

A COLLECTION OF WORDS

IBROX WRITERS GROUP AT HOUSE FOR AN ART LOVER

Exhibition open daily 14/04/17-26/4/17, 10am-4pm

This exhibition marks the end of a project between the Ibrox Writers Group and House for an Art Lover which has taken place as part of our Heritage Programme.

This project has taken place between January - April 2017. The writers responded to the content of the Heritage Centre which is in the former stables and dovecot buildings of Ibroxhill House and now situated at ART PARK House for an Art Lover. The Heritage Centre facility showcases the history of the local area including the 1938 Empire Exhibition, shipbuilding and much more.

Each writer has responded to the content of the Heritage Centre in their own way. They were inspired through group meetings, talks and personal research. The exhibition showcases a selection of works created during the project to read and listen to and includes a publication of works.

In addition to this exhibition you can join the writers for a coffee morning and readings at Ibrox Library on Friday 28/04/17, 10:30am-12pm.

Grant aided by Glasgow City Heritage Trust.

IBROX WRITERS

Ibrox Writers Group are a creative writing group who meet on Fridays, 10am - 12pm at Ibrox Library. They write, read, support and advise, drink tea and visit inspiring places. Open to all abilities, they are always happy to welcome new members. If you are interested in joining, send a letter including your contact details to:

FAO Ibrox Writers Group, Ibrox Library, 1 Midlock Street, Glasgow, G51 1SL

Search Ibrox Writers to follow them on Facebook.

The Heritage Programme has been supported by:



The Hugh Fraser Foundation
William Mann Foundation



HOUSE FOR AN ART LOVER



LOVE BY THE BURN

BY TOMMY CLARKE

I pain on the passion, I dare not tell
Why should I blush to say to all
By Cuninghous Burn, you cast your spell

Sin of Greeks is my hell
Masculinity holds my heart in thrall
I pain on the passion, I dare not tell

At dawn you wash, the water doth not quell
The flame in thy core for you it will call
By Cuninghous Burn, you cast your spell

Crimson petal cheeks makes my heart swell
You see me stare, you draw up tall
I pain on the passion, I dare not tell

Wet skin and hair, my gaze it does dwell
Painful, but sweet to love, befall
By Cuninghous Burn, you cast your spell

As you leave, I bid you a quiet farewell
Feeling an instant loss, insignificant, small
I pain on the passion, I dare not tell
By Cuninghous Burn, you cast your spell

THE EMPIRE EXHIBITION 1938

BY ROSALIE WHITE

It was a pleasant day in May 1938 and all the local Govan children were very excited. We were a motley crew with dirty faces, sticky fingers and even some with the backside hanging out of their trousers. At last, the Empire Exhibition was being opened today by King George VI and his wife Queen Elizabeth. Nothing as exciting had ever happened to the children of Govan before. The opening ceremony was held in Ibrox Park, the home of Rangers Football Club. The King looked very handsome in his smart Naval uniform and the Queen was stunning in a lovely suit trimmed with fur.

It was a very long winded affair and the children got a bit bored while waiting to see the Royal couple but it was certainly worth the wait when the King and Queen travelled to nearby Bellahouston Park, the site of the Exhibition, in a landau led by four horses with footmen sitting proud to guide them. All the dignitaries were gathered there to greet them. They were dressed to the nines, all suited and booted and looking magnificent with their top hats and gloves some with their medals on. The Lord Provost was sporting his Ermine robes and looked absolutely splendid. These sights were very unusual for Glasgow. The Exhibition stood out like a beacon in the darkness.

The Tait Tower stood 470ft high and was officially known as the Tower of The Empire. It had wonderful flowerbeds and fountains that were lit up with lovely colours. The Park was fantastic with all the different buildings that had been constructed especially for the occasion. There was The Palace of Art, The Palace of Engineering and The Palace of Industry. There were pavilions for commonwealth countries, South Africa, Canada, Australia and Ireland. There was a highland village with black houses and heather that people could walk through. Someone had even made a model of Balmoral Castle made of sugar. The Southern Rhodesia building had a working Victoria Falls. The UK building had wonderful golden lions standing proudly at the door. All the flags of the Commonwealth were gently wafting in the breeze, the fountains danced with sparkling water and gardens were a sea of colour unlike anything that we had ever seen before. There was an amusement park with a crazy house that had a laughing man above the entrance, sitting on the roof there was a sculpture of cats. Inside performed the fat lady and the tattooed man. Very unusual sights.

As the night began to fall tram cars carrying visitors arrived and they were all lit up and could be seen for miles. It was soon time to go home and off we went tired but very happy. The Exhibition would go on for another few months. Maybe if our parents could afford it we would manage to come and visit properly instead of having to view it through the railings but it was a wonderful day and we would have such happy memories, after all it's not every day you see the King and Queen in Glasgow.

79 years later, The Palace of Art is still standing in its original place, and we can visit whenever we want, no need to be royalty now. The Palace of Engineering was moved to Prestwick Airport and can still be seen today. The South African Pavilion was moved to ICI in Ardeer to be used as a staff canteen, not sure if it is still there or not. Maybe one day I will go and look for all three.

I REMEMBER IN PAISLEY ROAD WEST

BY ISABEL HAGGART

Embers dying
on black grates
in damp houses
where rats run
from room to room.

Looking for scraps
that have not already been eaten
by hungry bellied
children.

In large houses
servants prepare
turkey grand,
to serve at waited
tables.

Silver shining to
show face.

Wine rests on
polished surfaces
and dainty ladies
pick at meat
done to perfection.

WW1 SCOTTISH SOLDIER'S LETTER TO HIS WIFE

BY J ANTHONY LENTINI

Private Charles Sterling, British Company WF 48B
Western Front France
British Army Carrier Postal Service
4th Division
366 Rue de Lucerne
Paris, France

Letter addressed to:
Mrs. Clara S. Sterling
262 Paisley Rd West
Glasgow, Scotland G511BN

26-December-1914

Dear Clara,

Merry Christmas my Love!

You will not believe what happened today. Its six o'clock and I just returned to my trench. Something wonderful happened today amidst all the killing and war. I am still in a state of shock still trying to convince myself that it really happened. Let me start from the beginning. It started on Christmas Eve, there was an eerie quiet, not a sound, no shots were fired all along our portion of the Western front. There was something very unusual happening on this historic day. Not a shot had been fired since Christmas Eve and the deafening silence continued at daybreak on Christmas day. During the quiet of the morning, no one knows exactly how it happened. But this is what I wrote in my journal:

6:30 am Christmas Morning, 25-Dec-1914. There is an eerie silence, nothing, no fighting, no gunshots.

7:00 am. I hear singing, yes singing. A German soldier singing a Christmas song! Is this really happening? More Germans joining in, louder and louder, clearly the words in German but the tune, *Oh Come All Ye Faithful*, unmistakable. My friend, Gary sitting next to me stood up and began singing in English.

*Oh Come All Ye Faithful, Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem...*

Suddenly everyone around me started singing all along the trenches. The German soldiers emerged from their trenches calling out "Merry Christmas" in English. You cannot imagine the strange almost surrealistic feeling I had, my mind struggling to comprehend what happened next.

Our soldiers and our allies tumbled out of our trenches and greeted them, the enemy, the people we have been shooting at trying to kill each other now it was if nothing had happened, there was no war we were all long-lost friends and as I got up and walked out of my trench I saw a German soldier waving a sign, "Pleez, you no shoot, we no shoot".

Over the course of the day, we exchanged gifts; cigarettes, food, buttons and hats. The Christmas truce allowed both our sides to bury dead comrades, the dead bodies had lain there for weeks in "no man's land" on the ground between the opposing trenches.

I laid down my rifle, climbed up over the top of the trench and greeted the German soldiers, some no older than our eldest son, John. They were just like us, the only difference... is the uniform. It felt like we were all one, I smiled, shook hands and joked with German soldiers. No one really wanted to fight, it was a job we were supposed to do for some higher ups. I wished they could be here. I would shove this dirty war in their faces. The next day after the celebration the fighting resumed as though nothing had happened...nothing at all.

I am hoping this will be the spark that ends the war. Keep your fingers crossed!

Clara give the boys all my love. Tell them their dad is doing his duty and will be coming home soon. I love and miss you more than you can imagine.

Love,

Charlie

EMPIRE EXHIBITION 1938

BY MARGARET NICOL

My brothers and I were excited with the Empire exhibition coming to the Bellahouston Park in 1938 as we lived nearby. Every day we would walk by the park after school and we could see all these modern buildings being built, it was a big difference to where we lived in these grimey streets of Glasgow, in fact in the 1930's the streets were still being lit by flickering gas lamps and many buildings at that time were coated from the soot from industrial chimneys whereas the exhibition was new, clean and modern.

We could see the changes happening from day to day. We could see the tallest building we had ever seen being built (Tait's Tower) we thought no way are we going up that. Mum and dad would put money away every week so we could all go when the exhibition opened.

The exhibition was a symbol of the determination of a very large number of Scots to restore prosperity and employment to Scotland at that time and also a showcase to the talented architects of Scotland in the 1930s.

King George VI and Queen Elizabeth opened the exhibition at Ibrox Football Stadium on 3/5/38 and then moved to the Bellahouston Park.

We put on our best clothes and were warned to be on our best behaviour. When we arrived at the exhibition we were met with these tribal giraffe brass necked women, we stood staring at them and a little frightened by their stretched necks. Apparently the necks were not stretched, the brass rings make it look that way so we were told.

We heard the laughing policeman and that made us laugh so hard with tears running down our faces. We also saw a model of Balmoral Castle all made of sugar and showed every detail, that was fantastic. We visited the grassy areas where we would wander in and out of the old stone "Blackhouses" with thatched roofs, we had never seen roofs made of grass how can that keep the house dry we thought, Mum just laughed at us.

We went into the crazy house with the distorted mirrors making us look all shapes and sizes, that was so much fun.

The buildings all had to be made with inexpensive material and had to be rapidly and easily constructed. As it was to be all taken down after 6 months as that was how long the lease was for the park ground and then we would be back to grimey old Glasgow.

We only had 3 days of dry weather as it was one of the wettest the summer of 1938. In the closing ceremony we all stood in the pouring rain I will never forget the exhibition as it brings back a lot of happy memories for us kids and also 12 million others who visited the Park that year.

The only surviving building still in the Park is the Palace of Art from the exhibition still standing and at the top of the hill there is a monument dedicated to the Exhibition of 1938.

We as a family went there a few times as mum saved hard for our season tickets. I will never forget the Empire Exhibition with mum and Dad and my brothers.

FORGOTTEN BY HISTORY: A BRIEF WHO'S WHO GUIDE TO ALTERNATIVE VIEWS FROM 1938 ON THE EMPIRE EXHIBITION

BY KEITH MILLAR

ALL Red Route: The imaginative pamphlet published by the ILP to accompany the *Workers Exhibition in August 1938*. Inspired by the French surrealists it satirised the British Empire and the Exhibition by inviting readers to go on a voyage of discovery by means of an ocean liner run by the *All Red Route*.

ANDERSON, Tom: Respected and pioneering Socialist. Born in Pollokshaws in 1863. Founder of Socialist Sunday School and Proletarian school movements. Author of numerous pamphlets including: *The Proletarian song-book (1919)*; *The fat bourgeois: A story for the young (1919)*. In 1937 a flat in 38 Nathan St. Govan, he was using was broken into and his printing press stolen. He gifted the use of the flat and the recovered press, to the United Socialist Movement during 1938.

BELLAHOUSTON: Place from the gaelic, Baile Uistean. An estate purchased by James Rowan of Marylands in 1726, who built a mansion within the grounds. It was enlarged by the incorporation of part of Dumbreck before 1871, when on the death of Moses Steven, a trust was created by his sisters to for "charitable, religious and educational purposes" to benefit the citizens of an expanding Glasgow. Pursuing these themes the Empire Exhibition was held there during 1938, and received Papal visits in 1982 and 2010.

BRITTON, Sarah: Researcher, her article in History Workshop in January 2010 '*Come and See the Empire by the All Red Route!*: *Anti-Imperialism and Exhibitions in Inter-war Britain* focussed on the contrasting opposition to the 1924 Exhibition at Wembley, London and the 1938 Bellahouston Exhibition.

BUTLER, Uriah: Campaigner for social justice and home rule in Trinidad, where in 1937 the biggest oil-field in the Empire was located. Excessive profits by Apex, the Oil company whilst malnutrition and deficiency diseases were widespread gave rise to social protest led by Butler's Citizens Home Rule Party. On Sept. 18th 1937, he came out of hiding to give evidence to a Royal Commission but was instead arrested and charged for "incitement to murder". This was in the wake of British warships being deployed and draconian powers to curb the riots which had claimed the lives of two police. Butler served a 2 year sentence but was interned during WW2.

CALDWELL, J.T.: Guy Aldred's "right hand man" for 30 years, who died aged 95 in 2007. Born in Belfast (see his books *Severely Dealt with* and *With Fate Conspire* his auto-biographies) plus *Come Dungeons Dark* on Aldred. Lived in Gibson St. flat with Ethel McDonald from 1938 to her early death in 1960.

COMMON Goods Fund: Consists of a whole pile of assets all over Scotland held in Public ownership by Councils (like Glasgow City) worth tens of millions of pounds in different places.

In September 1938, after a damp summer. The Council decided to fund 100,000 child tickets for school-children, and 100,000 tickets by using the Common Good Fund. It urged other Councils to follow suit. It is not known whether the tickets to the unemployed were distributed on "signing on" or whether "signing on" was linked to attending the Empire Exhibition, and whether transport was included. [Source see H.T. Derrett]

CRAMPSEY, Bob: Author of *The Empire Exhibition of 1938: the Last Durbar*, Edinburgh, 1988. 50 years after the celebrated historian and STV football commentator wrote a reflective account on a waning Empire.

DERRETT H.T.: Author of a pamphlet *Under the Fifth Rib*, published by the Glasgow Anarchist Communist Federation in 1939 from a shop run by *Frank Leech*. In the pamphlet the Council's use of the Common Goods Fund is revealed along with sections on conditions in India, Rhodesia and Jamaica.

KINGSTON Halls: Located beside what is now the Quay. In 1938 it was a Library and Public Halls used by ILP.

KINGSTON, Jamaica: On the very day King George VI opened the Empire exhibition, a riot of impoverished workers in Kingston demanded to be imprisoned as the only means to ward off hunger and destitution.

NEHRU, Jawarhalal: Indian anti-colonialist. Sent a telegram in 1938, congratulating the Workers Exhibition in their opposition to the Empire exhibition and support for Indian independence.

SPIRIT of Revolt: Archive which in 2014 had a window display about Commonwealth Games in 13th Note pub & in 2015 in Mitchell Library to celebrate Glasgow rent strikes of 1915 led by Mary Barbour, Helen Crawford etc.

TRINIDAD: Location of impoverished oil workers' protests & riots in 1937 & trial of leaders including Uriah Butler. Birthplace of George Padmore and CLR James.

UNITED Socialist Movement: The group created by *Guy Aldred & Ethel McDonald* During the 1930s, the U.S.M. Was active in Free Speech Fights in Glasgow Green and in support of revolutionary forces during the Spanish Civil War. Ethel McDonald went to Barcelona in 1937. Jennie Patrick to Madrid. Published 4 leaflets Jan-April 1938 against the Empire Exhibition & the first issue of *The Word* in May, using the printing press in Nethan St. Govan. See John T Caldwell book, *With Fate Conspire* (Northern Herald Books).

WORKERS Exhibition: Held in August 1938, in Kingston Halls in opposition to the "imperialist" Empire Exhibition. Opened by James Maxton M.P. (Glasgow Bridgeton) and Ethel Mannin, both members of the *Independent Labour Party*. The Exhibition was devised by an I.L.P. committee, partly based in London, chaired by Arthur Ballard. George Padmore and CLR James were both advisors. The display was centred around a central pillar depicting the big business interests in exploiting cheap labour in the Empire.

EMBROIDERED TABLECLOTH DEPICTING 1938 EMPIRE EXHIBITION

BY LIZ COWAN

Although it is almost a dying art embroidery has been ongoing since the Middle Ages. Many museums display huge wall coverings meticulously embroidered by court ladies and well to do daughters of rich families. These hangings depicted historic scenes and views of this era. By the time the 1938 empire exhibition came about the beginnings of factory machine made embroidery had begun. However the majority of people could ill afford the cost of such an article but for a few pence transfers could be purchased and these were then ironed on to a plain cotton cloth. A few colours of embroidery threads could be bought. This thread actually contained 6 strands and these threads were often split into half by the thrifty to make the threads go further and the cost cheaper.

It was still over a decade before dyed factory printed cloths, especially tea cloths were mass produced and these were great souvenirs to bring back from your holidays without the necessity of any time consuming work to create a memory.

Right up until the 50s girls as young as 6 or 7 years old were taught sewing and knitting for an hour at school on 3 days per week. This also involved embroidering your sewing work with a flower, a fancy pattern and your name with coloured threads. Although it seemed arduous work learning from such a young age it meant that most of us have never forgotten these skills.

However the durability of the cloth and threads used in this particular piece from 1938 is a telling story of the quality of things from this age, compared to the throwaway society of today.

ISABELLA ELDER

BY IRENE BROWN

Isabella Elder, the lady of Claremont House or the widow of John Elder, the owner of Fairfield shipyard was quite a lady, nowadays, she would be regarded as a woman's libber. She was certainly ahead of her time.

Isabella was born in 1828 to a solicitor and his wife the youngest of four children two of whom had died in childhood, that left Isabella and her brother John who was eight years her senior, their father died in his early forties and Isabella's brother was sent to boarding school. There is very little known about Isabella's education as it was not deemed necessary for women to have one as their main purpose in life was to get married, set up home and have children. This attitude persisted in some areas in Glasgow to the 1950s. I always remember talking to a girl who had won a scholarship to a private school and wished to go to university, she took her qualifications early as she knew her father would not let her stay on at school, she won a place at the university and her father refused to let her go as education was wasted on a girl. I met her some years later and she had married and gone to university, her father was still displeased but her husband told him it was none of his business.

Some of the younger women will be surprised to know that in a lot of jobs as soon as you were married you had to resign as your husband was supposed to keep you, this happened in local government until the mid 1960s or did you know that women if they wished to take on Hire Purchase they had to have a guarantor, a male member of their family usually their father, the same restrictions applied to property.

Isabella married John Elder in 1857 and they had an antenuptual contract of marriage the forerunner of the prenuptual agreement, this fascinated me as one assumes that it is a relatively new idea for those who are extremely wealthy, theirs was a happy marriage and a meeting of minds.

John Elder was a kindly man with the welfare of his workforce at heart, he set up an accident fund at the shipyard and other owners on the Clyde followed suit, he also provided a shed in the yard where the men could heat their cans and shelter from the weather during their break. He died aged forty five in 1869 with the ambition to build decent houses for his workforce unfulfilled.

Isabella was devastated as her whole world had revolved around her husband, his aims ambitions and achievements, she was now faced with the responsibility of managing the shipyard and 5000 workmen alone, she turned to her brother who was a marine engineer for help and he came to her assistance at the end of 1870.

Mrs Elder was now a rich widow and at that time a woman was supposed to remarry as she needed a husband to look after her, Isabella was pursued by someone called "R" they referred to him as the Russian as they assumed that that was his nationality, in the book by Joan McAlpine the name is not revealed although I think "R" stands for rogue, nowadays he would be described as a stalker wherever she went in Britain or abroad he followed, he was a con man who thought he could bully Isabella into marrying him. He maintained that she had promised to marry him and at that time there was such a thing as breach of promise in engagement, damaged parties could take the other person to court and sue them, (the law was not repealed in England until the 1970s), at that time reputation was all and Isabella felt very threatened by him, so she passed the whole business to her brother who contacted her solicitor who perhaps bought him off, R seems to have been a rogue because his past caught up with him and he was later executed in France whether it was by hanging or the guillotine is not known as the French used the guillotine until 1977.

Although Isabella Elder was spending her winters in Cannes due to health reasons she had not forgotten about the people in Govan and in 1883 she purchased a piece of ground opposite the shipyard and had it laid out as a public park for the local population. It had a boating pond and Isabella always safety conscious stipulated that it should not be deeper than six inches at any point, the park had flower beds, a band stand and I must admit much to my surprise llamas, a public holiday was declared in Govan when it was opened by Lord Rosebery in June 1885.

In 1903 Elder Park Library was opened by Andrew Carnegie although he paid for many of the libraries in Glasgow he did not pay for Elder Park as it was funded solely by Isabella Elder and there are busts of her and her husband in the entrance hall, I think it is an architectural gem.

Isabella was not one to sit on her laurels she was interested in higher education for women especially in the medical profession notable female doctors, to this end she purchased North Park House 1884 which later became Queen Margaret College, at this time women were allowed to attend some of the lectures in the university, sit the exams but not allowed to graduate. In 1894 prior to this women had to go to Switzerland to graduate in medicine.

Times were changing Isabella felt that society was changing and that women would soon have to earn money for themselves that is why she was interested in education. She felt the way forward for all concerned was education for the young men in the shipyards and the young women who lived in Govan.

In 1903 Isabella had a hospital built called the Elder Cottage Hospital, her idea was that it would be a maternity hospital but she later changed her mind and it became a general hospital to cater for those men who were injured in the shipyards. It meant that their injuries could be dealt with sooner as they no longer had to cross the river to the Western Hospital, Isabella paid the full expenses for this hospital until her death in 1905. This hospital was the forerunner of the Southern General which is now the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital.

During her lifetime it is reckoned that Isabella Elder gave £200,000 in public benefaction over and above private gifts which are not readily traceable.

The people in Govan erected a statue to her by public subscription in Elder Park, unfortunately it was not completed until 1906 a year after her death, it was the only statue erected to a woman in Scotland apart from Queen Victoria until 1980, when the statue of Dolores Ibaruri was erected on Clydeside commemorating those who died in the Spanish Civil war.

To commemorate the fifth century of Glasgow University in 1951, handsome new gates and pillars were erected at the main entrance in University Avenue. The gates incorporated the names of twenty eight famous people associated with the University only one woman is among them Isabella Elder.

IBROX

BY KAREN GALLACHER

Ibrox stadium in Edminston Drive, a red bricked fortress, a formidable sight in the middle of a Glasgow housing estate. For any fan to walk over the RFC crest and into the foyer is a wonderful thing. The floor is covered in black and white marble tiles. The walls are wooden panelled and the staircase is marbled to the top of the landing.

For me, I see the ghosts of my past and I am blessed to be a part of this working legacy. My family joined the background staff in the 1930s, firstly by my great gran Margaret Lindsay.

I take the brown door marked "Laundry". A small grey haired woman, stockily built is standing over a large ironing board. She wears a pinny over her floral dress. On her feet she wears tartan slippers with pom poms on them and her stockings hang haphazardly around her ankles. She smiles sweetly at me, too busy to speak to me. I smile back and close the door as I make my way out again.

I pass through the black and white marble tiled foyer once more and skip by a sign marked "To the Field". My great uncle Davie is already on the field. He is driving the biggest lawnmower I have ever seen. I notice as he manoeuvres the machine up and down it makes a pattern on the green grass. He winks at me and I wink back. I wave as I exit upstairs to the seated area of the stadium.

Granda Willie is vigorously brushing the debris from the previous game he hands me a 10p piece he found on the ground earlier. I kiss his cheek and he gently pats my hair.

I continue up the stadium to the second tier and open the door of a wee 'houf' marked 101. I do not know the significance of this number still. Here I see my gran Jessie. She is having a cuppa and a scone. She wears a blue and white overall and in her hair she has rollers covered by a silk scarf. She has spent all morning polishing the wooden seats to the VIP's. Her colleagues are huddled around a small heater. I am offered a tea biscuit and a drink of diluted orange juice. Glad of the rest I enjoy my wee break.

I take a short cut through the back stairs and make my way to the player's kitchen. There she is my granny, Lizzie Love, doing what she likes most, making a pot of soup. Of course she is the lady of the kitchen so her staff prepares the vegetables. She takes me to the tea room and begins to make floral arrangements for the tables. An intricate job for anyone but granny is registered blind. She hands me a white lily, her favourite flower, which I gladly accept.

Great granny Minnie is washing the dishes. So many cups and saucers. It is hard to keep count, hands full of suds; she blows me a soapy kiss.

I walk through the Thornton suite. My dad is behind the bar. Handsome in his Rangers waistcoat and tie. Black smart trousers and the shiniest shoes you have ever seen. He hands me a Coca-Cola. This is a treat! I must have been a good girl today. Not one for kisses, he hugs me tight. I hand him the lily and a tear trickles down his face.

I walk through another door and I am now back to the present day. Here I meet my mum 'Tiny', proudly working as a tour guide and telling visitors of her family history as she shows them her own special award. In 2001 she went to Monte Carlo with Auntie Irene who worked hand in hand with her sister. UEFA made a special award to Mary 'Tiny' Gallacher nee Love in recognition of her 40 years loyal service to Rangers Football Club. Mum has had many duties since starting in 1967, from cleaning to serving meals to directors and players. She has met athletes and stars from David Beckham to Sean Connery.

Now a new Rangers has been formed. The building that remains holds only memories of the past but they are special because they are *my* past.

A HELPING HAND

BY NANCY BAIN

Nellie slowed as she turned the corner into her street. "What on earth was going on?" she wondered. On such a damp, chilly day she had expected the street would be almost empty. She slowed her steps further, and narrowed her eyes, as she weighed up the situation.

Small groups of women huddled in the close mouths, most of them with their backs to Nellie, facing the far end of the street.

Nellie clamped her hand to her head, as the wind worked its way under the brim of her hat. No way was she going to let five pounds' worth of brand new hat go bowling along the filthy gutter. "Five pounds for a hat!" she thought, "Five pounds!" That was more than the huddled women had to feed their families for a week.

If her hat did blow off, she knew the women would smirk in pleasure. A sneer crossed her face as she looked at them. Most of them hadn't even a coat to their backs. An old shawl to throw round their shoulders was the best they could run to, and no doubt it would be used as a bedcover at night.

Nellie was under no illusion about her lack of popularity. They might not like her, but most of these women at one time or another, found their way to her door.

"Can I borrow five bob till the end of the week, Nellie? I'll let you have it back when my man gets paid on Friday."

When Friday came, Nellie got her five shillings back, and of course she charged a little interest. Money lenders always did.

"He probably did it because he couldn't keep up with her charges!" A spiteful voice was aimed at her back.

Nellie whirled. "Who said that?" she glared at the women.

Mary Rooney's face paled.

Nellie barged up to Mary, "What the hell are you talking about? Who couldn't keep up with my charges?"

"Johnny McVey killed himself this morning."

"Did he indeed? Well that's nothing to do with me. He didn't owe me a penny."

Nellie glared at the women. "Well, are you going to tell me how he did himself in?"

"Jumped out the window," Mary Rooney whispered.

"Where did he land?" Nellie looked along the street.

"He jumped out the kitchen window round the back."

"So why are you all watching the street?" Nellie wanted to know, but she didn't wait for an answer.

"Stupid idiot!" she thought as she walked away, recalling all the times that Johnny McVey had borrowed money. She hadn't been truthful with the women. McVey still owed her quite a few quid.

"I suppose I'll have to write it off," she thought, knowing that his widow would never have enough to pay her back.

"I wonder how she's going to pay for the funeral? She better not come to my door."

As Nellie approached her own close, she noticed that her daughter Madge was among the women there.

Nellie smiled grimly to herself. "I bet she was disappointed again!"

Madge had taken to visiting at times she knew her mother would be out, and Nellie knew why. Madge came to search for Nellie's money. Like everyone else in the street she was sure Nellie had a fortune hidden in the house.

Ralph always let Madge in, no matter how many times Nellie told him not to. Ralph was the best lodger she had ever had. Quiet, clean and paid on the dot. No trouble at all, except he would let Madge in.

Nellie tightened her grip on the handles of her shopping bag, and thought of the bank book hidden in the lining.

She knew that everyone thought she kept all her money in the house, because no one had ever seen her going into a local bank. Nellie had started squirrelling money away right from the first time her late husband had handed over his pay packet.

Her husband had never known she used a bank in town, and neither did her daughter and neighbours. Of course she did keep a good sum in the house.

Well she had to, for she couldn't run to the bank every time someone wanted to borrow money. She never let anyone borrow more than a few quid, and she never let them have more than they could pay back.

Although she dealt in small sums it was amazing how quickly the interest mounted up.

Nellie smiled at the thought of the four figure sum in her bank account, and the two hundred pounds hidden in the house. Hidden where Madge would never find it.

Madge saw the smile on her mother's face, and thought it was for her.

"Hello Mum. Did you hear what happened?"

"Yes." Nellie answered, mouth tightening at the thought of the money she would never recover.

The entrance to her close was blocked by Madge and the group of women. As Nellie bulldozed her way through, she was entertained to the details of the finding of the body, the arrival of the police and the ambulance, and the speculation as to why Johnny had jumped.

The close was like a wind tunnel, and Nellie was thoroughly chilled by the time she reached her front door.

"I can't wait to get in and plug in my new electric fire," she said to Madge as she opened the door.

A wall of heat hit her as she opened the kitchen door. The electric fire had been lifted from where she had sat it in front of the grate, and a huge coal fire blazed up the chimney.

"I thought a coal fire would be more cheerful on such a cold day," Madge said.

Nellie slumped into her armchair and two fat tears ran down her cheeks.

Two hundred pounds had gone up in smoke.

"Don't cry, Mum." Madge patted her hand, surprised at her mother being so upset at the death of a man she didn't know very well.

Nellie looked at the blazing fire and mourned the loss of the banknotes she had hidden in the ashpan.