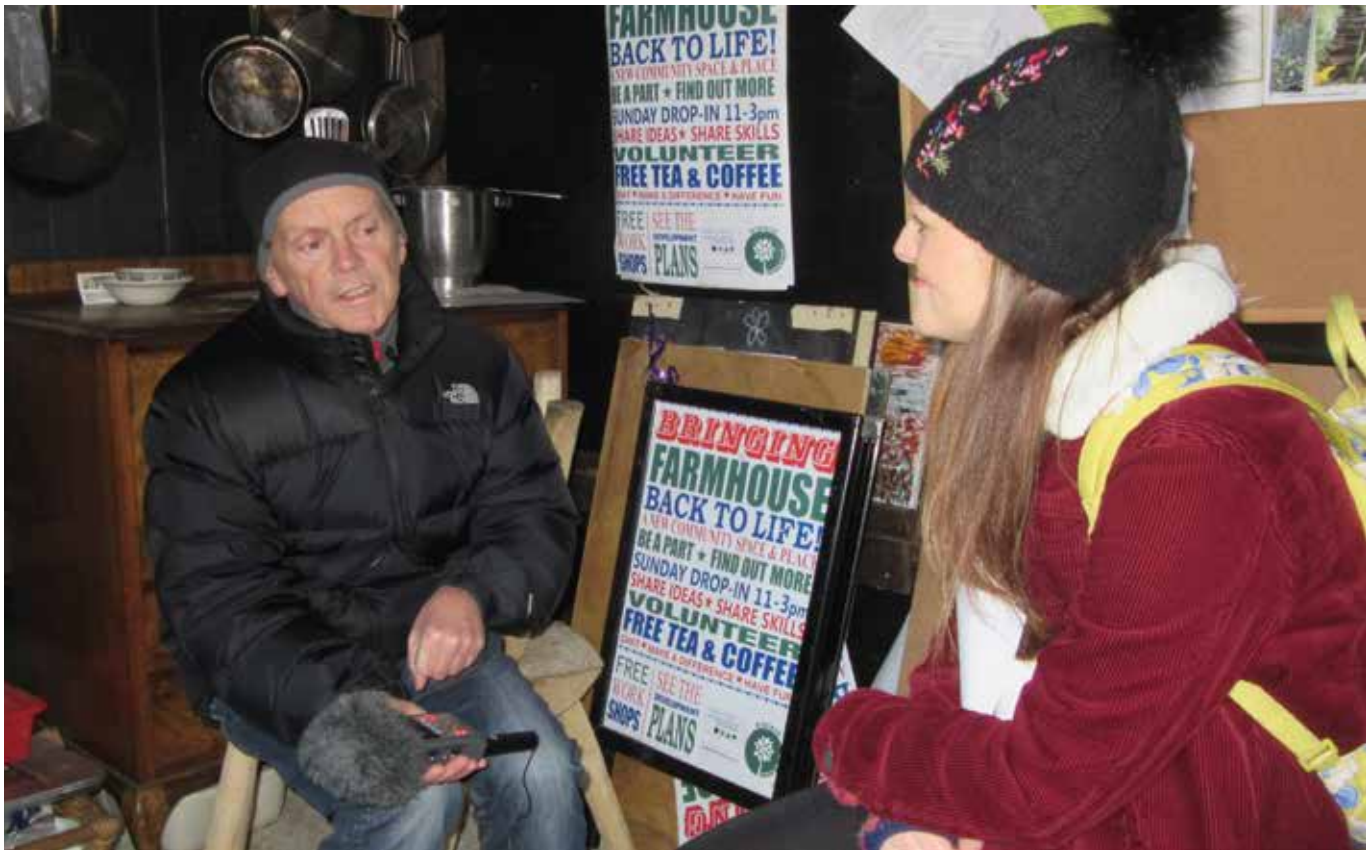
Och, go on then – just one more massive event to round off the year. 'Our Changing City', a weekend of community empowerment, heritage activities and inspiring discussions, was expertly organised by the brilliant Hannah Bradley and led by PWF in partnership with the Patrick Geddes Centre and their irrepressible Russell Clegg - with plenary generously hosted at the glorious Inch House, by Steven Hunter and Kevin Gibbons. This provided continuing professional development for community activists with an interest in Geddes' legacy, place-making, the power of heritage work and community asset transfer, a forum for debate and a great hands-on introduction to both the Geddes Centre's and Bridgend's learning activities – with a warm sense of welcome, according to participants (see feature). A short film of this event will be released soon.
Our final event in early 2019 will, of course, see the launch of this booklet, of John Nowak's much-anticipated film of the project, of our collection of archive recordings, of the first mini-museum display - and, with luck, of our Bridgend Timeline Mosaic!

Childhood memorabilia and PWF exhibition at Doors Open Day, 2018

The events and workshops programme has been highly demanding, sometimes exhausting, always rewarding. They have brought us countless new connections, partnerships, collaborations, ideas and resources. We are constantly heartened and stunned by the enormous, mostly unpaid efforts of our PWF team as well as other Bridgend volunteers, our interviewees, our colleagues and our partners out there. None of it would have worked without your care and devotion, folks, and our thanks are unending.

Carol Stobie

Place, Work and Folk volunteers 2018



Volunteer Amy McVicar interviews her father Kenny McVicar

Our Changing City

Co-hosted with the Patrick Geddes Centre and Inch House Community Centre

'Our Changing City', held over the weekend of 24-25 November 2018 in a rain-swept Edinburgh, presented an opportunity for folk to gather, contribute and discuss the main issues which face the city today in terms of saving what is important. With representatives from community projects around the city as well as speakers and facilitators with experience and knowledge in campaigning, asset transfer, civic engagement and community ownership, the weekend sought to share, demonstrate and advise on how to move forward, to understand the challenges and opportunities which lay ahead and to showcase the kinds of activity which can mobilise folk… both days were infused with humour, goodwill, action and participation.

There is no doubt that Edinburgh is changing, for both good and ill, depending on your point of view but this weekend showed that change can be beneficial and can galvanise; change can bring success and optimism.

Russell Clegg

Learning Programmes, The Patrick Geddes Centre for Learning

Our Changing City proved to be an inspiring weekend with a range of presentations and workshops on the Saturday at the restored Riddles Court, now the Patrick Geddes Centres, and the opportunity to hear a range of views and experiences about how participants have engaged with the places around them and the opportunities – and often perceived threats – of change. I learned about the importance of oral history (and why it should be recorded) from my former work colleague Carol Stobie. The second day was joyously spent at the restored Bridgend Farmhouse, with a range of activities based around learning practical and "making" skills, plus engaging with nature on a

Planning Workshop with Daya from Planning for Democracy at 'Our Changing City', November 2018

walk through part of the wonderful Craigmillar Castle Park – all very Geddesian. I also found my place in the Bridgend Farmhouse kitchen, a happy change from time so often spent in front of a computer!

David Wood
Chairperson, Causey Development Trust

… Several local organisations and campaign groups were involved, including Planning Democracy, Inch House, Save Leith Walk, The Causey, Community Ownership Support Service (COSS), Save Meadowbank and Edinburgh Old Town Development Trust. We were also happy to welcome the Edinburgh Active Citizenship Group, who facilitated a participative panel discussion around the issues, inviting speakers Nicky Donald from COSS, Linda Somerville from Save Leith Walk and Andy Wightman, MSP and activist, to contribute.

Finally, we moved back into the 16th century and re-discovered the history of our neighbouring Inch House. It has evolved over the years from a tower house to a Victorian mansion, to a school, to a community centre but is now in need of the kind of re-development we've seen at Riddle's Court and Bridgend Farmhouse. Lessons were learned all round. And as Patrick Geddes would put it, our learning was by 'hand, head and heart'.

John Knox
Bridgend Farmhouse Board Member

Engaging with School Children and Young People

An important element of the Place, Work and Folk (PWF) project was engaging with young people from local schools. One of the groups we worked with was Primary 5b from Niddrie Mill Primary School. The sessions we ran with this group aimed to teach the children about oral history and impart the necessary skills so they could try it out for themselves.

Gary Walker and Mai Smith interviewed by Niddrie Mill PS children.

We started the sessions by getting the kids to think about the history they learn about in school; what were the topics covered and where does the information come from? They told us about one of their projects, on the Titanic, and the process of getting information from books, newspaper articles and the Internet. Using the Titanic as an example, we introduced the idea of oral history and that it involved asking people questions about their memories and experiences – would we be able to do that in relation to the Titanic? What was the likelihood of there being people with living memories of reading about the event in newspapers or hearing about it on the radio? Using examples of topics the children had already learned about was a useful way to get them to think about *living* memories and the timeframe you'd be exploring if you were doing an oral history project, compared to historical events further back than people can remember first-hand.

Once we had established that oral history involved gathering the memories and stories of people with living memories, we explored some of the things we'd need to consider when interviewing people. We discussed the practical elements we would need to consider, such as checking our recording equipment was charged (we used very simple Olympus dictaphones), having our questions ready, making sure we kept quiet when people were answering questions so we could capture clear recordings, and, of course, ensuring we had the interviewees' consent to record their stories. The children were also prompted to consider the 'soft skills' needed to make people relaxed and comfortable enough that they might share their stories: introductory 'small talk', offering cups of tea and thanking them for their contribution.

Hannah with Niddrie Mill pupils.

Now it was time for the children to put these skills into practice. They split into small groups and started practising their interview skills on each other. They had to come up with their own themes and questions and operate the recording equipment by themselves. We used the senses as prompts when coming up with questions to ask: what do you remember seeing when you walked past the farmhouse? What do you remember *hearing and smelling*? At the end of the session we came together as a group and listened to the recordings they had made.

In the following session, we challenged the children to try out their newly-developed skills on members of the community. Three of the interviewees who had been involved in the PWF project very kindly agreed to come along with us to the school and be interviewed by the children, allowing the children a truly authentic oral history experience!

This element of the PWF project gave us the opportunity to do some intergenerational work, to engage children in conversations about consent and ethics, and to work with local residents we had not met previously – some of whom had never visited the Farmhouse before.

Working with the group from Niddrie Mill was very enjoyable and a hugely valuable part of the project. The children really engaged with the topic and worked hard on developing their interviewing skills, approaching their interviews with the members of the community with a perfect balance of humour and professionalism. We look forward to recruiting them as volunteers for future local history projects!

Hannah Bradley

Testing, testing: practice interviews between Niddrie Mill pupils in oral history training

Kyle: *Thank you for coming here. I am Kyle. We came here to interview you. Are you okay with that?*
Girl: *Yes.*
Kyle: *It's about the old Farmhouse. Do you know anything about it?*
Girl: *No.*
Kyle: *Okay.*
Kyle: *Do you know any animals what were in it?*
Girl: *Pigs, horses, chickens, cows, donkeys, sheeps, bulls, lots of animals.*

The real thing: Niddrie Mill pupils interview Gary Walker, Bridgend volunteer with lifelong memories of the farm

Pupil 1: *When you walked past the farmhouse what could you smell?*
Gary: *Oh, there were all different smells... I could smell pigs… hens… hay… smoke fae the farmhouse, fae the fire in the house.*
Pupil 1: *Can you remember what animals were on the farm?*
Gary: *Oh, there was pigs, hens… There was a couple of cows and there was horses in the fields, at the back, and there was a lot of wildlife as well. There was an auld owl… in an owl tree, but the tree's been cut down now… there used to be an owl there a long, long time ago, but that's away now.*
Pupil 2: *What do you remember about the farm?*
Gary: *What I remember was going to the farm with my mum and seein all the animals, and my mum speaking to the farmer and to the farmer's wife… it was a lovely place to go.*
Pupil 2: *What was the farm like?*
Gary: *It was smelly! [laughs} But it was nice, it was a nice place.*
Hannah: *Does somebody else want to ask a question?*
Pupil 3: *I'll dae it, I'll dae it.*
Pupil 4: *(whispering) Dae that one!*
Pupil 3: *Did you smell any poo on the farm?*
Gary: *Yes, pigs' poo!... It was clean inside the farmhouse, but a farm's a farm… that wis a guid yin!*

Hannah Bradley trains pupils in oral history skills.

In other sessions, artist Naomi Hare led the pupils in wonderful activities on mapping skills, photography and drawing inspired by the oral history collected. The drawings were worked into collages by volunteer Lynne Colombo, and featured as our first ever art exhibit in the Farmhouse. On our final date with the pupils, we took them first to Craigmillar Castle Park for outdoor art and nature activities with Ben McCallum of Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust, then walked down to visit Bridgend Farmhouse for the first time, have a picnic lunch and tour the place. Various pupils' reactions were recorded.

Carol: *What do you think of Bridgend Farmhouse?*
Pupil 1: *I think it's gonna be nice, cos there's gonna be a lot ae art, and… I think in a couple o years' time, I'm probably gonna be coming here and thinking, wow, I was actually here when I was a kid… [And your art is here!] My art's here…*
Pupil 2: *I think it's actually really nice now because there's no burnt stuff left, it looks really nice. I think it'll be really nice coming back here, cos there's gonna be loads of stuff happening.*
Pupil 3: *I like the design of it… It's really nice and decorated. And the kitchen and stuff.*
Pupil 4: *It's amazing. I really like it. I'm gonna come here some day with my family, I hope. And like, I hope my family says yes because this place is a brilliant place to be. Even if you're angry, you just come to Bridgend Farmhouse and you'll be calm. This is the best place to go if you're feeling angry… cos I was angry, and now I'm no.*

Carol Stobie

How to use the Place, Work and Folk archive with adult learners and community groups

We ran workshops and volunteer training in oral history interviewing, for various age groups. The Living Memory Association provides excellent training for groups of volunteers, and we began there.

We developed a design for a mosaic timeline of Bridgend's history, based on research kindly shared by the Greater Liberton Heritage Society, and this continues to grow over the months - see article by Gill Curran and Lynne Colombo. The interviews can also inspire local photography and other forms of artwork, some of which has been displayed in the farmhouse.

What activities and events can the oral history material inspire in learners?

- **Further oral history interviewing**
- **Capturing family memories**
- **Reminiscence groups – public or with existing groups, in day centres, sheltered housing and care homes, etc.**
- **Further local history researches, mapping, history of buildings and their inhabitants**
- **Seasonal events and gatherings to revive community connections**
- **Digital storytelling to share images and short commentary**
- **Artworks of all kinds including photography, painting, collage, mosaic, music, exhibitions, drama, dance, songwriting, animation, creative writing**

Questions that could be explored:

How has Edinburgh/Craigmillar/The Inch (or other local areas) changed?

What local landmarks can we map in the area that capture its identity?

What do we learn about changes in farming over the generations?

How has childhood/youth changed in recent generations?

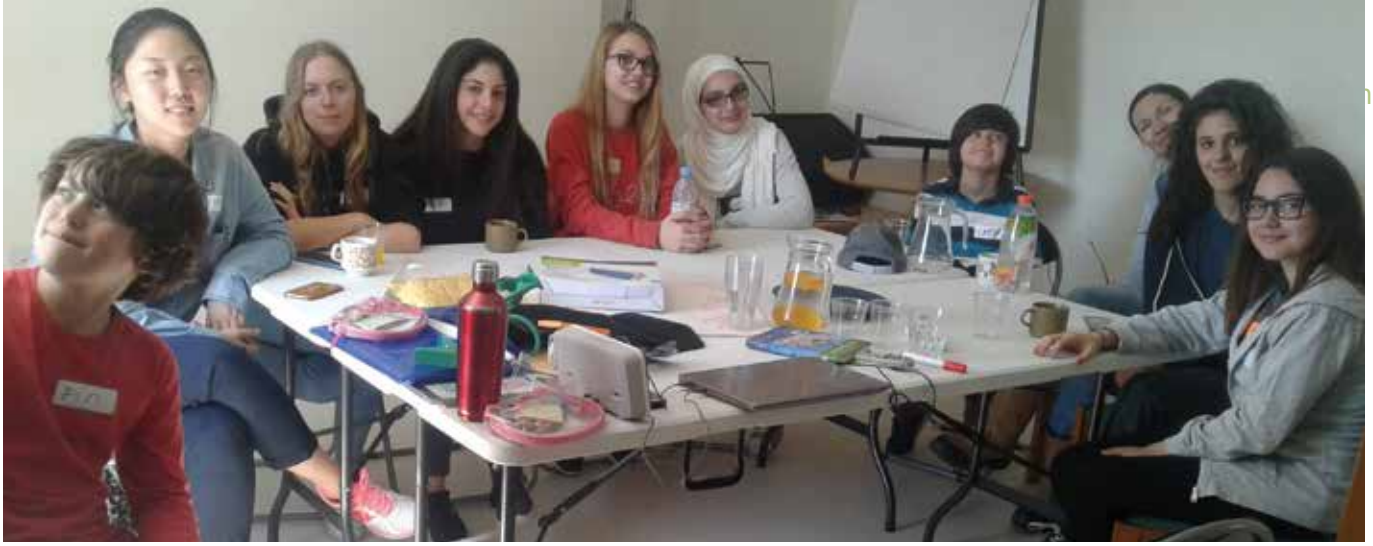
Compare these recollections to our own and ask young people today about their equivalent activities

How have occupations and industries changed?

What can we learn from these interviews about food growing, health, nutrition, exercise?

What themes come up about class, poverty, community networks, enterprise?

Which of these memories have you enjoyed most? Why?



Workshop on collecting family memories, Summer 2018.

How can sharing oral history benefit the individuals interviewed?... the interviewers?... the local community?... campaigns and movements for community empowerment and engagement, asset transfer, health and well-being, the creative arts?

What are the implications for local and national politics, social studies, campaigning?

Please contact Bridgend Farmhouse for advice and contacts on all these areas. We may be able to provide workshops and training in many of the topics above.

soundbites from all of the interviews. These can be used individually or in various combinations as stimulus material for a range of groups. Various edits of the interviews will be available. The DVD of our final film, plus other digital versions of the material, will all be available through Bridgend Farmhouse and eventually through Edinburgh City Museums. The Farmhouse will have a small museum exhibition containing key material which can be visited by arrangement.

Carol Stobie

Resources available:

Our material is available on SoundCloud (on BridgendPWF), and through the Bridgend Farmhouse website. It's also on display and accessible to hear and view at the Farmhouse, along with a mini-museum upstairs paying tribute to everyone involved.

Please contact the Farmhouse if you'd like more information or help with accessing the archive.

Our booklet contains short transcript excerpts from each interview and we are creating edited

Our links

SoundCloud: Listen to our BridgendPWF recordings on soundcloud.com/user-243974120-739258705/tracks

www.bridgendfarmhouse.org.uk/community-history

Acknowledgements

Heartfelt thanks to …
All our interviewees, who gave up their time to be interviewed, shared their rich and wonderful stories with the project and, in many cases, wrote extensive notes and shared invaluable archive material.

All our PWF volunteers, who researched, conducted interviews, gathered material for the booklet, edited and transcribed beautiful quotes from the interviews.

John Nowak, PWF's official film-maker, photographer, endlessly devoted volunteer, creator of bonds with key interviewees and contributor well beyond the call of duty.

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Bridgend Inspiring Growth

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David Binnie, Chris Binnie, Doris Darling, Mai Smith, Harry Darling and Jilly the dog visiting the newly-restored Bridgend Farmhouse, December 2017.