

# RECOLLECTIONS *of* BRIDGETON PAST

A personal look back with 75 year-old Bob Currie



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# Personal Note

I was born at 5 Silvergrove Street, Bridgeton on 12th April, 1937 in a one-room and kitchen flat. The tenements that once were in Silvergrove Street have long since been demolished and the area of the street revamped as Silvergrove Bellway Housing (2000). I was the last of six children born to my parents. Soon after my arrival, the family moved house to a two-room and kitchen at 555 London Road overlooking Silvergrove Street.



My tenement home at 555 London Road, Bridgeton. Snap taken on Coronation Day, 2nd June, 1953.



My mother Peggy at the door of our family shop at No. 4 Silvergrove Street, Bridgeton, Glasgow.

In 1942, aged five, I was enrolled at Greenhead Infants' School, Macphail Street. The Infant Mistress, the martinet Miss Simpson, inflicted her own special brand of discipline that instilled fear amongst her charges. Suffice to say, Miss Simpson was neither gentle nor kind

in her dealings with the unsuspecting infants placed in her care. Greenhead was a feeder for John Street Primary School, Hozier Street, where, by contrast, the Headmaster was the benign Mr. Robert Paterson, a native of Galloway whose zeal for his 'ain countrie' knew no bounds. Everyone in school had to learn 'Bonnie Gallowa' (a song extolling the region's natural virtues and glorious historic past). Mr. Paterson was also a Burns enthusiast and co-operated with Bridgeton Burns Club (instituted 1870) and The Burns Federation in promoting knowledge and appreciation of the poems of our National Bard.

In 1949, aged 12, and having successfully passed the Qualifying Exam, I moved onwards and upwards to John Street Senior Secondary School, Tullis Street.

In 1952, aged 15, I left school armed with the Scottish 3rd Year Leaving Certificate of Education as my passport to working life. From the day I left school aged 15, until my retiral aged 62, I was never out of work.

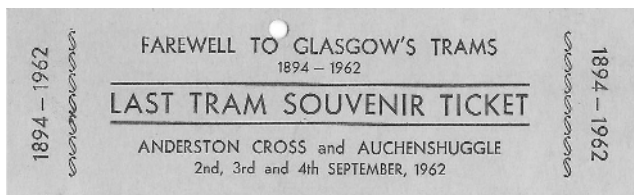
I started as Junior Clerk in the Factory Office of Messrs. William Beattie Ltd., 116 Paton Street, Dennistoun before moving to work for Messrs. Roxburgh, Colin Scott & Co. Ltd., 80 Buchanan Street in the city centre. In 1955, aged 18, I was called-up for two years compulsory National Service with the Royal Air Force. After 1957, I was numerously employed as an Administrative Assistant with Messrs. James Templeton & Co. Ltd., Templeton Street, Bridgeton; East Kilbride Development Corporation, Torrance House, East Kilbride; and, Honeywell Controls, Uddingston. In 1986, I returned to Local Government with East Kilbride District Council and, following reorganisation, with South Lanarkshire Council, Hamilton.

In 1999, aged 62, I enrolled as a student with the Open University. In 2006, aged 69, I graduated BA (Hons) in Humanities with Religious Studies. "Swift and elusive runs the hare, but in the end the snail gets there!"

# Introduction

Having told you all you need know of my personal background, let's take a stroll around Bridgeton Cross; in my youth commonly called The Toll. Much remains from the distant past. The Umbrella erected in 1875, the range of extant tenements built in the 1890s, Bridgeton Cross Mansions (1899), Glasgow Savings Bank building (1902) currently occupied by William Hill, Bookmakers and, not least, the regenerated Olympia (1911).

In the course of our walk-about we'll reflect on the scene that once was and take as our starting point 'The Seven-Ways' public house, formerly named 'The Snug' now more aptly renamed to signify the seven traffic lanes that converge on Bridgeton Cross. From there we'll continue along London Road towards Kerr Street and beyond to Abercromby Street and Tobago Street. Along the way we'll pick-up on some other aspects of local history which are bound to arise in conversation.



In Bridgeton past, the most striking feature was The Glasgow Corporation Tramway System and the sound of the clangourous rattle of the trams as they screeched along the tracks alongside horse-drawn carts, buses, trolley-buses, lorries and trucks that trundled the cobblestones in the Bridgeton that I used to know. The trams literally dominated the traffic scene. Significantly, as Edinburgh prepares for

the grand opening of its new tramway system, it's worth reminding ourselves that Glasgow's was miles better indeed, second to none. In their heyday, Glaswegians could jump on and off a tram from dawn till midnight every day of the week including Sunday, which, prior to the social revolution of the 'Swinging Sixties,' was widely recognised, if not generally observed, as a day of rest.

The Corporation operated a route colour system until 1938, but examples were still to be seen into the early 1950s. The number 7 tram was banded yellow, the numbers 17 and 26 red, and the number 18 green. There were other trams banded white, blue and purple, none of which trundled through Bridgeton. In Bridgeton you could board a tram for Anderson Cross, Aucheshuggle, Bellahouston, Cambuslang, Carmyle, Clydebank, Dalmuir, Dalmuir West, Whiteinch, Yoker and elsewhere. The Corporation system inaugurated in 1894, remained in service till 1962 when, on the consecutive nights of 2nd, 3rd and 4th September, Glasgow bade them a fond farewell.

# Models in Our Midst

Auld Will Ritchie cut a sorry figure about the place. But he was only one among many. There were two Model Lodging Houses for homeless men in Bridgeton, one in Abercromby Street, opposite the historic old Calton Graveyard, the other in Craignestock Street. The Abercromby Street Home was one of seven built by The City of Glasgow Improvement Trust to deal with the problem of homelessness. Opened in 1878, it closed in 1981 and was demolished in 1982. It had accommodation for 272 men, comprising 240 cubicles with dormitory accommodation for 32 individuals. These homes were designated ‘Models’ as it was intended they should be models to be imitated as an improvement on the otherwise low lodging houses dealing with homeless persons.

The inmates were referred to locally as ‘Modellers’ not ‘Down and Outs.’ Roses Home, Craignestock Street, epitomised the description of a low lodging house. It was certainly a grim place. In his capacity as a milk boy, my elder brother made deliveries there. He said it stank as much inside as it did outside, and he was as quick as he could be getting himself in and out of the place. My parents sympathised with the Modellers who they said belonged to someone either as sons, brothers or husbands.

The modellers were benign; an accepted part of the scenery in Bridgeton past, and deserving of something more than local sympathy. That ‘something more’ took effect following the Beveridge Report (1947) that ushered in the Welfare State and an end to the worst excesses of poverty in our society. Nevertheless, the Abercromby Street Model Lodging House for Homeless Men remained open until 1981. The closure of Roses Home, Craignestock Street may have followed soon thereafter, if not before.

# Churches

I was a communicant member of Greenhead Church of Scotland, London Road, under the ministry of Rev. John Hart. Other worshipping congregations during my time in Bridgeton, in alphabetical order, were:

- Bethany Congregational Church, Bernard Street.
- Bridgeton Methodist Central Hall, Landressy Street/James Street.
- Bridgeton Parish Church, Dale Street.
- Bridgeton West and Barrowfield.
- Dalmarnock Congregational Church, Fairbairn Street.
- Dalmarnock Parish Church, Springfield Road.
- Fairbairn Free Church, Fairbairn Street.
- Hall Memorial Fairbairn Church/Summerfield Church of Scotland, Dalmarnock Road/Summerfield Street.
- Hood Memorial Congregational, Muslin Street.
- London Road Parish Church.
- Newlands East Church, London Road.
- Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church, Old Dalmarnock Road.
- Salvation Army, Olympia Street.
- St. Clement's Church of Scotland, Brook Street.
- St. Francis in the East Church of Scotland, Queen Mary Street.
- St. Mary of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church, Abercromby Street.





Annual Orange Parade as it passes along London Road at its junction with Silvergrove Street, Bridgeton

The Orange Order had a significant presence in Bridgeton. This picture is of a parade of members of The Wilson Memorial Flute Band.

# Schools

The Education (Scotland) Act of 1872 required all children between the age of 5 and 13 to attend school. During my time Bridgeton schools, in alphabetical order, were:

- Annfield Primary, Cubie Street.
- Barrowfield Primary, Fraser Street.
- Bernard Street Junior Secondary.
- John Street Elementary, Hozier Street.
- John Street Senior Secondary, Tullis Street.
- London Road Primary School.
- Queen Mary Street Primary.
- Rumford Street Primary.
- Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary, Reid Street at Junction of Dale Street.
- Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Junior Secondary, Pirn Street.
- Springfield Primary School/Our Lady of Fatima, Lily Street.
- St. Anne's Primary School, David Street.
- St. Mary's Primary School linked to St. Mary's RC Church of the Assumption.
- St. Mary's Secondary School, Dornoch Street.

“Where are a’ these bright he’rts noo, that were then sae leal an’ true,  
some hae left life’s troubled scene, some still are strugglin’ through,  
an’ some ha’e risen high in life’s changeful’ destiny, for they rose wi’  
the lark in the morning.”

(Lines from an auld Scots sang.)



Qualifying Class John Street Elementary School  
1948/49

Back row, left to right: Alex Black, Hugh McAree, Andrew Steen, James Ferguson, Harry Adams, George Malcolm, George Downie, John Brown, and Alex Cranston. Middle row, left to right: Margaret Hutcheson, Frank Lamont, Tom Smith, Alex Mack, Ian Barton, George Blue, Hugh McGowan, Johnston Edgar, Robert Currie, and Ellen Summers. Second front row, left to right: Ellen Fyfe, Anita West, Pat Wilson, Meta Carwood, Marion Fleming, Anna Donnachie, Jessie Gray, Margaret Williams, Rena Graham, Annie Bell, and Wilma Cameron. Front row, left to right: Jean Hart, Etta Hutton, Moira Crawford, and Elsie McLean.



Group of Bridgeton Pals  
pictured in Kerr Street 1948

Back row, left to right: Moira Wallerstein, Jack Gardiner, and Robert Piggot. Front row, left to right: Rita McKenna, Wilma Wallerstein, Ellen Revie, Ellen Jackson and her cousin Edward Jackson. Jack Gardiner and Ellen Revie lived at 3 Kerr Street. The others lived at 549 London Road.



Laughter in Kerr Street  
circa 1945

Just look at those genuinely happy faces. Back row, left to right: Willie Piggot, Anderson Piggot, Jim Ford, and Archie Nielson. Front row, left to right: Tommy Piggot, Don Piggot, John Revie, and Robert Piggot. The Piggots lived at 3 Kerr Street before moving to 549 London Road. John Revie lived at 3 Kerr Street, Jim Ford at 7 Kerr Street, and Archie Nielson lived at 555(b) London Road. (Picture courtesy of Brian Piggot, Toronto, Canada.)



### The Backbone of Bridgeton

A group of wives and mothers on an outing to Butlin's Heads of Ayr Hotel, 1948. Left to right: Mrs Neilson, Mrs Meg Douglas, Mrs Peggy Currie, Mrs MacMillan, Mrs Kate Revie, and another whose name escapes me.

# Industry

From its earliest beginnings as an industrial area, Bridgeton was renowned for its Cotton Weaving Mills. In the early 19th century, largely owing to immigration from the Scottish Highlands and Ireland, there were no less than 2,000 hand-loom weavers resident in Bridgeton. These many weavers ultimately found their skills transferred to carpet manufacture, most notably with Messrs. James Templeton & Co. Ltd., whose factories at Bernard Street, Brookside Street, Crownpoint Road, Fordneuk Street, Kerr Street, Templeton Street, and Tullis Street mark the company as a major employer in Bridgeton. Messrs. Lyle's with factories in Fordneuk Street and Broad Street was another leading carpet manufacturer in the area. Carpet manufacturing ceased in Bridgeton when these companies were absorbed by larger firms. Other major employers in the area were:

- Sir Wm. Arrol, Dalmarnock Works, Dunn Street, Cranes and Bridge Building.
- Anderson Tunnelling, Broad Street, Specialists in Electrical Engineering.
- Begg Cousland & Co. Ltd., Springfield Road, Wire Weaving.
- East Kilbride Dairy Farmers, Silvergrove Street.
- Mavor & Coulson Ltd., Mining Equipment, Electricity Generators and Conveyors.
- Milanda Bakery, Wesleyan Street.
- R & G Dick, Macphail Street, Transmission Belts and Pulleys.
- R Y Ritchie, Landressy Street, Cardboard Box Manufacturers.
- Stewarts and Lloyds Ltd., Phoenix Tube Works, Dalmarnock Road.
- Welma Bakery, Broad Street.

# Transport

Besides the network of trams that rumbled across Bridgeton, the other major transport system was the railway. There were two railway stations in Bridgeton, namely, LNER Bridgeton Central and LMS Bridgeton Cross. The LNER line from Bridgeton to Helensburgh meant rail passengers could alight at Craigendoran where they could embark any one of the fleet of paddle and turbine steamers that plied a route from Craigendoran down Firth of Clyde to coastal piers at Kilmun, Strone, Hunter's Quay, Kirn, Dunoon, Innellan and beyond through the Kyles of Bute to Rothesay Bay. I regularly travelled this LNER network on visits to my grandparents at Kirn. Passengers on LNER could also alight at Glasgow Central Low Level for train connections to Gourock and the Clyde Coast. An alternative route from LNER Bridgeton Cross to Balloch opened up the scenic delights of the Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond. I only ever travelled the LMS network when travelling direct from Glasgow Central to Gourock onwards to Kirn or Dunoon. Then, as now, one could board a train at Bridgeton Cross LMS Station for Glasgow Central Station and a connecting train to Gourock. Passengers on this existing line can also travel direct from Larkhall in South Lanarkshire to Balloch in West Dunbartonshire.

For several years my mother was employed as a Carriage Cleaner at LNER Bridgeton, and is pictured overleaf with those with whom she worked. They were a great bunch, and always so kind to me when I called in at the bothy to see my ma.



Group of Carriage Cleaners  
LNER Bridgeton Central Station, 1946

Back row, left to right: Peggy Currie, Annie Tarleton, Meg Douglas, and Bella Logue. Front row, left to right: Maggie McIvor, Kate Reilly, 'Monty' Montgomery, Ellen Maitland, Nancy Pickering, and Francis Walker.



LNER Paddle Steamer 'Talisman' approaching Kirn Pier  
and Clyde Puffer 'Cretan' unloading coal at the wee pier



# Customs

Annually, during the first fortnight of July, Glasgow celebrated The Fair Fortnight, in Bridgeton parlance The ‘Glesca’ Fair. There was a total shut-down of industrial premises, no question of taking your annual holiday as and when you liked, and a mass exodus as people set off ‘Doon the Watter.’ The fair heralded the arrival in Bridgeton of a travelling fairground dubbed ‘The Shows’ or carnival that transformed the football pitches on Fleshers’ Haugh into a playground of public entertainment. This annual event, which generated great excitement, proved a magnet for youngsters on the loose. As youngsters we hoped to stretch our spending money by rolling our pennies on a game of chance in the usually false hope of their landing on a square marked 3d, 6d and 1/- to the accompanying bark of the showman ‘on the line, the money’s mine, on the square, we pay your fare.’ If we were lucky then we bought candy-floss and other dainties from our winnings.

The showground attractions included a Boxing Booth and a conglomerate of side-shows. The main attractions were the carousels, especially the Hobby Horses, that whirled to the accompaniment of the showman’s pipe organ with its inimitable fairground sound. There were other main attractions including Chair-planes, Swing-Boats, Dodgems, Waltzer, Steam-Boats, Dive-Bombers, Helter-Skelter, Rib-Tickler, Cake-Walk, Ghost Train, Shooting Galleries, Coconut Shies, Games of Chance, Slot Machines, including ‘What the Butler Saw,’ Magic Mirrors, a tented circus of performing Tight-Rope Walkers, Jugglers, Clowns, Bareback riders and tamers of elephants and tigers. Besides these, there was always a Palmist or Fortune Teller tucked away somewhere amidst the gypsy caravans.

For those families who couldn’t afford a holiday ‘Doon the Watter,’ the arrival of the carnival must have proved a second-best alternative.

# Food and Drink

## – Pubs –

Between Bridgeton Cross and Templeton Street/Tobago Street there were, in my time, no fewer than eight pubs, in alphabetical order as follows:

- Robertson's now The Crimson Star, London Road corner of Kerr Street.
- Slowey's, London Road, corner of Blackfaulds Place long demolished.
- The Hayhouse, London Road, corner of Anson Street long demolished.
- The Oasis, London Road, long demolished.
- The Snug now The Seven Ways, London Road, corner of Olympia Street.
- The Monaco, renamed The New Monaco, at corner of Drake Street.
- Wedderburn's now The Londoner, corner of Abercromby Street.
- Another at the corner of Templeton Street the name of which I don't recall.
- There was also a pub in nearby James Street namely, The Mermaid.

## – Ice Cream Parlours –

There were numerous Italian ice cream parlours or cafes spread across Bridgeton. Those I personally recall, in alphabetical order, were:

- Bonini, Orr Street.
- Café Continental, James Street.
- Cappochie, London Road.
- Gizzi, Main Street.
- Crolla, Main Street.
- While Peter Rossi's Café in London Road was renowned, his café was in Calton not Bridgeton.

### – Fish and Chip Shops –

Fish Restaurants, in alphabetical order, were:

- Cappochie, London Road.
- Chiappa, London Road.
- Maggie Cotter, Landressy Street.
- Reekie, James Street.
- There was also a fish and chip shop next to Bonini's Café in Orr Street.

# Cinemas

In its heyday, the Olympia was the most modern and renowned cinema in Bridgeton. A category 'B' listed building, it first opened in 1911 as a variety theatre and was rebuilt for cinema use in 1938. In 1974, following its closure as a cinema, it became a bingo hall and later a furniture warehouse. Since around 2000, the building had lain derelict. Then in 2004 a serious fire occurred within the building.

However, the Olympia was to rise like the phoenix as part of an exciting regeneration project for Glasgow's east-end. Clyde Gateway URC in partnership with Glasgow City Council, South Lanarkshire Council, Scottish Enterprise and the Scottish Government saved the building for future generations. Its major rebuild, at a cost of £10,000,000, developed and delivered in partnership with these organisations and with the communities of Bridgeton Town Centre, should ensure the Olympia's survival for a further hundred years. The building now provides a mixed public space with combined facilities for a library, sport, offices and café. In my time other local cinemas, in alphabetical order, were:

- Arcadia Cinema, London Road.
- The Wee Royal, Main Street.
- The Dalmarnock Picture House, Nuneaton Street.
- Kings Picture House, James Street.
- The Star Palace, Main Street.
- Strathclyde Picture House, Summerfield Street.
- The Premiere, Kirkpatrick Street.



The Olympia Cinema  
circa 1938



The Olympia  
2013

# Commerce

Let's now reminisce on the many businesses that once surrounded Bridgeton Cross and beyond into London Road during my lifetime in the district. According to the 1912 Post Office annual Glasgow directory, some were already long established in both my parents' and grandparents' lifetime. From the vantage point of the recently restored Olympia one can see that the base of the preserved tenements around 'The Toll' and a little way beyond continue to accommodate a range of independent businesses. In Bridgeton past these comprised shops, public houses and banks.

## – From Bridgeton Cross to Landressy Street –

Commencing at Bridgeton Mansions at its junction with Dalmarnock Road and Main Street:

- Timpson Footwear (now occupied by Premier) and opposite, at its junction with Main Street and James Street:
- Logie & Company\* Drapers, Milliners and Costumiers. This was a local department store at 2/6 Main Street, Bridgeton Cross (currently the site of Bridgeton Shopping Mall). In my lifetime Logie's entrance was on The Cross.
- Cockburn, Chemists, then continuing around The Cross:
- Stobo, Tobacconist.
- Birrell.
- Scottish Wool Shop formerly The Hosiery Manufacturing Company Limited\* (former premises of Stobo, Birrell and

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\* indicates these businesses recorded in The Post Office annual Glasgow directory for year 1912. They continued trading until the mid/late 1960s.

- Scottish Wool Shop, 11 Bridgeton Cross).
- Easiephit Footwear (currently Curry King).
- R.S. McColl, Confectioner.
- Riddel, Tobacconist.
- British Linen Bank, 26 Bridgeton Cross\* (subsequently Bank of Scotland, currently Lloyd's Pharmacy).
- Moore Optician's close.
- Vernal Bros, 28 Bridgeton Cross, Gents Outfitters & Manufacturers of Masonic Regalia\* (currently the Liquor Barn).
- Close number 34 Bridgeton Cross - Grant & Wilson's close (Grant & Wilson, house factors and property and insurance agents).\*
- Mason Electrical, subsequently Clydesdale Electrical (currently Waltons).
- Annacker Ltd., Sausages & Table Delicacies.\* Dubbed Annacker's Midden (currently Eurofoods).
- William Scobie, Ladies & Gents Hairdresser,\* 38 Bridgeton Cross (currently Raja Store).
- Glasgow Savings Bank, 42 Bridgeton Cross\* (currently William Hill).

### – From Landressy Street to Anson Street –

On the opposite corner of Landressy Street, at its junction with London Road:

- Miller & Brown's, Ladies Outfitters.
- Messrs. Andrew Cochrane & Sons Limited, Provision Merchants.
- A close known locally as 'Doctor Bolton's close' because his surgery was located there on the first landing.
- Craig's, Second-hand Jewellers.

- A pub named the ‘The Old Hayhouse’ (Craig’s and the ‘Hayhouse’ were subsequently demolished and the firm of Gents Tailors, Messrs. Claude Alexander opened a branch on the site).
- Finlayson, Confectioners.
- Taylor’s, Fruiterers (subsequently Carmichael’s). By late 1950s Finlayson’s and Carmichael’s premises were demolished and Messrs. Grant’s Furnishers built on the gap site. Grant’s Furnisher’s premises were also subsequently demolished and again we have a gap site.

– From Anson Street to Blackfaulds Place –

- On the opposite corner of Anson Street was a large furniture emporium named Bon-Accord, that in an earlier era was occupied by ‘The All British 5/- Footwear.’
- Greenhead Parish Church of Scotland, 564 London Road.
- Harry Brown’s, Tobacconist, No. 562 London Road. Harry also sold leather wallets, purses, gents brief-cases, ladies hand bags and shopping bags.
- Flett’s, Fishmonger, No. 564 London Road.
- A close numbered 566 London Road.
- Miss Scobie’s Confectionery shop.
- A millinery shop, numbered 570 London Road, that afterwards became the premises of High Walk Shoe Company at the corner of Silvergrove Street.
- On the opposite corner of Silvergrove Street at its junction with London Road, R. M. McFadden, Hatter and Hosier\* otherwise known as ‘The Silvergrove Hatter’ (subsequently acquired by Radio Rentals).
- DER.
- ILP close.



- ILP Meeting Room.
- Miss McNab, Draper & Hosier\* (subsequently acquired by Bell's, Dry Cleaning Service).
- Carmichael, Fruiterers.
- A close.
- Newsagent (affectionately dubbed Auld Kate's, duly acquired by a member of the Slowey family who were landlords of the neighbouring pub at the corner of Blackfaulds Place).

All of the foregoing were demolished and the site of the existing Silvergrove Street redeveloped by Bellway Homes in 2000.

### – From Blackfaulds Place to Arcadia Street –

- Miss Brown's, Ladies Requisites, Spiers & Knox, House Factors, 534 London Road.
- A close.
- Spiers & Knox (House Factors).\*
- Fair Isle Knitting shop (subsequently Harry Thomson, Gift Shop).
- Cappochie's Café. (The Cappochies subsequently opened a fish and chip shop immediately next to the Café in the former Harry Thomson, Gift Shop.)
- Sentinel House (a distributor of religious tracts).
- McCue's Store.
- Donaldson's Electrical, where people took their accumulators for recharging.
- Smith's Paint and Wallpaper, number 498 London Road.
- YMCA.
- Electric Bakery.
- American Bookshop.

- A pub named The Oasis, 496 London Road.
- Chiappa's, Fish and Chip shop where as kids we could buy a pennyworth of chips in a paper 'poke.'
- A 'Bookie's at the corner of Arcadia Street,' and on the opposite corner:
- Arcadia Picture House.

All of the foregoing were demolished and this stretch of London Road redeveloped as far as Arcadia Street as new housing accommodation.

We now return to Bridgeton Cross thence by way of London Road from Orr Street to Tobago Street:

### – From Orr Street to Kerr Street –

Commencing at the Olympia at corner of Orr Street then, as now, there were:

- A pub, currently named the Seven Ways, formerly The Snug at number 496 London Road. Moving on towards Kerr Street:
- A close known as 'Foster's close.' Mr Foster, a teacher of pianoforte, gave piano lessons within his flat. SNP member the late Wendy Wood resided in lodgings up this close.
- Clydesdale Bank, (currently Ladbrokes).
- Walker's Bar established 1865 and still serving on site.
- Royal Bank of Scotland.
- A close.
- Windsor Restaurant formerly Ellen Howie's (Royal Bank of Scotland have extended their premises to include Windsor Restaurant).
- A close.
- Station Bar.

- Bridgeton Cross LNER Station, now occupied by Bridgeton Express.
- George Grierson & Son, Chemists (currently occupied by Bridgeton Cross Coffee House and Windsor Lounge).
- A close number 605 London Road.
- State Studio, Photographers (currently Spice of Canton).
- City Bakeries Ltd., Bake-shop and Restaurant, 579 London Road.
- The Crimson Star, at junction with Kerr Street, formerly known as Robertson's pub. The pub has clearly been extended to include the former City Bakeries premises.

– From Kerr Street to Abercromby Street –

- Ladies Outfitters.
- W. Devine, Ophthalmic Optician and Photographic Dealer.
- A close.
- Sellyn, Ladies & Gents Outfitters.
- Brand & Mollison, Dry Cleaners.
- A close numbered 555 London Road.
- Harry Thomson, Newsagent & Stationer, formerly Robert Lowe.
- Groundland, Jewellers.
- A close numbered 549 London Road.
- Bloch's China Emporium (formerly Paint and Wallpaper shop).
- Gall & Company, Wool Shop.
- A close.
- A shop that sold blinds.
- Chiropodist's.
- Tool Shop.

- A close.
- M & M, Confectioners.
- Bryson, Gents Hairdresser.

This continuity was then broken by an in-shot where the following traders were located:

- Hurricane Radio, alias Sutherland, Electricians.
- Ladies Boutique.
- Ladies Boutique.
- Forrest, Jewellers.
- Bank of Scotland, 517 London Road, that subsequently became the premises of Messrs. Taylor Bros, Funeral Directors on their vacating their premises in Abercromby Street.

All of the foregoing were demolished to make way for a new housing development.

### – From Abercromby Street to Tobago Street –

- Wedderburn's Pub, currently named The Londoner.
- A close.
- McCue's Gift Store.
- Fruit Store.
- Glasgow Eastern Co-operative Society Limited.\*
- Jim Weir's, Newsagent & Stationer.
- Woodworker's Shop.
- Wilson's, Ladies & Childrens Outfitters.
- Drake Street: On the opposite corner of which there was a pub named The Monaco, subsequently renamed The New Monaco.
- Messrs R & J Templeton, Ltd., Tea Merchants & General Grocers,

477 London Road. Formerly trading at 177 London Road.\*

- A close.
- Newsagent's shop, and at the corner of Tobago Street:
- Fruiterer.
- Tobago Street where Bridgeton Police Constabulary had their headquarters prior to their removal to new Police Headquarters in London Road.

# Final Reflections

Bridgeton past was a lively place charged with excitement, and peopled by larger than life characters in their own right. Sure, it was a tough place in which to grow up, but its inhabitants had an overriding sense of humour and got on with their lives as best they could. The majority were hard working and law-abiding. Before the introduction of the Welfare State folk were left to fend for themselves. But the camaraderie among working folk meant neighbours were regarded as friends and, in some cases, extended family even. The last few decades of economic boom and bust have seen a return to hard times. Who can predict what lies ahead? In Bridgeton past, there was work for all, a place where the natural abilities of the population were nurtured through education augmented by programmes of Further Education and industrial apprenticeships that fostered professional skills. The district was an industrial hub and for many the centre of their universe.

# Bridgeton Future

The past is another country. That said, all of us must face the future with hope, determination and fortitude. With that in mind, there can be no better motto than that of the former Bridgeton Working Men's Club 'Learn from the past. Use well the future.' It's an appropriate maxim for the inhabitants of Glasgow's east-end as they anticipate completion of the ongoing programme of regeneration of the area to mark the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

“Austin Smith Lord were commissioned to undertake an urban design study for the revitalisation of Bridgeton Cross. The study involves the development of a vision for Bridgeton which will deliver physical, social and economic regeneration within the wider Clyde Gateway initiatives. Based on an understanding of Bridgeton's role within the wider city and quality of its architectural heritage the master plan seeks to repair and reinvent this keynote within the city. Public realm proposals were developed for key selected areas of Bridgeton as part of the Urban Design Study. The area currently suffers from decay and poor design resulting in poor legibility and unappealing public spaces. This promotes a negative image of Bridgeton and discourages positive use of open space ... The Conservation Team assisted in the Bridgeton Urban Design Study by initially undertaking a desk assessment outlining the historic development of Bridgeton from its beginnings as a settlement along a major route into the east end of Glasgow from the 18th century up to the present day. The massive industrial development that followed the weaving industry resulted in a regular grid of streets which housed the factories and tenements for the workers. These post medieval and later

19th century street patterns define the character of Bridgeton and together with the survival of several important buildings were deemed to be important elements to save in any regeneration proposals. The key listed buildings within the study area were also recorded as part of the CT work. The conclusion of the CT assessment work was that the core area of Bridgeton centred around the ‘cross’ was of such historic merit and special interest that the recommendation was given to Glasgow City Council to undertake a fuller appraisal of the area for Conservation Area Designation.” \*

‘Better Canna Be’

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\*[http://www.urbanrealm.com/buildings/264/Bridgeton\\_Urban\\_Design\\_Study.html](http://www.urbanrealm.com/buildings/264/Bridgeton_Urban_Design_Study.html)  
(Bridgeton was awarded Conservation Area Designation in late 2011.)



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[http://www.urbanrealm.com/buildings/264/Bridgeton\\_Urban\\_Design\\_Study.html](http://www.urbanrealm.com/buildings/264/Bridgeton_Urban_Design_Study.html)

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Bob Currie was born in 1937. He lived in Bridgeton for many years and has recently been participating with the Clyde Gateway Olympia Arts and Heritage Project. This booklet is part of the memories he has shared with us.



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