

Our Planned Activities: Keep an Eye Out!

- 1. The Pipers of Allandale:** a festival of events celebrating and commemorating the unbelievable story of this amazing piping family and their losses during World War II at El Alamein in Egypt. We will be engaging with John Reid who has very kindly provided us with some artefacts on this story. John will begin the festival with a talk, which will also signal the start of an exhibition on the story, with a visit to the Allandale area and a play based on the experiences of the women in the family. Our aim is that you hear the talk, view the artefacts, experience the place where it all happened, and engage with the emotion, sadness and tenacity of the family that the play will evoke. We are developing a range of interactive materials to go with this festival. This will take place in Bonnybridge Library at Easter, and run for around one month.
- 2. Booklets, postcard series and map packs** on the area which will encourage residents to collaborate with us on building historical materials on the area.
- 3. Visits from a group of community workers based in Ledeborg in Belgium,** who are undertaking a study trip to Bonnybridge to learn how we set up and manage our walking programme and how they might be able to do something similar in their community.
- 4. A knowledge sharing project** with the history society of **Edenderry** in Ireland, where many Bonnybridge residents are originally from.
- 5. Possible new exhibits** based on the artefacts in Falkirk Council's museum stores that relate to the area's history.

Through our activities we've developed the capacity for local people to explore their area with a much higher critical awareness of their surroundings, the amazing historical significance attached to these areas and an understanding of how special the area is. We have also built the capacity for older residents to share their knowledge with others through their everyday use and experience of the community's physical spaces, and newer residents to extend and enjoy their use of these spaces so that they can pass these experiences on to other residents.

Historical Talk on The Baronies of Seabegs and Castlecary by John Reid of Falkirk Local History Society. Around fifteen residents came along to this talk and engaged with John about the subject, with some great questions during and after the talk.

Historical Research: Interviews with local people, visits to Callendar House Archives, Falkirk Council Museum Stores, Falkirk and Bonnybridge Libraries. We gathered a lot of data on the area, the kinds of community activities there used to be, stories from the Falkirk Herald archive, images, artefacts, maps and book excerpts. We're currently writing new historical materials for later on this year. We've gathered so much material that it's taking us quite a long time!

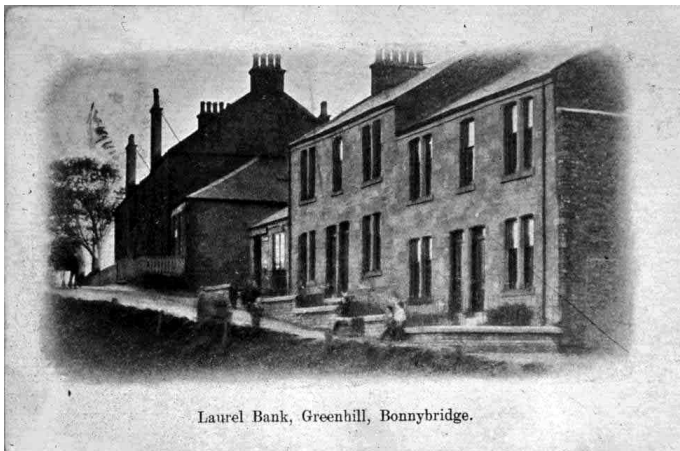


Historical Research:

- 1. To engage with residents of Greenhill and High Bonnybridge in constructing the geographical and narrative history of the area from the perspectives of new residents to the area and older established residents.**
- 2. To develop, with new and old residents, ways of exploring local history as a way to understand physical changes to the area (the unseen, the derelict, the absent, the new) with a view to developing critical awareness of our surroundings from deeper and more extensive points over time and contemporarily.**

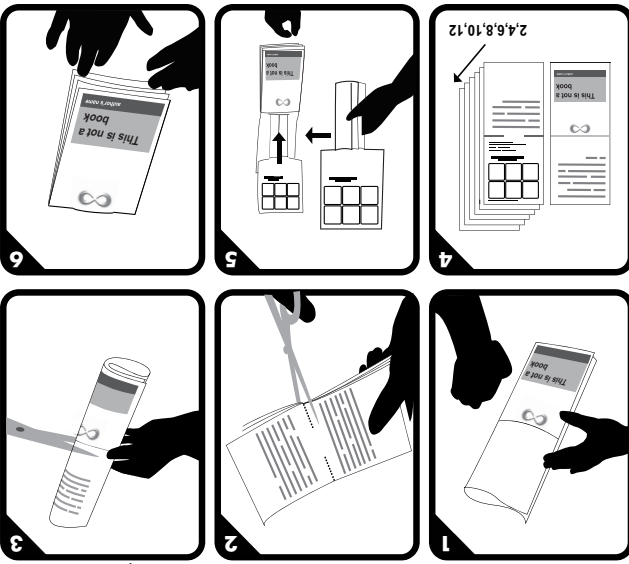
Our aims are:

We are a group of individuals based in Bonnybridge and exploring the history of the village, with particular interest in the Greenhill and High Bonnybridge areas. We formed the group informally in the summer of 2008 and our formal activities began in the autumn that year. We're interested in exploring the effects that specific issues, industry and events have caused for the area and to encourage residents to explore their area from different points in history as well as generating their own experiences and meanings from a contemporary point of view



Laurel Bank, Greenhill, Bonnybridge.

Greenhill Historical Society Summary of Activities in 2009 and Plans for 2010



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- 3. To train our members in undertaking historical research, involving digital interviewing, archive and library work and seeking out historical objects held in Falkirk Council's museum stores.
- 4. Through the development of our historical research skills, and the research we have gathered, to create thought-provoking and useful materials, events, historical talks, walks, exhibitions, mapping sessions and materials that stem from our engagement work with local people and local historical resources.

Background to the Geographic Area

Our major interest is wandering and exploring the community of Greenhill in Stirlingshire. A "village" situated in Bonnybridge, Greenhill has experienced a significant amount of upheaval and change over the last century. Most recently, hundreds of new and expensive houses have been built on vast tracts of greenbelt; mineral industry, predominantly mining, is all but gone. We're interested in what this means for the area now. If Greenhill will never be as great as it once was, what does that mean for us? We hope that by exploring the derelict, the hidden, the new, the old, the stories of new and old residents we can come up with a new definition for this amazing place.



Over these physical spaces they layered their stories of using, enjoying and understanding these places from a historical perspective. Newer residents began to see the place from different points in history which was really exciting. Conversely, newer residents showed older residents the places they liked to visit and the way they used these places. New walking routes, understandings and uses were opened up to both 'sides' and a new version of the community opened up through these walks.

7 **exploratory walks** around the High Bonnybridge, Darnair, Seabegs Wood, Seabegs Antonine Wall, Roughcastie Roman Wall, Forth and Clyde Canal, Millnquarrier and Eif Hill. We undertook these walks with a mix of new and old residents. One of our members, James, set the schedule for these walks and we invited a mix of new residents to the area to walk with residents who had lived in the area a long time. Because of this mix we therefore explored the area from a variety of perspectives over time: older residents showed newer residents pathways, routes and places that are now absent, covered up or missing, and which are no longer shown on maps.



We have undertaken a wide variety of activities in the year that we have been running, which include:

Our Activities So Far

Web: <http://greenhillproject.ning.com>
 Email: gilliancowell@btinternet.com
 Mobile: 07794 072190
 Tel: 01324 503290
 Bonnybridge FK4 1AA
 Bridge Street
 Bonnybridge Community Education Centre

Contact us:

We're always looking for new members so if you're interested in joining us just let us know! All you need is a keen interest of the area of Bonnybridge – no previous knowledge needed.

New Members

6. Continued exploration into finding a new home for a 1922 munitions wagon that was gifted to us by Network Rail and which we hope to turn into a rural community venue for arts and education programmes.

5 historical walks around Milnquarter and Canal Station, Seabegs Wood and Pend, High Bonnybridge derelict industrial areas and station, Greenhill, Roughcastle Roman Wall. These walks were specifically to engage residents in the history of these particular places. We brought along old maps and historical images which we used to show residents how the area had dramatically changed, with a view to encouraging people to see what had been allowed to be run down, lost and removed from this area to create the dereliction we now see. We hope residents will consider these losses and think about how we go forward with this to create a new place we can all live in and care for.



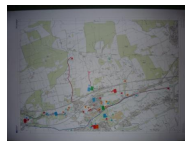
Interviews with ten local residents on their experiences and knowledge of the area which will form part of our historical materials and exhibition work over the next year. We also became historical researchers through the process, learning how to use digital voice recorders, carrying out a conversation and writing up these transcripts into meaningful and engaging materials for other residents to connect with.



A **film** of our walking routes, a collaboration with the artist Jason Nelson, as part of the exhibition "And So It Goes" **at the Park Gallery** in Falkirk exploring community spaces.



5 Mapping Exercises with new residents to the area and residents who have lived in the area a long time. We explored how the landscape is experienced and understood over different points in history, using old images, different historical and contemporary maps and coloured stickers and pens to build up different maps that are a result of the conversation between people who live, experience and understand the area in very different ways. We put missing places back on the map, traced routes and paths that some residents use part of, and other residents use the rest of. We explored places you weren't allowed to go, or places that we didn't realise we could go into. These exercises will become part of new materials we are creating soon.



This was exciting for us because Jason spent half a day with us as well as various meetings before the walk. He filmed us for about three hours and also produced quite a bit of audio! We walked round most of the areas we investigate, including Lochgreen, the Targets, Greenhill, High Bonnybridge, and we uncovered quite a lot of new things as a result of having Jason there. We found a pathway made entirely of Bonnybridge and Dykehead brand bricks. Anyone who visits or lives in the area should try to find these paths because they are quite special and tell you a lot about the brickmaking in the area.