

Frae Big House...

Logan

Logan District

History Group



...Tae Wee Village



.....

This publication is part of the Workers' Educational Association's **Salt of the Earth: A Scottish Peoples' History Project**. Funded by the National Lottery Charities Board, we have initiated local oral history groups and collaborative ventures in over 40 locations throughout the country. Our aim has been, through adult education, to gather audio, video and associated material, to form an archive representing life in Scotland in the twentieth century from the perspective of ordinary people rather than academics or historians. Oral history has proved an effective method of highlighting the experiences of, for example, family and working life, and previously neglected and marginalised groups, in a powerful and fascinating manner.

As the WEA approaches 100 years of quality adult education provision, we are confident that this unique project represents a significant contribution to Scotland's history, and that this publication is an important and impressive component of **Salt of the Earth**.

Howard Mitchell

Salt of the Earth Project Co-ordinator

Produced by WEA Scotland

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The **Workers' Educational Association**, a national, democratic, voluntary organisation, seeks to encourage access to education throughout life, especially for those adults who have experienced barriers to learning as a result of economic circumstances, social isolation, limited confidence, low self esteem or lack of educational opportunity.

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Learning is the key to the regeneration of the communities we live in. East Ayrshire Council is committed to improving the quality of life for our communities.

Congratulations to everyone who has participated in developing this booklet, and those who helped by providing the information. The content was shaped by the insight and advice of local people. Particular credit is due to those who researched and produced the final booklet.

The booklet, "Logan, Frae Big Hoose Tae Wee Village" has been compiled by a group of local people working with the Workers' Educational Association, Salt of the Earth Project in conjunction with the Forge Ahead Learning Project.

Many hours of hard work and research are clearly evident and I am sure that it will evoke many memories for those who still live in Logan as well as those who have moved away.

Most importantly, this booklet was written by the people of Logan, for the people of Logan, in the words of the people of Logan.

Councillor Tom Farrell JP

East Ayrshire Education Committee Chair

June 2000

From the 17th century, the area we know as Logan was owned by a succession of families. The head of the family was known as the Laird and the most famous of all was Hugh Logan, a popular landowner well known for his hospitality.

He enjoyed entertaining guests in his mansion, to which they rode in their carriages along an avenue of Lime trees, past the stables and the workers' cottages right up to Logan House. Financial difficulties, due no doubt to his social life, resulted in the sale of the estate in 1798.

Thereafter Logan House had several other occupants until it eventually became a ruin and was demolished in the early 1950's to make way for housing. The only sign that there had been a house there was the yearly display of snowdrops and spring bulbs, which popped up in the grass where the gardens had once been. These too disappeared as the housing estate developed.



Logan House

Ella Richard



I moved to Logan in 1954 when I got married and spent the first 3 years of married life in the cottages at Logan. I moved in with my husband to the very house that he was brought up in. I think these houses were built at the same time as the big house. These would be the cottages that the workers lived in, only 3 or 4 houses. It wasn't very nice after coming from a house with electricity, it was like going back in time, using Tilley lamps. The living room was large and like all old houses it had two set-in beds.

The cottages stood around where the club and the scout hut are now. The stables were joined on to our house through a door in our living room. It led to the harness room and then through to the stable yard and then maybe to the stables. Handy for the stable lad if he had lived there years ago. It's possible he lived in that house.

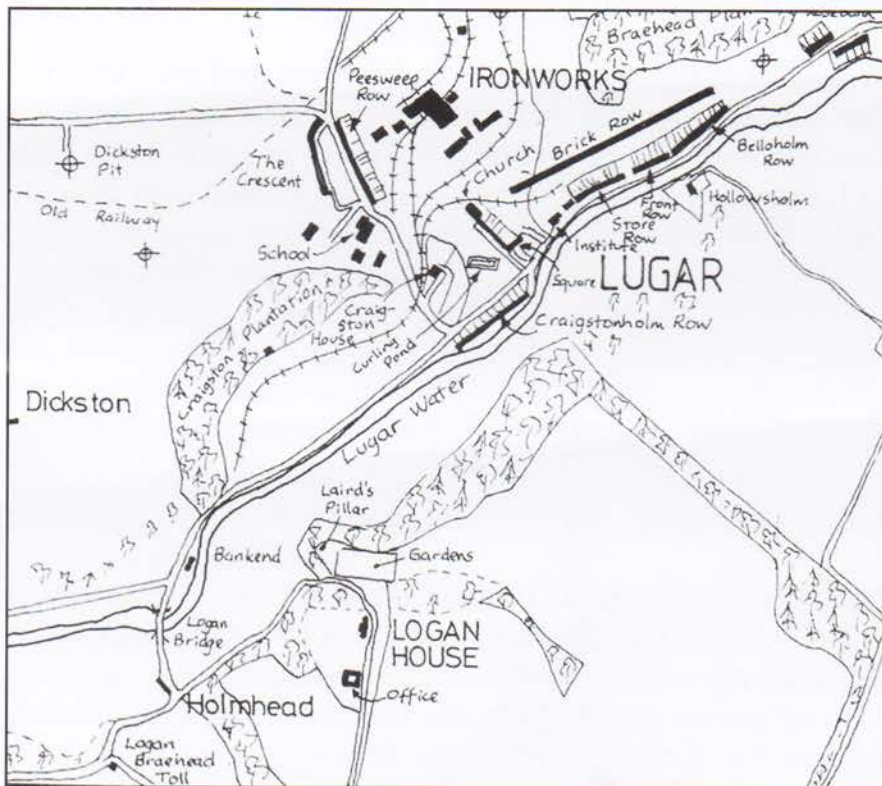
The toilets were outside, flush toilets, away at the other end of the row. So on a cold winter's night you had to get wrapped up to go along the row. I got many a fright, there were a lot of wild cats about. They would shoot past you yowling and nearly give you heart failure. Then you would get into the toilet, it was so wee, and you'd sit there with your knickers at your ankles listening to the wind whistling in below the door. Logan House was more or less a ruin then. I was in the cottages for 3 years then I moved across the road to number 2 Holmhead Crescent.

Stable Cottages with
ruin of Logan House
in the background



Logan is sometimes referred to as Logan Toll. At one time there was a tollhouse in Logan at the top of Holmhead Brae. This was where people had to pay a toll to get into Logan and beyond. I think this is where the name Logan Toll came from.

My Grandfather had some ground, at the top of the avenue, with haystacks and a few hens, like a wee smallholding and he grew all his vegetables. In warm weather there wasn't much water in the house and further up the avenue in a field he had to dig a wee well to get water. I used to get sent down to the stables where the big house used to be, there was a spicket at the end of the building. Near the stables at the crossroads there was a wooden brig over the burn. The water from the burn is now piped underground.



Map (circa 1900) shows location of Toll House



After the war, several folks in Cronberry and Lugar got together and decided first of all to form a Labour Party. We got the organisation going and at the first meeting it was decided to look into housing in these areas. In Cronberry in particular the houses were outdated. The sanitary arrangements were called 'dry middens' and it was quite an ordeal every six weeks when they had to be emptied. The County Council were not happy about rebuilding in Cronberry and parts of Lugar were to be demolished and rebuilt. Miners coming into the district and people from Cronberry and Lugar miners rows were expected to be housed at Netherthird, although the locals would have preferred new houses where they already lived. In November 1945 I was elected Councillor. The government of the day would not allow building in Cronberry or Lugar. After many long discussions and disagreements it was decided to build at Logan Toll.

The S.S.H.A. built houses for the miners and the first two families into Logan Toll were the Stirrat and Torrance families, both from Cronberry. Thirty pre-fabs were built in Logan as temporary housing. They rotted very quickly and later Swedish style timber houses were built, these are still in existence today, along with other brick built houses. When a new housing scheme or extension to a scheme is built it is common practice to look for a local name for the streets. For the first time ever, three Labour Councillors were elected at the same time and their names were used in Logan housing scheme. Bryce Avenue, Baillie Drive and Paterson Avenue.

Logan Workingmen's Club was built in 1968. At the time it was County Council policy not to allow the building of licensed premises within a housing scheme. We explored various avenues and finally the Council agreed to building within the scheme. It was the first club ever to be built within a housing scheme.

I have many relatives in Spain where my parents came from. When they arrived here by boat, landing at Ardrossan, they travelled to Lugar by train. My Mother's first feeling was one of dismay – so many smoking chimneys and furnaces. She said if there had been a bridge back to Spain she would have walked there.



The neighbours were kind to the Spaniards, who more or less kept to themselves because they did not speak the language.

They had Spanish type parties with guitar music and my mother went to Glasgow to buy the stuff, the Spanish stuff.

My first visit to Spain was in 1958 and I return there regularly. Although it is nice to go there on visits, Scotland is my own country.



Smoking chimneys
of Lugar rows and
the furnaces



The Cronberry Rows

These Tarry Rows
were demolished in
the mid-1920s

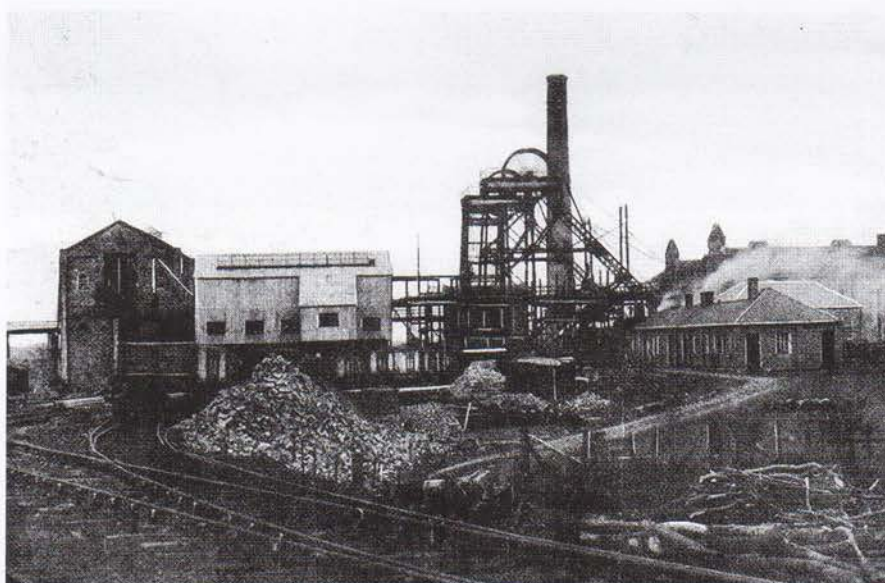


Pits were closing down all over and miners were being moved to different districts. We decided to come to Ayrshire, as that was where the Lennox family originated. In 1949 when we came from Lanarkshire, there was no Dixton Avenue, Holmhead Crescent, Baillie Drive or Bryce Avenue. The Big House was still there and there was a walled garden for the Big House.

We started up the Tenant's Association. I forget what it would be, a shilling or a sixpence first that you paid in. We went round collecting. Well it was just supposed to keep the thing going, but we started a stupid thing, we decided to use up some of the money. We paid the rent of anybody that was off work. And here, they suddenly discovered that if you lay off work, you were better off than working. Because by the time we paid the rent etc they were sometimes gaining a wee bit. So as a result many started laying off and it just fell away, we ran out of money.

The Tenant's Association ran Gala days and sometimes we had bus runs. There were two or three successful Gala days held in Lugar football field. There were no facilities in Logan for such events in those days.

**Barony Colliery
pre 1962**



I got married on the 15th August 1952, before that I stayed at Cronberry Railway Station and John was from Lugar. We couldn't get a house in those days so after we were married we moved in with John's sister in Netherthird. We had a room and we shared a kitchen. It wasn't easy but we got on very well together. It was fourteen months before we got a house in Craigston Holm, Lugar - a room and a kitchen and a scullery, but it had an inside toilet and boiler. We were in heaven. It was lovely to get your own house.



In 1957 most of the Lugar rows were being demolished and Logan was being developed for incoming miners, so we came to 2 Dixton Avenue, Logan. There's a farm you can see from here, Dixton Farm, and I think that's where we got the name of our street.

Now we had all the mod cons, a bathroom and hot running water. We've been here for 43 years and have no plans to move.



Cronberry Railway
Station



My family lived in a room and kitchen at 16 Craigston Holm, nicknamed the Dandy Row because that was where the gaffers lived. We had the best of neighbours. Mrs. Hall up the row from us used to start at the top and work her way down, calling at every house collecting and giving news. She would do the same on the way back up if she had learned anything new. That's the kind of situation we had, folk who thought a lot of their neighbours. Up here in Logan, everything is different because people lead busy lives. In the Dandy Row, the top and bottom were the double houses. Andrew Steele lived in the bottom one next to the school brae, and it was Jimmy Simpson lived in the top one.

When entertaining, you had the sitting room fire on and your visitors would sit in there. Next-door in the kitchen you had the table laid. Visitors went through to the kitchen, had their meal then everybody went back through to sit at the fire for a wee blether. When the Wylie's got together, it was a great night. Our house in Lugar was far better for entertaining than the one I have now, with its long narrow living room. When I put the table up there's no room left to get round about.

For entertainment in Lugar we went to the Institute where there were billiards and dancing. The library there had all kinds of books, I don't know what happened to them. There was a Social club for the football and many a good night we had. The Dandy Row folks organized bus trips for away days. After moving to Logan all these stopped when we were separated. There was nothing to do in Logan except going for walks. I'm not fit enough for that now but I've a great view. From my window I can see right to the top of Lugar. At one time I could see down into the Glen and watch people going for a picnic there. Now trees block the view in summer.

John Fleming stayed next door to us with his mother and sister. His father was killed in the pit. This is a wee poem that John wrote about the brick row sweet shop.

**For a poke of sweeties or a lollipop
We went to a hoose, which was also a shop
So at 459 let's take a stop
And enter Annie Kelly's sweetie shop**

Nae fancy coonter tae haud the sweets
The kitchen table held a' the treats
Nae plastic bags for us pare folks
Oor sweets were put in newspaper pokes

Oh what treats for a penny or two
Highland Toffee and Lucky Bags too
And Ogie Pogie Eyes, different colours they took
Depending only on how hard you could sook

But oh that's enough o' this patter
It's fairly makin ma mooth watter
So let's leave the shops and be on oor way
Tae ither places up and doon the brae

There was Annie Kelly's shop and another one down the row where toffee and tablet were made, the kind of things our Mothers used to make for us years ago. Your penny bought two pokes of sweeties, they were sweeties in those days. The poke was made from newspaper.

In Lugar we shopped in the store. It was originally owned by the Coal Company then the Co-operative took it over. Willie Craig who had Dixton Farm used to come with a cart and he delivered milk and cream. Tam McCaughie came with a horse drawn cart to sell fish. It was a smashing wee horse he had, it was smart.

When we moved to Logan the Co-operative vans came with provisions. Elsie Hawthorn and Anna McIlvaney came in for my mother's order. Lipton's van and also a butcher came round.



Institute and Store,
Lugar



Before I came to Logan I lived in Lugar Front Row in a room and kitchen. There were seven of us, my husband, myself, two daughters and three sons. My husband and I slept in a double bed in the kitchen and the girls in a built-in bed and the boys in a bed settee in the room.

We moved to 1 Boswell Crescent, Logan in June 1957. At that time houses were being built all around us. Ours was a five apartment so now we had plenty of room, which made such a difference.

My next door neighbour, over the fence, was Ella Richard who moved there from the stable cottages.

Lugar Front Row



I came to Logan in the early 1960's. I was brought up with my grandparents when they retired out of the farms. We came to Baillie Drive where there were houses set aside for farm workers. Our house backed on to the railway line and countryside, so it was not such a big change because, although we were in the village, we still bordered the countryside.



The trains still ran in the early 1960's right along the back gardens of Baillie Drive. We had never seen this before and it was really exciting. When a train came my friends and I ran up to the top of the garden to see it going past and waved to the driver.

I went to Logan school in 1965, starting in Primary 2. Previously I had gone to Greenmill Primary.



Agricultural houses (right) a prefab and variety of other housing



On my first visit to Logan, I can remember walking along what is now Logan Avenue. The whole of the Avenue was in full bloom with daffodils and there were trees on either side and I thought I'd never seen anything so nice.

I lived in Peesweep Brae in a single end, one room and a tiny kitchen with a sink and cooker. We had cold water in the house and the toilet was outside and across the road. The first time I went to the toilet I couldn't get back out. Three big white Alsatians, which belonged to Mrs. Dixon, were outside, and I had to sit there until they went away. You made sure you went to the toilet before you went to bed. The waiting time for a house in Logan was six years. I moved to Bryce Avenue in Logan.

When we moved to Logan we intended to open a shop. There were no shops of any kind then in Logan. People walked to Cumnock for their shopping and there were a lot of vans came in too, but for many years there were no shops. The County Council allocated plots for shops, you had no say in the matter. We opened ours in 1955, and took on the Post Office after six months. I sold everything in the shop, even wool, there was no competition. Other shops appeared about 6 or 7 months later. Bert McKechnie sold all the stationery, paper and lemonade next door to me. Then the Co-operative was built. They took two sites, a double shop. They sold everything you could imagine, drapery, groceries and butcher meat. I was worried it would hurt my trade. The McVities biscuit traveller said the best thing I could get was a Co-op next to me, the people would come to me. The next one must have gone bankrupt. The shell went up and then it was left empty. That's when my brother John Livingston completed the building. He sold ironmongery, ornaments, carpets, paper and paint, everything. Mrs Gall, another local person, opened the bakery next door to my brother and everything was baked on the premises. Lily Smith and her sister Mima built another shop next to Mrs Gall. It was a fish and chip shop, but it was really only weekend trade. It closed later and was used for various purposes. The Club was built where the stables had been. The Logan folk were good to us.

I attended Lugar Primary, up the school brae. We got the bus from Logan, it didn't go up the brae so we had quite a climb. School dinners came in a van in the big stainless steel containers and were served in the Horsa hut, which was also a gym hall and music room. The school seemed a forbidding place to me, dark inside in some parts. Some of the rooms had a partition. The desks were wooden with a seat attached, sometimes two together. The toilets were outside, it was icy cold, so there was never any time wasted in the toilets. We had good fun playing in the sheds. A lot of the boys wore tackety boots and they used to make them spark on the playground, we girls were impressed. I left Lugar School in 1963 when the new school in Logan opened.



Now I work at Logan Primary. I've been a teacher since 1972. The equipment at Lugar was very basic and we did a lot of sums and language. Nevertheless my education then did me proud. Nowadays we have lovely books and materials to work with. Environmental studies get a big whack of the time, whereas maths and language get less. Primary school children can now work on the Internet.

Logan Primary has seven classes and a Nursery. This makes it easier for me as a Primary 1 teacher, as I already know the children and they know me and the building when they come into my class.

The Wing is for further education classes, youth groups and the Forge Ahead classes East Ayrshire are running just now. It's used by the Rural and for different social activities, just like a Community Centre.



**Lugar Primary
School closed
June 1963**



My first job as a teacher was at Lugar Primary School from 1936 to 1939 when I taught the qualifying class. I returned to my home area of Girvan and Barr to teach until the headship of Lugar became vacant and was appointed Head Teacher there in 1949.

At that time houses were being built in Logan to accommodate incoming miners. There was also a shift in population from Cronberry and Lugar to Logan. Lugar School was not able to accommodate the influx so a new school was built at Logan and it opened in 1963. I was automatically made Head Teacher there although I would have preferred to stay at Lugar. I occupied the old school house at Lugar and travelled every day to Logan. The new school had many advantages. It was light, airy and spacious. Toilets and washing facilities were inside instead of in the playground and the children had much better shelter on rainy days. One disadvantage was the flat roof, especially when we had heavy rain.

Logan Primary School, 1963 to present day





Lugar School and children circa 1962



Lugar School
Dinner Ladies
Mrs Gall,
Mrs Hastings,
Mrs Mullen.

Heather Hamilton

Logan Primary School badge was designed by a former pupil, Mary Harkness. Her aim - to find symbols relevant to the district and to the school, while perpetuating the bond with Lugar, what more appropriate then than "William Murdoch's Flame" and the Colliery Winding Wheel.

The badge colours are black, white and gold showing the Wheel of Industry and The Light of Discovery.

The photograph shows Matthew Torrance and Edith Ballantine wearing the "New" Logan Primary School Badge and Colours.



The Scouts started in 1940. They met in Lugar Institute and a little later the Guides and Cubs started.

The church hall in Logan opened in February 1959. It was the first and only place in Logan where people could meet. The Scouts moved up from the Institute to the hall for their meetings. At the time we got planning permission to build a Scout hut. We went to the old airport at Monkton where we dismantled two houses that had been used by squatters. The Scout leader at that time was Willie Baird, a joiner, who planned how to make the two houses into a hut, which opened in 1960. While the hut was being built we met in the church hall, but we also used the old stable cottages where we held a sale of work to raise funds for strips for the scout football team.

The Scout hut nowadays is different from what it used to be. Thanks to help over the years from volunteers and the unemployed youth scheme and a grant from the Minerals Trust, it now has brick walls and a concrete floor with a wooden topping, a permanent hall.

We have always been well supported by the local community. Sadly the youth movements are all falling away now. We still have Cubs and Beavers, but nothing for the girls.



Scout Presentation
at Logan

Agnes Conn



I've been a member of Cronberry S.W.R.I. for 51 years. It first started at Cronberry School in 1947, with monthly meetings held in the School. We had demonstrations and speakers and we entertained ourselves when it came to the closing of the season. At first we travelled by bus from Logan to Cronberry for the meetings, then we moved to the church hall and finally the I.F.E. wing in 1965. We always have a closing social and our summer outing. We've a very good membership, and we have won lots of trophies at shows.

I joined Lugar Church Guild in 1959. Rev. Ian Tweedlie was the minister and Mrs Weir was the president. Originally the Guild met weekly in the church vestry. When I became a member, we met in the church hall fortnightly and this is still when and where we meet now. It's a good going Guild and we work hard to help the church with donations.

Lugar Church Guild members mark their 60th birthday



The day we came here from Lanark it was snowing, a cold raw day. There was no lighting and no heating. Wee Maggie Baird sent us some food over. John McGregor sent over pails of coal, paper and sticks to light the fire, and kept us supplied with coal until our own arrived. Very, very good neighbours, made me feel welcome.



The elderly folk in Logan had no amenities until the council built a cabin for them. We formed a committee and we had indoor bowls, dominoes and games. We had social evenings, competitions (very lively ones) and a days outing every year. We had a good coal burning fire, and one of the men was allocated to light it every morning. We opened at 9 o' clock and closed at 10 at night. Although the Council supplied the cleaning materials, the actual work was done by willing volunteers. The cabin eventually got burned down. The County Council built another cabin. It is used by the Chiropodist, and they have bingo sessions there. Some people still go up for their dinner, but it's not on the same standing as the old cabin.



**Logan Senior
Citizens Club**


Sandy Drury

The Logangate Arms was built by the McKechnie family and opened in June 1955. A meeting of cronies interested in forming a Burns Club was held in the Logangate Arms in February 1957, with twenty interested cronies present. The club has no affiliations with the Logangate Arms although it is called the Logangate Burns Club.


Present owners, the Hanlon family, continue to give us the use of the premises as and when required. Our main events are the St Andrew's night and our Burns Supper, with our annual Burns trip in June.

Occasionally we bring in guest speakers, but on Millennium night it was solely conducted by all members of our own Club.

THE LOGANGATE BURNS CLUB
Federation No. 811



THIRD
Anniversary Celebration
IN THE
LOGANGATE ARMS, CUMNOCK
ON
FRIDAY, 29th JANUARY, 1960
at 6.45 p.m.



Chairman - - - W. HALL, Snr., President

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Cathy Cambridge	Agnes Conn
Isobel Dawson	Elizabeth Dewar
Sandy Drury	Concha Esquierdo
Betty Fleming	John Fleming
George Greig	Heather Hamilton
Betty Harrison	Terry Harrison
Elaine Jones	Joe Jones
Willie Lennox	Dane Love
Rose McMillan	Jean McMurdo
Willie Paterson	Ella Richard
Alex Rowan	Stanley Sarsfield
Marion Wylie	May Wylie
Jean Young	

The Baird Institute, Cumnock

The Forge Ahead Learning Project, Auchinleck

The Cumnock Chronicle

The group would like to give a special mention to Miss May Wylie, who sadly passed away before this book was completed.

Heather Hamilton.

Elaine Jones.



Jean McMurdo.!

John Fleming.

Betty Fleming.

Logan

Logan District History Group



"Three Cheers for Logan"