

Dennistoun Heritage Map

Stop 1: Golfhill House (dem. 1922)

Stop 2: Dunchattan Dye Works (dem. 1850s)

Stop 3: Wellpark Brewery, 161 Duke St

Stop 4: The Crown Creighton, 476-480 Duke St

Stop 5: **Duke St Prison (dem. 1958)**; surviving outer wall located opposite 32 Drygate

Stop 6: Prison Gate Mission, 13 Whitevale St

Stop 7: **Juliet Fulton**, dressmaker, 19 Roslea Drive; approx. 19thC location indicated on map

5 Duke St Prison

Stop 8: Agnes Mullan Conway, 255 Onslow Drive

Stop 9: East End Exhibition Buildings (dem. c.1910); approx. location marked by Buffalo Bill statue, 63-87 Whitehill St

Stop 10: Whitevale Baths and Steamie, 75-89 Whitevale Street

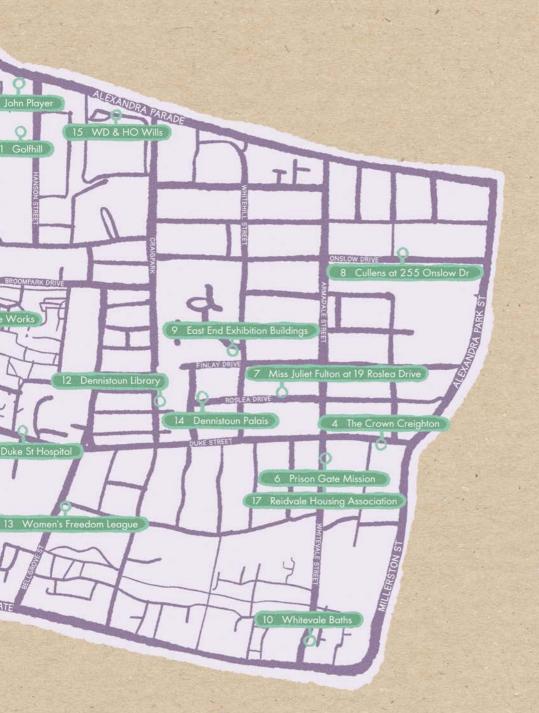
Stop 11: Duke St Hospital, 253 Duke St

Stop 12: **Dennistoun Library**, 2A Craigpark

Stop 13: **Bellgrove Presbyterian Church** (dem. 1972), 76 Bellgrove St

3 Wellpark Brewery

Dunchattan D





Lithograph of James Salmon Senior's proposed layout of the Dennistoun Estate for Alexander Dennistoun, 1854. SC768952. © RCAHMS

When *Time Out* ranked Dennistoun "eighth coolest neighbourhood in the world" in 2020, locals reacted with amusement. Yet the marketing of a "secluded island in the East End" might have been lifted from the 1850s, when **Alexander Dennistoun of Golfhill 1** engaged James Salmon Sr to design a model middle-class suburb in his name. Only a few streets of their grand design were built due to encroaching heavy industry and increasing demand for tenement housing. Even so, Dennistoun retained prestige, first attracting lower middle-class, then skilled working-class tenants. Some street names, such as **Annfield Place**, commemorate the otherwise forgotten wives of local worthies, while **Ladywell Street** and **Witch Loan** (Bellgrove) evoke older female archetypes. But what about the ordinary women who lived and worked here?

A century before Dennistoun was conceived, a Highland clachan stood to the west in 17 acres surrounded by a high wall. Rumour had it, the mysterious inhabitants lived and died within, having never spoken a word of English.

Dunchattan Dye Works 2, colloquially known as the Secret Works, was established in 1777 by George Macintosh (1739-1807). He employed only Gaelic-speaking Highlanders who lived onsite and were discouraged from mixing with locals. This was to preserve his trade secret, cudbear, a purple dye derived from lichen.

Named after patentee Cuthbert Gordon, it was derived from a traditional technique used by Highland women - including George Macintosh's granny - to dye woollen cloth. Crottle (rock lichen) was steeped in urine for three months then dried to a powder.



Dunchattan Cudbear Works, c. 1807. Map of the City of Glasgow and suburbs, Peter Fleming, 1807. National Library of Scotland. License CC BY-NC.

Macintosh industrialised the process using a salt called alum to fix the colour. As lichen was plentiful, cudbear was a homegrown alternative to imported dyes such as cochineal and indigo. Dunchattan survives today only as a street name, yet George Macintosh's wise Highland granny played an important role in the chemical revolution.

Woman's wool and cotton dress printed with purple (possibly cudbear) stripes c 1836-1838. E.1938.92.n. © CSG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection. License CC BY-NC.

Brothers J & R Tennent established a brewery on Drygate in 1777, later named **Wellpark 3** after nearby **Ladywell Spring**. During WW1, women kept Tennent's running when their male employees enlisted. But their involvement in brewing far predates the famous brand. In medieval Glasgow, brewing was women's work. **Alewives** or **brewsters** home-brewed weak barley ale flavoured with herbs, selling the excess.



Much imagery associated with witches originates with brewsters. They placed brooms outside their houses when the ale was ready; wore tall hats so customers could spot them in the marketplace; and brewed ale in cauldrons. Most were married or widowed as the authorities disapproved of single women earning an independent income. Only in the 16thC, when European style hop beer gained popularity, were brewsters pushed out, since few had the capital to invest in the expanding industry.



In 1902, Glasgow's Licensing Court prohibited women serving behind bars in establishments that were principally for drinking. The rule was relaxed in 1940 but many pubs remained male bastions, refusing to serve women. Interviewed by Dennistoun Conservation Society in 2012, Tommy Kieran of the Crown Creighton 4 reflected, "Ladies were taboo in a pub back then. I used to let some customers' wives come in, and a few times the police would stop by, asking what the women were doing in the bar. I would just tell them they were here to collect their husbands." When the **Sex Discrimination** Act became law on 29 December 1975, the pub made headlines. "I noticed a young woman standing with long blonde hair and a big fancy jacket on, drinking at the bar and surrounded by all my usual customers, along with a photographer." Next morning's Daily Record splashed, "It's a women's world... So Liz Crowns it with a pint", with a posed photograph of "Tennent's lager lovely" Liz Wilson. Some pubs dragged their feet, so licensing boards applied pressure until they installed women's toilets. Tommy's daughter-in-law Frances Kieran recalls women customers forcing the issue by asking men to wait outside while women used their facilities.



For those sentenced to Duke St rather than the asylum, rehabilitation consisted of hard labour with a feminine slant Prisoners sewed, knitted and laundered, and spun thread for mills attached to the prison. Children born within reportedly received a farthing per day for life; later, births were registered at "71 Duke St" to avoid stigma. In the early 20thC, suffragettes imprisoned here included Helen Crawfurd Anderson (1877-1954), Ethel Moorhead (1869-1955) and Dennistoun-born Dorothea Chalmers Smith (1872-1944), one of the first female medical graduates from Glasgow University. Members of the militant Women's Social and Political Union, their crimes included window-smashing and attempted arson. Supporters sang outside the gates accompanied by child piper Bessie Watson. Scottish nationalist Wendy Wood (1892-1981) arranged to be imprisoned for non-payment of National Insurance to observe conditions. Her campaigning contributed to the decision to close the prison in 1955. Demolished in 1958, a boundary wall survives within **Ladywell housing scheme 5**. A salvaged cast iron umbrella stand is displayed at Glasgow Women's Library. Painted in the suffrage colours of purple, white and green, it was allegedly kept in the office of a prison Governess who was a sympathiser.

The three-storey building at 13 Whitevale St, currently the offices of Reidvale Housing Association (see 17), was once the laundry of the Prison Gate Mission, later known as Whitevale House of Shelter for Females 6. The Mission was founded in the late 1870s by friends and temperance campaigners Mary White (1827-1903) and Agnes Ann Bryson (1831?-1907). Their Bible Woman met newly discharged women at Duke St Prison's gate with the offer of breakfast and attempted to persuade them to stay in the Mission for one year while maintaining sobriety. The Mission had no legal powers but was surrounded by a discouragingly high wall and its inhabitants, described as inmates in the Census, wore uniforms. There was accommodation and employment for 70, mostly in the laundry, whence the institution received all profits. The Mission aimed to produce servants for



Detail of section plan for House of Shelter for Females, 1900.

Office of Honeyman & Keppie. B4/12/1/7931. Glasqow City Archives.

Above Right: Umbrella stand, 1872. Glasgow Women's Library Collection.

Miss Juliet Fulton (1864-1961) taught classes in the Anglo-Parisian Dressmaking System at 19 Roslea Drive 7 where she lived with her mother, Jane. By 1891, dressmaker outstripped teacher and governess as the most common occupation for middle class "spinsters". Juliet's classes were promoted at an unusual event in September 1887 in Blackfriars Hall, Dennistoun, where the System's patent-holder, Mrs Hanmer Cooke delivered "a lecture and exhibition of fancy costumes showing the progress of the dress since the time of William the Conqueror." Juliet's family had humble origins in Lochwinnoch, where her grandparents worked as a varn-winder and shirtmaker. Her mother Jane Fulton (1844-1914) was widowed in 1871 with five children. Jane returned to her parents, without apparent means of support; however the occupations of women working from home often went unrecorded in the Victorian census. By 1881, Jane, now head of her own household at 332 Duke St. was recorded as a "dress and mantle maker" with daughters Juliet and Emily also listed as dressmakers. Ten years on,



at Roslea Drive, mother Jane was both "dressmaker and employer". There was a live-in servant, Lizzie, and nine rooms with at least one window, providing plenty of light for Juliet's classes. By the mid 1890s, another agent took over Juliet's patch, and she moved to Dunoon. After her mother's death, Juliet, now 53 and owner of a seafront cottage, married Arthur Jenkinson, 68, a retired minister who came with a manse. Juliet died in Edinburgh aged 97. This household of dressmakers, glimpsed through census records, might have ended up in the poorhouse a few decades earlier. They survived due to a combination of resourcefulness, increased opportunities in the late 19thC for single women to make a living, and the dynamic, socially mobile context of Dennistoun.

Teagown designed by Miss Martin, c. 1890-92. Miss Martin was S. Lanarkshire agent for the Anglo-Parisian system, and a contemporary of Juliet Fulton. E.1987.85. © CSG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection. License CC BY-NC.

By 1851, more than 18% of Glasgow's population was Irish born, as families departed political turmoil and famine to seek work in Glasgow. Glasgow Women's Library's archive holds papers from a typical Irish family who lived at various addresses in Dennistoun, which reveal how their biographies intersected with history. The impoverished but tight-knit community included the **Conway**, **Cullen, Mullan and Rooney families**. Neighbours from County Tyrone,

Clippie (L) and tram driver (R, holding steering handle), 1914. 50 Years of Municipal Transport: A Short Historical Survey; GW Alexander (Glasgow Corporation Printing and Stationery Department, 1944)

the Conways and Cullens remained close when they arrived in Bridgeton c.1890. The families merged in 1916 with the marriage of Patrick Conway and Mary Cullen (1889-1975), who worked as a tram conductress. or "clippie". During WW1, Glasgow pioneered the employment of women as clippies and drivers to replace conscripted men. They worked the same 51-hour week, with equal pay and conditions. At first some had to wear men's outsized caps, but by 1916 all had a custom-designed uniform of Black Watch tartan skirt and green straw bonnet. The Mullans arrived by the 1860s and the Rooneys a few decades later, finding work in Govan's shipyards. In 1919, their families merged, and newlyweds Charles Mullan and Margaret Rooney moved to Plant Street by the railway. They had six children, including

Agnes Mullan (1923-1996). Agnes worked as a machinist in a boot factory before joining the Women's Land Army in 1943. She posted a portrait in uniform (see cover) to her fiancé, Joseph Conway, then serving with the Royal Navy. Her practical breeks allowed freedom of movement to dig, drive tractors and harvest. Agnes and Joseph married at St. Anne's in 1947, bringing all four families together. They lived at several addresses before returning to Dennistoun, at 255 Onslow Drive 8. Following Agnes' death, her daughter donated her papers to Glasgow Women's Library.

On the evening of 16 November 1891, thousands watched an unusual parade along Duke St. Buffalo Bill's touring Wild West Show had arrived, playing the **East End Exhibition Buildings 9** until 27 February 1892. The show, *The Drama of Civilisation*, was delivered from a white American perspective. Performers included 50 Lakota Sioux warriors, 17 of them POWs, accompanied on tour by wives and children. The women participated by selling beadwork, building tipis and chanting on stage as their husbands performed war dances.



While the show principally featured male performers, there was one dazzling exception. Ohio sharpshooter **Annie Oakley (1860–1926)** could "shatter ten glass balls thrown successively in the air in as many seconds, changing her rifle ten times in the process." Born Phoebe Ann Mosey, she shot game as a child to support her family, before going professional. At the end of the show's run, interpreter

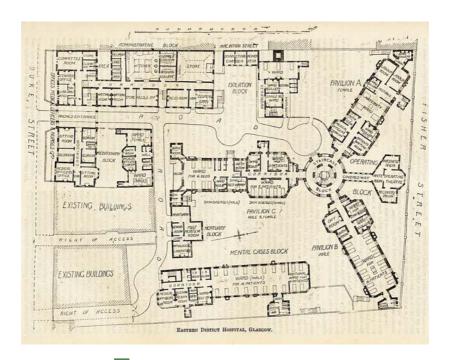
George Crager sold artefacts for £12,000 to the City Industrial Museum at Kelvingrove House, including a sacred **Ghost Dance shirt** allegedly removed from a fallen warrior at the recent **Massacre of Wounded Knee**, South Dakota, in 1890. A century on, Cherokee descendant John Earl saw the shirt in the McLellan Galleries and alerted the **Wounded Knee Survivors Association**. In 1999, following seven years of negotiations, Glasgow Museums returned the shirt, the first repatriation of an object from a European museum to a Native American community. **Marcella LeBeau (1919–2021)**, descended from a Lakota warrior, represented the Association throughout negotiations. She made and gifted a hand-sewn replica, now displayed at Kelvinhall.







In a heavily ironic speech, Magrit asks: "Isn't it wonderful tae be a woman? Ye get up at the crack o' dawn and get the breakfast oan, get the weans ready and oot the hoose lookin' as tidy and as well dressed as ye can afford. Then ye see tae the lord high provider and get him oot, then wash up, finish the ironin', tidy the hoose and gie the flair a skite o'er. Then it's oot tae yer ain wee job, mebbe cleanin' offices, servin' in a shop or washin' stairs. Then it's dinner time. Ye go tae the steamie, finish at nine o'clock and get the washin' hame. What are we? Skivvies! Unpaid skivvies." With the rise of the domestic washing machine, steamies fell out of use. Whitevale Baths has been derelict since the 1980s, but it is hoped the building may be saved for community use.



Duke St Hospital 11, or the Eastern District Hospital, was established in 1904 as one of three new poor law hospitals in Glasgow, the others being Stobhill and the Western District. Prior to this, the city poorhouse catered for sick and well alike. Duke St dealt with acute cases, and uniquely in Scotland at that time, had a ward for psychiatric observation. In the 1940s, when Scotland's infant death rate ranked among the highest in Western Europe, the maternity unit was expanded. Following the inauguration of the NHS in 1948, infant deaths sharply dropped, from 77 per live 1,000 births in 1947 to 36 per 1,000 in 1955. In the 1960s and 70s, the hospital was popularly known as **Duke St Women's Hospital**, with a reputation as "forward-looking". When the gynaecological unit closed in 1977, the National Abortion Campaign reacted with dismay. "It is the only unit where women do not have to follow the usual formalities in order to be treated. They can simply be referred there by any nurse, midwife or heath worker and in fact, they can refer themselves without going through any preliminary procedure." Furthermore, it was "the only hospital which provided a full and proper abortion service, as opposed to most Glasgow hospitals which appear to make it their business to circumvent the [Abortion] Act as often as possible." Duke St then served as a geriatric facility before conversion to flats in 2000. Due to structural issues, the flats were abandoned in 2014, but their restoration is on the horizon.

Dennistoun Library 12 is one of 15 **Carnegie libraries** in Glasgow. When it opened in 1905, it offered a general reading room for male readers (126 spaces) and a much smaller ladies' reading room (36). Many women preferred the general room with its better stock but were not made welcome. Yet this situation was an improvement on the 19thC library, where women readers might be shown to a single screened-off table. Segregation reduced female interaction with male "library loafers" and supposedly prevented "female chatter" distracting serious readers. Though women formed a substantial portion of the district library workforce, they were obliged to leave upon marriage, and tended not to reach senior positions. Dennistoun's first sub-librarian was a woman, Florence Mackenzie. However, a senior male librarian selected material for the ladies' reading room, a pattern repeated across the city's libraries. More radical literature, including suffrage journals, found their way in via donation. Post WW1, the separate ladies' reading room was felt to be out of step with the emancipated modern woman. Today the National Library of Scotland's Chief Executive and National Librarian

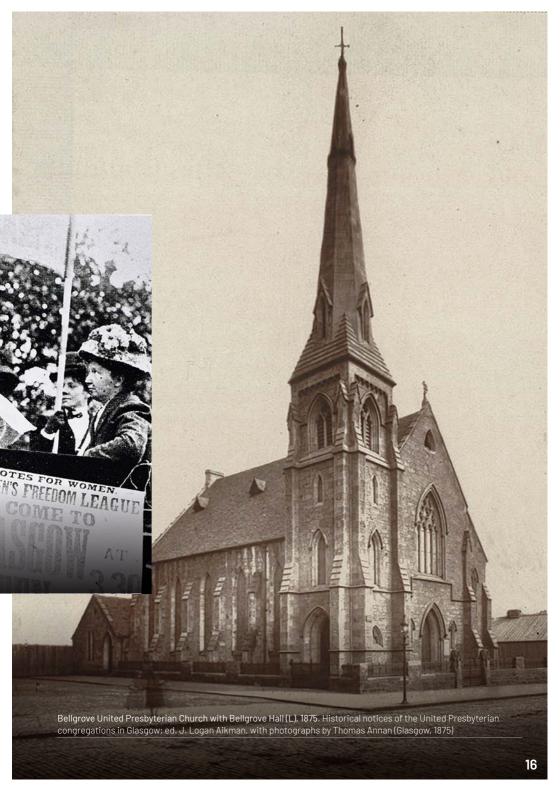


The Dennistoun branch of the Women's Freedom League (WFL) met fortnightly in Bellgrove Hall adjoining Bellgrove Presbyterian Church 13 (dem. 1972). While the Scottish Presbyterian church was officially neutral on women's suffrage, individual ministers were often supportive. The Dennistoun WFL branch was one of the earliest in Glasgow, formed c. 1907. Like the Women's Social and

Political Union (WSPU), the WFL used direct action. But whereas the WSPU attacked people and property, the WFL's strategies, such as passive resistance to taxation and non-cooperation with the census, were non-violent. Speakers here included "first Scotch tax resister" Janet Legate Bunten (1885-1960), who gave an account of a recent picket of the House of Commons. Fundraising events were creative. In April 1910, a cake and candy sale was held, with palm readings by "Madame Marguerite",

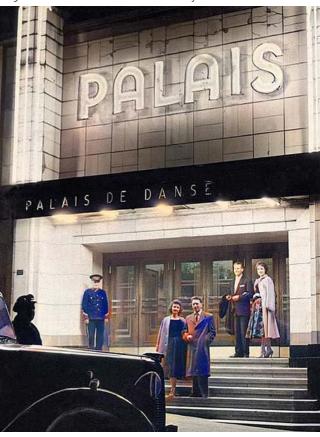


and an evening performance of **Cicely Hamilton's** comedy, *How the Vote was Won*. In summer, the WFL went "doon the water" to their HQ in Rothesay, campaigning along the coast. In 1918, women over 30 with certain property qualifications were granted the vote. Women achieved full political equality in 1928, when Parliament passed the **Equal Franchise Act**, opening the vote to all women and men over 21.



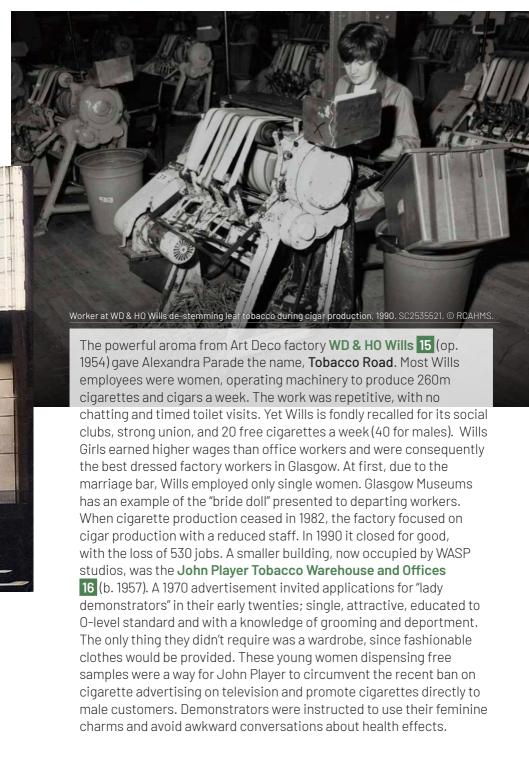
Post WW1, Glasgow went dance crazy. The demand was met by purpose-built dance halls such as **Dennistoun Palais de Danse 14** (op. 1922). Destroyed by fire, it was rebuilt in Art Deco style in 1938 as the biggest dancehall in Glasgow. With a star-covered ceiling, the Denny Pally had plenty of glamour but no alcohol; initially

only Kia-Ora and milk were served. Unlike pubs, the Palais was designed as a specifically female leisure space. Women and girls vastly outnumbered males, particularly early in the evening when groups of women dancing together were a common sight. To counterbalance this, an honour code decreed that when women were asked to dance, they had to stay for three numbers or be put off the floor. For those partnered up, there was a weekly raffle to win an engagement ring. Dennistoun resident Irene McInnes recalls: "We'd just got into the hall when the band on stage were announcing the winners - and it was us! We went up on stage and



Dennistoun Palais, June 1957. Photograph by John MacKay. 17765249. © Reach PLC.

got to pick out our £95 engagement ring, which was a lot of money back then, and by 23 November we got engaged. I was too excited to wait until Christmas. I just wanted to wear my brand-new ring!" The Palais was converted to a roller-skating rink in 1966, then occupied by supermarket chains until demolition in the early 2000s. The site now forms part of Dennistoun Village residential scheme.



Reidvale Housing Association 17 pioneered a community-based approach to urban regeneration. In 1975, Glasgow District Council proposed to demolish nine tenement blocks "below tolerable standard" south of Duke St and rehouse residents in Easterhouse. A group of locals dubbed the Bathgate Street Mafia established Reidvale Housing Association to save and renovate their area. One of the founding members and Reidvale's first female chair, Irene McInnes, recalls: "I remember big John [Butterly] standing up and telling the council, "If you think Easterhouse is so great, you



Reidvale Housing Association Newsletter, October 1988. The Victorian-era Prison Mission dormitory premises are still visible, later replaced by South Dennistoun Neighbourhood Centre (b. 2008).

can move there - because we're not leaving!" Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1974, the new Association could access substantial government funding. Yet while their vision was ambitious, the group was decidedly grassroots: the first office at 143 Bellfield St had to be vacated twice a week for Senior Citizens' Club bingo. When the first show flat at 93 Reidvale St was ready, an open day was held, with locals invited to sell their flats to the Association then rent them back. Irene followed up with home visits, taking time to explain the proposals in detail. Reidvale's approach went beyond basic repairs. External stone cleaning was undertaken, despite the council deeming it a luxury. After the honey-

coloured tenements were dramatically unveiled, stone cleaning became a grant eligible cost. Reidvale has renovated over 1,000 flats and built 180 more, with no resident moved further than a few hundred metres from their original home. Reidvale's most recent chapter involves a proposed transfer to Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association. As always, the tenants have final say. If they vote in favour, the transfer will commence in Spring 2024.





About Glasgow Women's Library

Glasgow Women's Library is no ordinary library. It is the only Accredited Museum dedicated to women's history in the UK and also a designated Recognised Collection of National Significance. A place for browsing and being inspired. GWL is welcoming, free and open to all, with programmes of events and activities that offer something for everyone: from film screenings to literacy support; from talks to supported volunteering opportunities; and from exhibitions to workshops. GWL's extensive outreach programme can also offer support for women's projects in local areas around Scotland.

Contact us

To find out more about GWL's women's heritage work or to find out more about support for projects in your local area, please visit our website: www.womenslibrary.org.uk, or email info@womenslibrary.org.uk

Thanks to: Kathy Aplan; Eileen Conway; Glasgow Golden Generation's Group, Battlefield; Fiona Hayes, Curator, Social History, Glasgow Museums, Ruth Johnston, Dennistoun Conservation Society; Frances Kieran, Crown Creighton Pub; Beverly McFarlane; Irene McInnes; Milnbank Housing Association; Alasdair Satchel and Tim Morozzo from Tales Fae the East podcast; Jim Schaap; Clare Thompson, Librarian, Special Collections, Mitchell Library; Alan Wylie.

Map topics and research by Heather Middleton, Morag Smith, Mara Hadden and the Dennistoun Women's Heritage project group. Designed by Hannah Moitt. Edited and compiled by Heather Middleton.





