

Bonnyseen

The free **magazine** from **Greenhill Historical Society**



Central Station then and now

Photo left: thanks to John Reid; Photo right: thanks to Frank Walton

This edition is kindly sponsored by:

Eddie Moffat. E&R Moffat Catering Equipment Company

Malcolm Allan Family Butchers

**Exploring the effects of the
past on the present and
future of our community**



Inside this issue Current projects,
Brickworks map, Irish Connections,
Agnes Henderson, the Radical Uprising,
Mrs Nan Ure.

Issue 2: Spring 2011

Our sponsors: Malcolm Allan & Eddie Moffat

We are thankful to Eddie Moffat and Malcolm Allan for their generous joint sponsorship of this issue of Bonnyseen. They have also given their time to be interviewed for this magazine and we hope you will enjoy reading about their businesses. Bonnybridge is often painted as a village that used to be grand in industrial terms but is no longer. Although to a large extent the heavy industries have gone, there are many profitable and highly innovative businesses thriving here, and have done for a considerable length of time. Its grand industrial past makes it all the more exciting for innovative and profitable companies to be situated in Bonnybridge.

Introduction to this issue

Welcome to the second edition of Bonnyseen. We were delighted with the reception of the first edition, where 500 copies disappeared within four weeks! We were excited by the number of people who engaged with the content, gave us historical materials and stories for future issues and sent such nice comments about the magazine itself. We were also surprised by how far the magazine travelled: from Bonnybridge to Falkirk to Australia and Canada! It is nice to hear from so many original Bonnybridge residents now living abroad who have many memories of living here. We were particularly delighted to get a good response to our last 'Can Anyone Remember' about Agnes Henderson's pantomimes (see p. 7) and a Bonnybridge resident now settled in Canada who added to these memories too. We hope you enjoy this issue as much as the last one and that you'll continue to contribute your own memories and historical materials for us to print. We always welcome feedback and contributions, whether you live here, used to live here, are new to the area or have lived here for generations.

Greenhill's corrugated hut destroyed by Frank Walton



We were saddened to see the corrugated hut, based in Greenhill at the start of Reilly Road before you go under the tunnel towards Glenyards, has been destroyed by fire. Historically the hut was a thriving community centre, hosting tea dances, first aid classes for the railway, and local community work connected with the railway.

Corrugated buildings sprung up around Scotland, and indeed worldwide, as a cheap way of putting up buildings such as schools, hospitals,

pavilions and community centres. The Greenhill hut was also connected to other important corrugated huts in the Bonnybridge area and beyond. The corrugated sheeting was used for Anderson air raid shelters too. As far as I know, the buildings up at Clayknowes (the area towards Lochgreen) were made from corrugated sheeting with wood lining. There were also corrugated air raid shelters at Smith and Wellstood's. We celebrate the hut here and reflect on the number of historical buildings destroyed over the last fifty years in Bonnybridge, including most recently the Ebenezer Hall at the top of the Canal Brae in May 2011. Any memories of the Greenhill Hut or the Ebenezer Hall are gratefully received.



Photos: Frank Walton

A Dream Come True: Malcolm Allan

By Phil Swierczek

A young Scottish airman stationed in the deserts of North Africa in WWII had a recurring dream as he lay in his tent beneath the vast canopy of brilliant stars. 'I'm going to have my own shop when this is over and the name will be in gold lettering on a bright red background'. *Did the dream come true? Absolutely!* But he never did write it in gold on a red background. Instead his name was wrought in stainless steel over his dream butcher's shop and 19 others throughout the Central area by the time Malcolm Allan retired.

Malcolm, 92, was born in Camelon in February 1919 and left school at fourteen to be apprenticed to his uncle in his butcher's shop in Bonnybridge. His career was cut short in 1939 when he was drafted into the RAF. After a distinguished career which saw him serving in France, North Africa and Italy he was 'mentioned in dispatches' and on demob met and married his wife Nancy. He went back to work for his uncle but was still determined to go into business for himself. When vacant premises were offered for sale in 1954 he jumped at the chance and started his first shop. He also had a van and spent most of his time driving around the area to sell meat. This wasn't how he wanted to conduct business so he hired a van man and put his considerable personality into providing a first class service to the people of Bonnybridge.

Malcolm had a close relationship with a range of the industries in the town and supplied many of the works' canteens. So much so, that the boss of the cigarette factory contacted him about an ongoing problem. Many of his female workers lived in Kilsyth and arrived home too late to get something for the 'tea' as the shops all shut at 5pm. Imagine living without 24-hour shopping! So a scheme was set up whereby the ladies filled out an order form, it was delivered to the shop, the assistants made up the orders and they were taken back to the factory with the invoices. At the end of

the week everyone put what was owed into the pot and the money was duly sent down to Malcolm's shop, which by now sold a whole range of goods. Try getting your shopping nowadays without paying up front. This was an honour system which worked really well. The company benefited on paydays when the ladies treated their families to fillet or sirloin steak.

His beloved wife Nancy worked tirelessly behind the scenes dealing with all the administrative tasks which go with running a business. He assured her that they would 'just about get by with the shop'. Bit of an underestimation of his capabilities as history shows! Later, his two sons James and Gordon joined him and they went from strength to strength. Only the effects of a country-wide outbreak of foot and mouth disease could hamper the progress of the business. Folks will remember the queues outside the shop every Saturday and at Christmas and New Year they snaked along the Main Street as people waited to pick up their festive steak pies. Malcolm extended the shop at one point so that customers wouldn't get wet while waiting outside. After the downturn in sales following the foot and mouth outbreak the retail business was sold and the company concentrated on supplying their top quality goods to several of the biggest supermarkets. Yes you can still get Malcolm Allan's square sliced sausage and steak pie. The success of the business is a testament to Malcolm Allan's hard work and sense of humour and banter which made every visit to the shop a special occasion, as well as the dedication of the whole family.

GHS would like to thank Malcolm for his generous support of Bonnyseen Magazine and wish him continued good health.

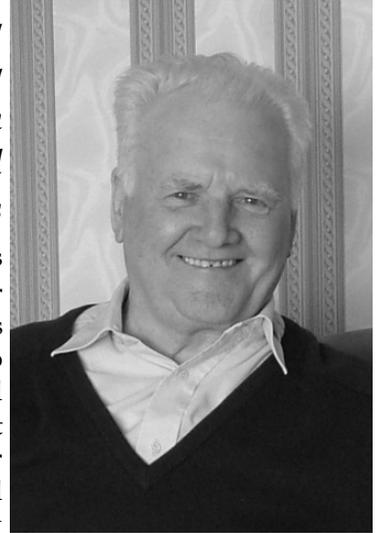


Malcolm Allan

Interview with Eddie Moffat by William Parker & Phil Swierczek

E*&R Moffat Limited, the catering equipment company based on Seabegs Road is one of several highly profitable and innovative companies existing in Bonnybridge today. It has a fascinating history and we were delighted to get the chance to interview the company's founder Eddie Moffat.*

Mr Eddie Moffat was born in 1925 in the row of cottages which were in front of Clayknowes House. His father worked at one time in the Powder Works and delivered the explosive powder round the area using a horse and cart. His father then went to work as a mechanic for Jimmy Alexander (brother of Walter who started the bus company), who had a garage in Bonnybridge. Eddie was a sheet metal worker and always wanted to go into business for himself. He made five caravans at various times for his own use and began looking for premises to build them on a bigger scale. Finding premises was difficult but eventually in 1963 he rented part of what had been a brickworks. Freddie Forest rented the other half of the workshop. Unfortunately the premises were too low to make caravans so Eddie began by making ash pans for Smith and Wellstood's, fire interiors and fabricated metal pallets for Mitchell and Russell.



Eddie Moffat

In the beginning he worked on his own, helped by his wife and parents. After a year he took on his first apprentice, Alan Fulcher. Four years into the business the sheet metal workers at Smith & Wellstood's went on strike and they asked if Moffat's could take on the work during that time. They agreed and S&W never re-employed the sheet metal workers.

Eddie's plan was always to manufacture catering equipment and in 1968 they moved to their current premises. The site



had previously been a chemical works, Bowers and Young, and was next door to what was the Penny Pug, a halt for a single-track line taking passengers to Greenhill Station. The company built the existing premises, which are vast inside, and recently purchased the neighbouring yard, previously the old railway goods yard and will extend into that in the future. The showroom for the company is sited in two wooden huts which date from the First World War and are in amazing condition. In 1968 there were between 20 and 30 workers. Now there are about 150, although the peak was 180. The decline in numbers is the result of advances in technology. Eddie retired in 1990 and his son, William, took over as managing director. They have contracts to supply British establishments such as schools, hospitals, fast food outlets and cinemas with high quality catering equipment. One fantastic piece of equipment is the buffet trolley; the food is individually plated and placed in the

refrigerated trolley and when required for the event the trolley then becomes an oven to heat the food at the flick of a switch. The firm has customers in Australia, Norway and Algeria. The company has no plans to move from Bonnybridge in spite of the fact that the area is not considered a development area, meaning that grants are unavailable.

Eddie works in the design department every week, taking an active role in the company he founded and worked hard to develop. He has many anecdotes and we discovered that he went to school with Piper Ian MacLachlan (of Pipers of Allandale fame). He was in the Air Training Corps with John Rollo and remembers going into to the countryside past Fankerton to practise flying gliders. Unfortunately Mr Rollo did not manage to get the height and had to be released from the winch as he was in danger of colliding with it. He then skimmed the heads of the rest of the Corps and crashed and wrote off the glider! When Steins Brickworks put the football pitch up for sale, the local community could not raise the funds to buy it. They approached Eddie who agreed to buy it on their behalf so long as any football club organised by Moffat's would be able to play there. **GHS would like to thank Eddie for giving his time for this interview, and for his support of Bonnyseen Magazine. We wish him continued success.**

GHS would also like to thank William Moffat and Gordon McIntosh for providing the photographs in this article.

Current Project: The Open Exhibition



We have a 'living exhibition' in Bonnybridge Library, that is being added to over time by Society members and residents here. Based on a huge map of the area, where the current topics on display are (1) the refractory (brick) industry, and (2) Rollo's and the Stone of Destiny. We hope local residents will add information, stories and pictures on these topics and future topics, which include Smith and Wellstood, Dougall's, Stein's and other brickworks, the Puzzle (Broomside Iron Foundry), Griffiths, and any other works in the area.

My Edenderry Connection

by James Nolan

There's a major connection between Bonnybridge and Edenderry in Southern Ireland - people came over from Edenderry to Bonnybridge to work in the various industries here. Our family went the other way, from Bonnybridge to Edenderry! I was born in Bonnybridge in 1948, and we moved to Edenderry when I was six, attending a boy's school there officially until I was 13 1/2. However, from the age of nine I began to help out in the peat bogs, and from the age of twelve I worked full time with my dad in the peat bogs. Edenderry itself is situated right in the middle of the Bog of Allan, which is a prominent peat bog area. I cycled three to four miles from our house to the bog then sometimes had to walk two or three miles to where I was actually working, depending on what part of the bog I was working on. On a bad day I had to cycle nine miles, with big cans full of water for drinking during the day.

There was a shoe factory and if you were lucky you got to work there; if you weren't lucky you got into the bog. My brother was in the shoe factory, but my dad and me were in the peat bogs. Peat bogs were worked by people cutting their own turf to heat their homes but also to make a living. From the age of 12 I was working full time in the bogs for Major Connolly who owned the lorries that transported the peat to the various locations around the north and south of Ireland. I graduated to the Bord na Mona, a firm which was government-owned and still is today.

I did backbreaking work called 'futting turf' which was working huge lengths of turf, layering until it was a ten high stack. You were bent double the entire time you did this, and often it was easier

to stay bent when you got to the end of the bog than to straighten; you just turned while still bent when you reached the end and came down the next row. You were bent double for the entire day with the exception of two tea breaks of half hour duration each. You didn't get full pay if it rained, instead getting a shilling an hour for 'wet time'. If you managed to work your half plot you got 21 shillings; there were 21 rows in the half plot. If you were good at it, and I was, I could do one and a half plots or

I did backbreaking work called 'futting turf'. You were bent double the entire time you did this, for the whole day apart from breaks.

maybe two in a day. We used to bring my younger brother out, who was about ten or eleven at the time, and he would do the bottom ones at the end of the row for my father.

We also had our own small area to provide turf for our family. In terms of living conditions in Edenderry, our house had no running water, it had an outside toilet and for a long time there was no gas or electricity. So the peat was used for burning to heat our home. Thirteen people lived in our three-room cottage: all my brothers and sisters and my mother and father. The cottage is still there and we still refer to it as the family home even though other people live there now.

I left Edenderry in 1966 to work in Sheffield and then to Birmingham in 1972. I was there until 1978, when I moved back to Bonnybridge.

.....
• If you have any Edenderry connections please let •
• me know. •
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Can Anyone Remember.....

By William Parker

Do you remember the following people who lived in Bonnybridge?

Flannelfoot; The Osbornes; Freddie Forrest; Rory and Jake; The Wild Colonial Boy; Fritz; Joe Petale; Sanny Pollock; Dougie Thomson (from Thomson's shops); Reverend Malcolmson; Canon Murnin.

Do you remember these places?

- * The Puzzle
- * The cricket ground
- * Harris's Picture House
- * The Huts
- * Chip shops – Fraser's, Sinclair's, Goldie's and Marcella's

People selling goods door-to-door:

- * Rag and Bone Man – with trumpet!
- * Onion Johnny
- * Bleach/Paraffin van
- * Store horse and cart
- * Old Jimmy Walker

Did you know that....

- * James Anderson (brickworks) owned two pieces of land in Bonnybridge which he donated to the village: Anderson Park and Jenny's Park – which he named after his wife, Jenny!
- * Nobel's explosive works in Greenhill (near the Targets) were owned by the future Nobel Peace Prize donator.
- * The 27th Stirlingshire Boy Scouts (Bonnybridge) celebrate their centenary this year (2011).

WHY ...is the Peeweep pub in High Bonnybridge known by this name and why was the Puzzle Foundry called that?

REQUEST FOR PHOTOS: We're looking for photographs of Greenhill, St Joseph's, Bonnybridge, Castlecary and Broomhill Schools and any school memorabilia (for example, belt, blackboard, dusters, etc) you might have. This is for a future exhibition.

Thank you to everyone who bought tickets for our Easter raffle held on 15th April, which will fund the winter edition of Bonnyseen, for distribution before Christmas!

Thank you to Daisycraze in Bonnybridge for donating beautiful prizes for our Easter raffle!

Response to the last Can Anyone Remember...

Rae Wilson

I was delighted to read in the first edition of your magazine (Bonnyseen) an article by Margaret Murray with reference to Agnes Henderson and the pantomimes she produced in Bonnybridge around 1943-45(?). It was a time of great austerity when people had to make their own entertainment and like Margaret, I remember the pantomimes with joy. For the young people of the village it was very exciting to attend the rehearsals, dress rehearsal and finally appear behind the footlights. Parents played a huge part by making costumes, playing in the orchestra and changing scenery. Performances took place in Bonnybridge Public Hall and also in the old Town Hall Falkirk and some in outlying villages such as Cowie and Airth. There was a wealth of talent in the village and I particularly remember Archie Walker (dance instructor), Marion Provan (principal boy), Madeleine Greig (leading lady), Mr Gibson (pianist), Joyce Blair (ballerina). Agnes had amazing talent and made a huge contribution to the lives of many children of Bonnybridge.



Rae also recalls another talented group in the village - the Bonnybridge Players, who won several competitions in the world of amateur dramatics. She writes: "Many of their plays were produced by Fred Roy and his son Dick Roy whose wife Esther Bernard often excelled in leading roles."

Perhaps there is someone in the village who remembers Agnes Henderson and who knows how she acquired the knowledge to produce so many great pantomimes?

Readers' Letters

I have just received a copy of your new magazine from my sister-in-law who lives in Bonnybridge. I have to congratulate you and commend your excellent magazine. As a youngster in the thirties I lived in the railway buildings, my father was a railwayman, and your articles in the magazine brought back many nostalgic memories of Greenhill, a wonderful community. I remember the families you mention and others of Wilson Terrace. I still remember the names of all the families who lived in the old railway buildings, and the teachers at Greenhill School. I thank you for reviving those memories and wish you well in your projects. It is over 40 years since my family and I left Bonnybridge but I still have many fond memories of my years spent there. *David Gourlay.*

What a wonderful wee paper - I live in Vernon, British Columbia, Canada, and got the paper in the mail yesterday from a cousin in Western Australia, who in turn had received it from her sister in Falkirk. My family name is McPhie - the Chas McPhie in the 'Bowling Club' picture on page 7, was my grandfather's brother. Our family emigrated to Vancouver, Canada in 1946 - we left from 12 Anderson Street - Miss Henderson (Pantomime lady also on page 7) lived at the other end of our block at 6 Anderson Street. I remember the pantos well; my older brother Ken has a family picture of the two of us in wee Chinese outfits standing on the 'green' behind Miss Henderson's house. My father David McPhie and the hall-keeper, 'Auld Jock' Weir, also put on many concerts during the war - in the Public Hall.
Ian McPhie.

What can you remember or what would you like others to help you to remember? Let us know!

Who Do You Think You Are? by Phil Swierczek

Researching family history is an increasingly popular interest in Scotland today. But the results of a foray into our past can sometimes produce startling results which are shocking in the context of a civilised and developed society. One such discovery revealed to a local family the awful fate which befell one of their ancestors as he fought for a just and fair society and 'one man one vote'.

James Beveridge senior was a well-known Bonnybridge teacher who was very interested in finding out whether family folklore was a myth which had developed with the telling or was indeed fact. He was led to believe that one of his forebears, John Baird, was not only involved in the Radical Uprising, which culminated in the Battle of Bonnymuir on 5th April 1820, but was one of two men executed after capture on the field of battle. His sons, Sandy, Jim and Ian, knew that their father had carried out research into this aspect of his family history over many years. After his father's premature death, Jim was present at the dedication of the memorial to the Radicals on the site of the battle but had no recollection of what had happened to the results of his father's research. Jim and his family moved home a few of years ago and moved boxes from one attic to another, as we all do, with the intention of sifting through it - some time!

As a result of the first issue of the Bonnyseen magazine going to print, Jim, in common with many other residents was motivated to seek out his own memories of Bonnybridge and aspects of its history. Recently, Jim found a package belonging to his father in the attic. It contained valuable evidence of research into the details of his ancestor's role in the Battle of Bonnymuir. This included notebooks, family trees and many photographs to illustrate this episode of Scottish history which he has kindly loaned to Greenhill Historical Society. His brother Sandy, now living in Canada, was also very interested in the family genealogy and I am indebted to him for the information he has supplied on the link between the Beveridge family and John Baird. The lineage passes from John Baird's sister Jean through ten generations to the present great-nephews, Sandy's sons Douglas and Jamie, and Jim's sons Jon and Paul, with a new baby born on 4th May 2011.



Jim Beveridge

Beveridge family link to John Baird - Radical leader executed in Stirling in 1820

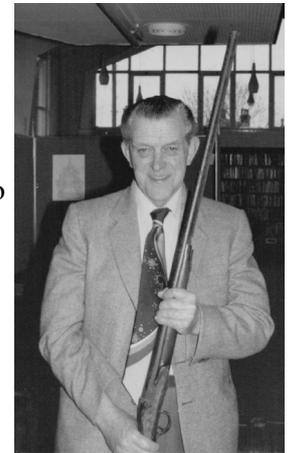


Contribute an idea, a memory, a comment, a story – contact details on the back page



John Baird © University of Strathclyde. Licensor www.scran.ac.uk

John Baird was a hand weaver to trade, an educated man who had served in the army in Argentina and Spain, a prime candidate for leadership of a group of Condorrat men willing to rise up against the government of the day in defence of their way of life. These skilled men had enjoyed wages of 13/4d per week but by 1820 this had shrunk to 5/3d. This led to widespread poverty and destitution and the situation was so desperate that men were prepared to take up arms against a government which had reneged on its promises (no change there then). They were also aggrieved by the fact that they were unable to vote the government out as only those with property and money in the bank were allowed to vote. John Baird wrote posters and leaflets for distribution to tell people of their intentions and to seek recruits. A national strike was called and 60,000 workers stopped work. This gave the Radicals a sense that the time was right for a revolt and that they would be supported in their efforts. Some of this



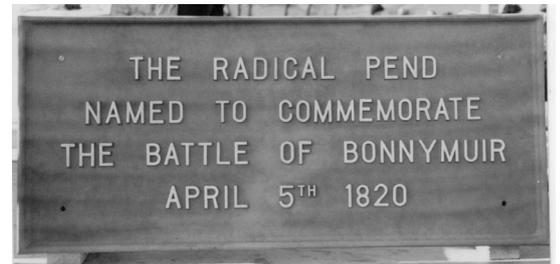
James Beveridge Snr

confidence was reputedly enhanced by government spies or agents provocateurs who encouraged the revolt and fed the groups of men false information. The plan was for the Glasgow Radicals to meet up with those from Condorrat, march along the canal through Bonnybridge and on to Carron Iron Works. They were informed the works were in Radical hands so they could be properly armed when they arrived.



Monument to Radicals, Glasgow

On the way to Falkirk they were met by a government agent who asked them to wait at Bonnymuir for reinforcements to arrive. Instead it was a troop of Hussars who arrived and battle ensued. It was an uneven fight to say the least, the skirmish ending with one man escaping and 19 Radicals being captured and taken to Stirling Castle. The count of the Radicals' weapons was five muskets, two pistols, a hundred rounds of ball cartridges and eighteen pikes. No one on either side was killed.



Plaque at the Radical Pend, Bonnybridge

The prisoners were charged with high treason and the leaders, Andrew Hardie and John Baird, were sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered. Imagine such a sentence in the early 19th century. However, the judge showed mercy to the two men and commuted the sentence to hanging with posthumous beheading. You have to wonder at the logic behind such a sentence which is of no consequence



Executioner's Axe

to the executed men but a horrific experience for their families. The rest of the men were sentenced to be transported to the penal colonies of Australia. In fact many of them enjoyed a far better lifestyle than would ever have been possible in the Scotland of the day. Three years later the Radicals were all granted a free pardon and all but one of them opted to stay in Australia. The executed men were also pardoned which may have brought a crumb of comfort to their families but was harsh punishment indeed for standing up for the rights of your fellow man. **The bravery of the men was recognised locally with the dedication of a monument at Bonnymuir, the commissioning of a plaque on the**

Radical Pend beside the Mill Garage and on the house in the village of Condorrat where John Baird was raised in a family of seven children. A search for the past certainly brought a poignant story to light for the Beveridge family.

N.B. Many excellent accounts have been written of the Radical movement and the archive in Callendar House has a great deal of information including newspaper clippings which detail the execution itself although they make difficult reading.

Women's Rural Institutes

The Greenhill SWRI is the oldest branch of the SWRI in the district, formed on 19th October 1925 in the Maxwell-Muller hut.

The hut, situated off Glenyards Road, was destroyed to make way for the new housing estate situated around there.



The Bonnybridge Ramblers

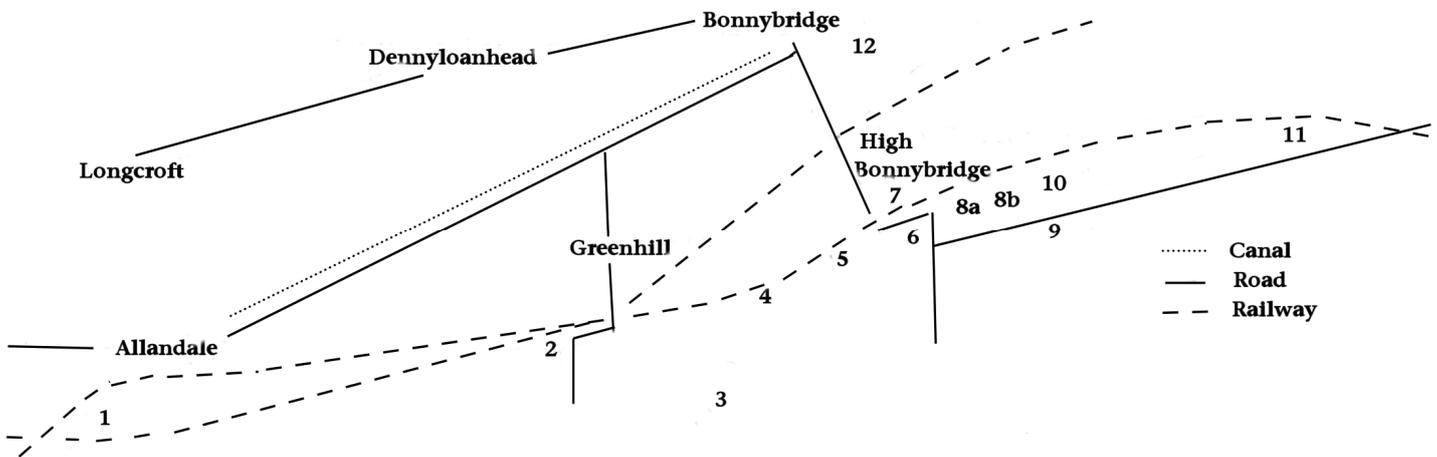
by Ian McPhie



This photograph is Bonnybridge Walkers (or Ramblers?), taken about 1924. My cousin Rena McPhie (Proffit) is sitting at the front right with our Granny Agnes McPhie; Rena looks to be about two years old. Two rows back, wearing the white moustache, is our Grampa Henry. The minister with the plaid in the middle of the picture is Reverend Tom Millar. Rena helped me with quite a few more names over the years before she passed on last year. **If you recognise people in this photograph let us know and we will publish the names in the next edition.**

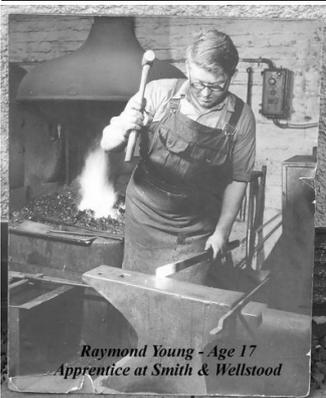
Bonnybridge Refractory Brickworks By Willie Thomson

Refractory bricks are for use in furnaces and are quite different from common building bricks. There are a number of different fireclay seams each with their own characteristic properties. The quality of the clay determines the grade of bricks and therefore the application in which they can be used. Very approximately the fireclay bearing strata are a bit like a saucer. The southern lip occurs at workable depths in the Sheffield area in England. The northern lip comes to, or at least close to the surface in a line across central Scotland. Looking at the distribution of brickworks in our immediate area would seem to suggest that the clays are only at economically workable depths along a very narrow band. In fact clays were workable over a much larger area but as the sketch shows the deciding factor was in fact the proximity to the railway. Most of the works had their own siding. The refractory brick industry was big business and figures quoted by J. Waugh state that Stein's Milnquarter mine extracted two million tons of fireclay. This was by no means the biggest works. The Castlecary works had, at one time, the longest kiln in the world. The ware from the kilns was loaded directly onto railway wagons and shipped out by the trainload. Not only did Scottish firebricks supply British industry, they represented a huge export market, shipping to practically every country in the world.



(1) John G.Stein, Castlecary Works, 1899-1980. (2) Glenyards Fireclay Co., 1880-1964. (3) Greenhill Fireclay Works, Clayknowes, 1860-1890. (4) George Turnbull, Dykehead, 1906-1962. (5) John G. Stein, Milnquarter Works 1887-1971. (6) Bonnybridge Silica and Fireclay, 1874-1972. (7) Woodlea, 1890-1892. (8) James Dougall and Sons, (a) West Works & (b) East Works, 1875-2002. (9) Cochran's Brickworks, 1906-1930. (10) Broomhill Brickworks, 1915-1980. (11) Campbell & Co. Roughcastle, 1892-1965. (12) Bonnymuir Brickworks, 1836-1960.

Tribute to Mr Raymond Young By Mike Robinson



Raymond Young - Age 17
Apprentice at Smith & Wellstood

In September 2010 we visited Mr Raymond Young, who was an apprentice at Smith & Wellstood. One of his daughters, Mandy, had replied to our item in the Falkirk Herald regarding our new project on Bonnybridge in Transition. Mr Young told us that he started his six-year apprenticeship at the age of 15 and served a total of 17 years at the company. When the company was closing down they gave all the apprentices that were still there the large 48" x 24"



photo of them that had been on display for the 100-year celebration (left). Raymond trained and worked as a smithy. The family had lived on Foundry Corner. Mr Young, pictured, died in November 2010. We would like to thank the family for sharing this with us.

Mrs Nan Ure (85), of Banknock, has many memories from the six years she worked as a book-keeper in the 'great big wooden office' of the Glenboig Union Fireclay Company, Dykehead. Dougalls and Stein's were just along the railway line. Jimmy Reid, the manager of the brickwork, would ask Nan to get on to the station master and tell him to shunt the wagons they needed into the siding at the top station (LNER): 'You knew when it was coming because it rattled ... it really was something for me to see.' The destinations of the cargo were written on the wagons.

Nan also recalls that at the Bonnymuir brickwork at Bonnyside, it was women who did the work, bar three men for heavy labour. 'Women made the bricks. Each woman had moulds on her hands and they champed on it. They drew a wire over the moulds. The women liked it, but they had a quota to meet every day and never made more than their quota. They wore a turban on their hair and had bag aprons.'

In contrast, Dykehead bricks were made by machine and the different sizes were called 'squares', 'scones' and 'cupolas'. They made about 20,000 firebricks a week. 'The green squad took the raw brick from the machine. When it was fired, that was the burnt squad. They were on piecework. It was a flat rate for those on the machines.' Nan worked until she married. She has a picture from the Falkirk Herald

of her brother among his workmates at Mitchell and Russell and her father was a moulder there. Coincidentally, Nan is also the niece of Agnes Henderson (see p. 7) and thinks Agnes should have been honoured for all the good work she did.

Nan also had several prized possessions and vivid memories of the Second World War. One is a piece of green-and-yellow camouflage silk her younger brothers took from a bomb dropped on Dougall's - it was widely assumed that the bomb was meant for the railway but hit the brickworks instead. Her late husband Bill served with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and was a prisoner of war in Germany's Stalag IX. She has a handkerchief with the Argylls motto embroidered on it from the camp and a

silk map of Europe given to the regulars. She also remembers meeting Italian and German prisoners-of-war and attending a concert with her father-in-law - without realising beforehand it would all be in German.

We are very grateful to Nan for giving her time to talk to us, twice, and hope that Nan's story inspires you. If it has reminded you of your own experiences and memories we'd love to talk to you.



Mrs Ure with the silk map



Embroidered handkerchief



Camouflage silk

Find us at www.greenhillhistoricalsociety.org.uk

Email: greenhillhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Telephone: Gillian on 07850 250495

Come to a meeting: Bonnybridge Library, Fridays 2pm

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