

Project: **'Memories of Seven Lochs' Communities: A people's history**'.

Respondent: Jamie (James) Craig

Year of Birth: 1930s

Age:

Connection to project: Local knowledge

Date of Interview: 07/09/2023

Interviewer: Yvonne

Recording Agreement: Yes/ No

Information & Consent: Yes/ No

Photographic Images: Yes/ No (Number of:)

Length of Interview: 1.07.45

Location of Interview: Glenboig Development Trust

Recording Equipment: Zoom H4n (internal mics)




| Time (from: mins/secs) | Description | Transcribed Extract (from- to: mins/secs) |
|------------------------|---|---|
| 00.15 | <i>Where were you born?</i> | |
| | I was born in Coatbridge and raised in the Seven Lochs area. I was born in Greenend and the reason I was born there was my Mother was down in her brother's house at the time. We then went to Old Monkland and stayed there until I was 4 when we moved house to Coatbridge near the Town Hall. We flitted from there to Albion Street, near to my Auntie Ellen, my godmother, and my Uncle Eddie and my cousins. | 00.28-01.38 |
| 01.39 | <i>Can you tell me about your family?</i> | |
| | My Mum was called Matilda and my Dad was called Paddy. My sisters were Patsy, Mary and Anne and us the brothers, John and me. My Dad was a Miner and my Mum looked after the family. | 01.40-01.54 |
| 01.58 | <i>Can you tell me about the house you were born in?</i> | |
| | I can't remember much about it, it was very small. They've built a wee shopping centre there now, straight across from the Time Capsule, that's where it was. | 02.00-02.27 |
| 02.30 | <i>What school did you go to?</i> | |
| | I went to St Augustine's School for a year until we moved house. I went to St Augustine's School for a year Then I went to St Pat's wee school when I was 5 living in Albion Street. St Pat's was across the road, you'd hear the bell going you just jumped over the fence and that was you in the school. When I left primary school I went to St Pat's Secondary school, it was right beside the primary school, so again I just crossed the road and I was at school. I liked woodwork the best. I enjoyed school. | 02.40-04.00 |

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| 04.01 | <i>What games did you play when you were young?</i> | |
| | We used to play with the ball of course, heading the ball and all that, not so much football, I didn't play football. We just played in the streets because there were no cars anyway. We went in the park climbing trees and played cricket. | 04.12-04.44 |
| 04.45 | <i>Can you tell me about the local community?</i> | |
| | Everybody knew each other and looked after each other | 04.46 |
| 05.18 | <i>What was Christmas like when you were young?</i> | |
| | We always got presents. Everybody came to our house. My Mother made the dinner. She used to do a lot of baking and made cakes for the neighbours as well. | 05.20-05.55 |
| 06.06 | <i>Can you tell me what you did for holidays?</i> | |
| | We would go to Loch Lomond and Saltcoats for days away. We took the train from Coatbridge into Glasgow and then another one down. We loved it. | 06.14-06.48 |
| 07.30 | <i>What did you do for entertainment as a teenager?</i> | |
| | We went to the cinema quite often, it was the B.B.s Coatbridge. You had the Theatre Royal and we called it the Hens' Hoose up the top because there were no seats, you sat on the steps and at one point a couple of rats ran across and one boy he ran and knocked a bit of the wall down it was quite funny. To get in it was tuppence. A couple of times it was a jelly jar to get into it. If you wanted to go down the stairs it was fourpence. There was youth clubs but I don't think there was that many because we didn't go to them. When I was about 14/15 I got my Dad's bike. My friend Archie Wotherspoon had one as well and we went cycling. My Uncle Tom he was in the Youth Hostels and said we should join. We started going weekends and staying in youth hostels and then when I was 15, we started really going cycling. We'd travel maybe 50 or 60 miles a day and staying in youth hostels. We went to Inverness, Dundee, Carlisle, Blackpool. We were cycling every weekend. We didn't cycle on a Monday because that was our first day back at work, but we did cycle on the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, doing 40 miles a night. On the Friday night we'd head off for our cycling weekend getting home on the Sunday. | 07.32-17.38 |
| 17.39 | <i>Did you go to the dancing?</i> | |
| | Only when I got older about 16. I went to the Templars Dancing, it was good I enjoyed it. We went to Airdrie Pallais a lot. As you got older you went into Glasgow, though I didn't go there very much. | 17.40-17.50 |
| 17.59 | <i>What did you do when you left school?</i> | |
| | I left school and started in the Glenboig pit on the Monday. The pit was at Annathill. I worked at the pit-head. So you went in there and you got shown round, told about supporting the roof and the hutches and all that. So you'd maybe get a day doing that. You were taught all these things to prepare for going down the pit. You had to take all the dirt off the conveyor belt and it | 18.12-26.19 |

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| | <p>was on to a mine-cart loaded with coal and we were there to take the dirt out of it. You couldn't go down the pit until you were 16. As soon as you were 16 you were told to go down the pit but before that you were trained at 16 for three months. You went down the pit one week and the next week on the surface at the training school learning woodwork and metalwork, health and safety.</p> <p>The training you got for going down the mines was very well done. Safety was a priority in the training.</p> <p>Once the three months training was up, you went down the pit because you were 16 and you were working on the hutches. As soon as you were 18 you were put on the face-line where the coal is. You go in there, bend down, go underneath the rock-dirt, you crawl in there and that's where the coal is. The Miner who you worked with taught you what to do and how to do it right. You had a lamp on your head. In each section there would be about 14 men in each section.</p> <p>I worked there from 15 until the pit shut down when I was 50.</p> | |
| 26.29 | <i>Did you have any accidents?</i> | |
| | <p>The first one was when I was 15, I was in the training school making a tool that I would be using down the pit. It was in a vice and I was using a rasp and it slipped and hit me between the eyes.</p> <p>The second one was the hutches were coming down and they are on hooks but someone hadn't put the hook on correctly and as I stepped aside the hook went off and got me under my lip. I had to go to the hospital to get stitches.</p> <p>One year I had a bad accident we were sorting the conveyor belt and we connected the chain, loosening all the bolts and tightening them. So you're doing all that and the bolt snapped and that was me, unconscious. They thought I was dead because of all the blood pouring out. I was taken to hospital. I survived it, but the unfortunate thing was it was ten months before my memory would come back. I'd lost my memory, I couldn't go to work, I was sitting in the house, start a sentence and then it was completely gone and that was me for ten months, but then it came back. I didn't get full pay. That's when Anne started working as a Nursing Assistant in Gartloch. She worked there until she was 50 odd.</p> | 26.34-28.36 |
| 28.40 | <i>What about romance?</i> | |
| | <p>You'd meet girls at the dancing and see them all the time. One time we were going to the dancing in Airdrie Pallais, we didn't drink or anything like that, but one of our pals who'd left the army he was home and he was drinking. So we were in the pub and he had too much to drink, we just had orange juice, and he was going to throw a glass through the window so we had to get him out. We put him on a bus back to Coatbridge and me and Hughie went to the Pallais but the big lad on the door wouldn't let us in. He said, oh you were in the pub. So he let us in but only as spectators, not to dance. So anyway it came to the second dance and one of the girls I used to dance with saw us, got a ticket off another fellow and gave it to me so we could dance together. So I danced a few dances with her then went back up to spectate again.</p> | 28.48-30.53 |

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| 31.15 | <i>Did you get married Jamie?</i> | |
| | <p>I got married to Anne O'Brien when she was 19 and I was 21. We met on a bus when she was there with her sister. My friend and I went to a party in Coatbridge and Anne was there and the next thing is they're playing a kissing game where you don't know who you're kissing. Anyway we talked away and I asked her out. We dated for about two years.</p> <p>We got married in St Barbara's in Chapelhall and our wedding reception was in the Miners' Hall in Annathill. After that we got a bus into Glasgow and then went to Edinburgh for a week on our honeymoon.</p> <p>We have five children, Marie, Jim, Patricia, Allison and Brian. I've got eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. They all live in Scotland.</p> | 21.17-38.17 |
| 38.27 | <i>Where did you live when you first got married?</i> | |
| | <p>Albion Street Coatbridge. You see it all came under Annathill then. Those houses are all demolished now. The pit was up there, two minutes to the pit. It was just a room, a kitchen and a living room. They built a new scheme in Moodiesburn all new houses and we got offered there or Glenboig and that's how we moved there. Allison still lives in that house, It looks right on to the loch. What happened was that my Mother had died so Anne and I moved into Coatbridge again, so Allison took my house there and we moved to Glenboig.</p> | 38.28-41.36 |
| 43.00 | <i>What other industries were in the area?</i> | |
| | <p>Down in Cumbernauld and Moodiesburn there were plenty of places down there. There was the Sausage Factory.</p> | 43.05-43.15 |
| 43.33 | <i>What would you say is the biggest difference in the area now?</i> | |
| | <p>The biggest difference is all these houses getting built and instead of keeping the green bits green, you could be walking about here in a couple of years time and looking at people's windows, not green grass. They've been there a few years now and everybody used to speak to each other, and when the new people came in they didn't speak to anyone. I don't know if that's changed now.</p> | 43.37-44.50 |
| 44.51 | <i>Do you remember the loch?</i> | |
| | <p>When they started building the new houses at this end of Glenboig, the contractor took all the dirt and put it into the top end of the loch, so they filled a good bit of it in because it used to be a bit further up. That's where the park bit is now. I think it's marvellous.</p> | 43.02-45.40 |
| 46.21 | <i>Were there ever any campaigns in Glenboig</i> | |
| | <p>Oh aye. People didn't really bother, they just got on with things. People in Glenboig got on with each other.</p> | 46.31-46.48 |
| 47.02 | <i>Do you remember the war, or were you too young?</i> | |
| | <p>I was four years old down in Mitchell Street Coatbridge there was a great big shelter built and all I can remember in it were all the people singing and everything else, as if it was a party. They didn't sit there and mope.</p> | 47.05-47.43 |
| 47.49 | <i>How do you feel when anything comes up about Glenboig in the media?</i> | |

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| | I don't think they get Glenboig at all. Glenboig is not a secretive place or anything like that. People are wide open, they tell you that. If anything does happen in Glenboig, people seem to know about it right away. It seems to solve itself anyway. | 48.01-48.22 |
| 48.40 | <i>When you were in the pit, did you have to join the Union?</i> | |
| | You joined it when you were 16. They got me £20 compensation for an accident. They were there to support you. | 48.52-49.01 |
| 51.06 | <i>How would you describe your national identity?</i> | |
| | I am Scottish and proud of it. | 51.22 |
| 52.22 | <i>Do you think Glenboig still has a strong sense of community?</i> | |
| | Well it does in a sense. Allison walks the lochs a lot. | 52.30-52.35 |
| 52.54 | <i>What did you and Anne do socially?</i> | |
| | Well we couldn't go for dinner, we couldn't afford it. When we were courting we went to the dancing and the pictures. | 52.55-53.05 |
| 53.26 | <i>Where was Anne born?</i> | |
| | She was born in Annathill. She was one of eight girls and two boys. | 53.27-53.40 |
| 53.54 | <i>Do you think there's anything that can be done to improve Glenboig now?</i> | |
| | They're trying their best. There was always pubs, betting shops, dancing hall, all that. Now there's nothing. No dancing, no picture halls. Actually everything has gone. We've only got one shop that sells food and that and round in the village there's one shop selling papers and hot rolls, nothing else. We need shops and a pub. I was in the new pub on the first night, it was quite good. It was really busy, I got up to the bar and one of the boys said come on Jamie, this is the Glenboig corner. | 53.58-55.59 |
| 56.18 | <i>You come into the Life Centre, is that good?</i> | |
| | It's fantastic. Anne and I started coming when it was in the new house. There are a few new shops, hairdressers. I used to play the carpet bowls in the Life Centre but I can't now because of my hand. Anne and I used to go to the Autumn Group with another man and woman. Only four of us. We got other ones to come and they ended up with maybe ten or whatever and just mounted from then. | 56.30-59.13 |
| 59.31 | <i>Is there any stories that we've missed Jamie?</i> | |
| | Just about the pit. It was just working with all the men and getting to know them. I still meet some of them in the cafe. | 59.42 - 1.00.01 |
| 1.01.01 | <i>You mentioned the 'world famous bricks', can you tell me about that?</i> | |
| | Anne's sisters went over to America where their Auntie lived, she'd emigrated there. The Auntie said come on down to see the cellar. So they went down to the cellar and all around you could see the house was built of Glenboig firebricks. So their house in America was built of Glenboig bricks, their home village. | 1.01.10 - 1.02.07 |

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| 1.02.35 | <i>Did your own family go to the local schools?</i> | |
| | Och aye. The same schools as there is now, just newer buildings. | 1.02.44 |
| 1.03.40 | <i>Did you have a good life growing up?</i> | |
| | Oh aye, except for the bad accidents in the pit and all that. | 01.03.54 |
| 1.06,33 | <i>What's your greatest memory?</i> | |
| | Anne. She was brilliant. She dealt with everything. I never did anything in the house paperwork or anything like that, she did everything. She was a clever woman but unfortunately she's gone. She passed away in the past two years. We had more than 50 years together. | 1.06.48 - 1.07.01 |
| 1.07.02 | <i>How would you sum up your life in the Glenboig, Seven Lochs area?</i> | |
| | I would say it's one of the best places to stay | 1.07.04 |
| | <i>Thank you for sharing your memories with me Jamie</i> | |
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