
H I S T O R I C

Shawlands

A Glance at the Shawlands Cross Conservation Area



Glasgow City Heritage Trust



Postcard of Shawlands Cross around 1920



SHAWLANDS: AN INTRODUCTION

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The district of Shawlands and the village of Crossmyloof, which included the junction of Pollokshaws Road and Langside Avenue in the Conservation Area, developed rapidly during the 19th Century. Over time, the number of inhabitants in this largely artisanal and industrial area had nearly doubled due to the formation of significant local businesses, such as the Camphill Bakery, which opened in 1847. Following their rapid development the villages of Shawlands (1819) and Cathcart (1912), which included the Crossmyloof parts of today's Shawlands Cross Conservation Area, were

absorbed into Glasgow during the city's southward extension.

With the prospering of Glasgow as the second city of the British Empire, the transport links by train through the Cathcart Circle and the introduction of the tram network to the outer settlements improved drastically, leading to a further suburban development of the Shawlands area.

As a consequence, Shawlands developed into an immensely vital commercial town centre for the South Side of Glasgow.

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Top: Image of flats above Linen

Above: Detail of ornamental features at Linen

SHAWLANDS CROSS

With the growing development of the city, rows of tenements occupied the bigger transport routes into and out of the city and became the new architectural feature of outer Glaswegian settlements. With this new development in the creation of living space, the crossing of these tenement rows, often at sharp angles, grew in significance as a focal point for commerce. For this reason, the 'typical Glaswegian "cross"' was often home to splendid architectural design and decoration, only affordable for prosperous businesses like banks¹.

A prime example of the Glaswegian cross can be found at Shawlands, where the former TSB building, now Linen Pub, with impressive architectural features occupies the most prominent spot. This ornate Renaissance-style building of the former Glasgow Savings Bank was built by architect Neil C Duff (1861 - 1934) in 1906.

Location: 1110 Pollokshaws Road, 4 Moss-side Road.

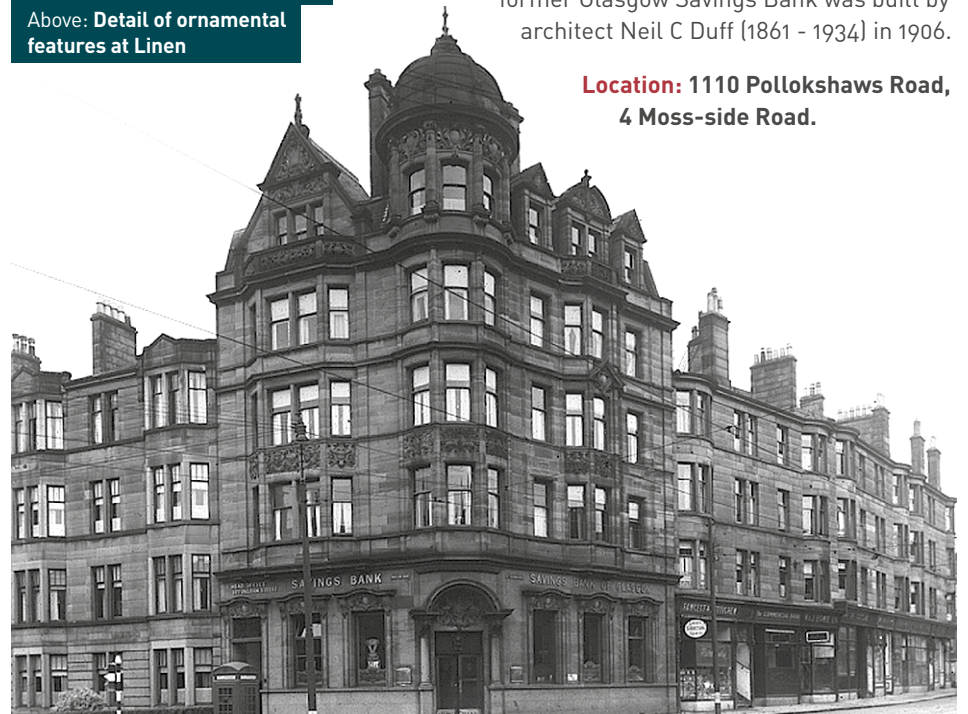


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TENEMENTS

Both the Springhill Gardens and the Camphill Gate Tenements are Category “C” and “B” - listed buildings for their unique, though not necessarily obvious features. Both five storey buildings were built by local architect John Nisbet (1868 - 1951) between 1904 and 1906 and are situated opposite Queen’s Park. Springhill Gardens is formed in a U-shape with a ‘pleasure garden’ in the middle, while Camphill Gate is a symmetrical tenement building fronting Pollokshaws Road and featuring Art Nouveau decorative elements.

Both tenement blocks call attention to the distinctive sculptured panel displaying their names towards the front of the house. Interestingly, both buildings were built with flat, asphalted roofs for washhouses and drying areas. Although not very common, these roofs provided an alternative when there was a lack of space in the backyards, as in the case of Camphill Gate where the Crossmyloof Bakery buildings occupied that area. John Nisbet designed Camphill Gate tenements to be Glasgow’s first fireproof building by installing a fireproof roof and walls throughout the building².

Locations: Springhill Gardens, 6-76 Springhill Gardens & 912-924 Pollokshaws Road (top). Camphill Gate, 988-1006 Pollokshaws Road (bottom).



CROSSMYLOOF MANSIONS

This distinctive bowed end and balustraded white ashlar gushet tenement was built around 1890. The Granary, a traditional public bar is located on the ground floor which was formerly used as a centre for the Glasgow tram network.

Location: 10-12 Kilmarnock Road & 1155 Pollokshaws Road



The Corona Bar

THE CORONA

The Corona Bar was designed by architect J.H. Craigie (1870 - 1930) and built by Clarke and Bell in 1912-1913.

The spirit merchant James O’Malley commissioned this typical Scottish single storey public bar at the building cost of approximately £1,724. With its ornate exterior, the balustraded roof and the turret including the clock and lead cupola, the Corona Bar is a prominent and unique sight in the Shawlands street picture.

The two doorways each feature a distinctive decorative depiction of a right-hand palm topped by a Passion Cross. The right hand side entrance also features a mosaic-tilted floor, a common feature of early 20th century businesses, with the same depiction of a palm and cross. Accordingly these distinctive elements represent the origin of the name Crossmyloof (cross my loof) meaning



“cross my palm” in Old Scots. Several inventive stories on the origin of this curious name go back to Mary Queen of Scots, a cross in her hand and the Battle of Langside (13th May 1568).

Following Rudolph Kenna, the name Crossmyloof originates centuries before Mary Queen of Scots and thus goes back to a Celtic cross erected by Saint Moluag³.

This traditional Shawlands pub is now the new South Side home of The Butterfly and the Pig, bar and restaurant.

Location: 1039 Pollokshaws Road.

TRADITIONAL SHOPS

The retail environment can reveal much about the social and cultural history of an area. Shawlands, especially along Pollokshaws and Kilmarnock Road, used to be a bustling and significant shopping district for Glasgow's South Side. In the early 20th century important commercial chains had branches in Shawlands. These branches included Glasgow-wide businesses like the City Bakeries which began as an industrial workers' co-operative, baking cheap and wholesome bread. Another sight on the Shawlands City streets was Ross's Dairy which had shops all over Glasgow including the popular Milk Bars in which Scottish Milk was promoted as the ideal drink during the 1930's.

Other shops included the two competitive yet very successful confectionery companies Birrell and R.S. McColl, specialising in the production of high quality chocolates and other sweets. Many of these confectionery branches were conveniently placed in the vicinity of entertainment venues, such as the Elephant Cinema or the Cameo Ballroom on Kilmarnock Road. A branch of the famous pharmaceutical chain Boots on

Pollokshaws Road provided residents with medicine as well as the popular 'Boots own Brands' products at a low price.

A branch of the American company Woolworth added an international flavour to the commercial picture in the town centre. With its small prices between a penny and sixpence, Woolworth's influence and popularity grew rapidly around the British Isles after opening its first British branch in Liverpool in 1909. Local authorities even sent out requests to the company for a "Woolies" branch to be opened in their town because of its immense popularity⁴.

Historic shops, like the ones mentioned above, are unfortunately a rare sight in Shawlands today. Although still a busy commercial environment, the heritage of these historic Victorian and Edwardian shops that once dominated the street picture is fading away due to poor maintenance and plastic fixtures on traditional shop fronts. Historic features such as bell-shaped entrances, decorative mosaic floors with Art Nouveau flower motifs, decorative glass, geometric design, Art Deco elements and sun blinds have largely disappeared or are hard to find.

Conserving Shawlands characteristic commercial environment, and its social and cultural history, could thus make a significant contribution to the overall townscape as well as promote Shawlands as a destination for tourism⁵.



Shops along Pollokshaws Road, December 2014



1



3



2



4



5



6

- 1 City Bakeries, Pollokshaws Road, 1939.
- 2 Birrell, 46 Kilmarnock Road, 1933.
- 3 Ross Dairies, 1056 Pollokshaws Road, 1939.
- 4 Boots, 1083 Pollokshaws Road, 1939.
- 5 Woolworth, 29-79 Kilmarnock Road, 1939.
- 6 RS McColl, 79 Kilmarnock Road, 1939.

CINEMAS

In the early 20th century cinema culture flourished in Glasgow, with 139 cinemas throughout the city attracting customers to their often bold, architecturally distinctive Art Deco buildings⁶. Glaswegians visited the cinema an estimated average of 51 times a year, more often than people in the rest of Scotland, and could often choose from two or more cinemas within a 10 minute walking distance from their homes. The Glaswegian cinema was frequented by people of all social and cultural backgrounds and fulfilled a 'vital social function' as Bruce Peter points out⁷. Admission for children to some cinemas could at times be paid through a "jeelly jaur", an empty and washed jam jar. Even poor families could afford weekly cinema visits with this payment method⁸.

Shawlands Picture House:

This nickelodeon-type cinema, owned by ABC opened in 1914, was demolished in 1930⁹. Situated at 1045 Pollokshaws Road with an entrance in a close between two shops, it was a small, broad hall, where films were projected onto a white painted wall¹⁰.

Camphill Cinema:

This cinema opened in 1911 at 7 Baker Street and became part of the Maxwell's ABC cinema circuit in 1929. Only two years later on 22 April 1931, the building was completely destroyed by a fire which, surprisingly, left 20,000 ft. of film untouched¹¹.



White Elephant

Waverley Picture House:

Situated at 19 Moss-side Road and designed by Watson, Salmond and Gray this cinema was opened by Lord Provost, James Paxton on Christmas Day 1922. In 1929 the ABC bought the successful Waverley cinema to replace their old-fashioned Shawlands Picture House¹².

White Elephant:

Owned by the eccentric A.E. Pickard and designed by architect H. Barnes (1870-1935) this cinema opened its doors at 42 Kilmarnock Road in 1927. When cinema magnate A.B. King bought the cinema in 1934 he instantly dropped the 'White' from its name¹³.

Embassy:

This "real suburban super"¹⁴ was built by architect James McKissack (1875 - 1940) and opened at 146 Kilmarnock Road in February 1936. Initially, it belonged to Harry Winocour's circuit, but despite its success it was demolished after only a short working period in May 1965¹⁵.

White Elephant Image © Newsquest (Herald & Times). Licensor www.scran.ac.uk
Embassy Image © CSG CIC Glasgow Museums and Libraries Collection: The Mitchell Library, Special Collections
Waverley Picture House Image © Scottish Screen Archive at the National Library of Scotland™



Embassy



Waverley Picture House

NEALE THOMSON & THE CROSSMYLOOF BAKERY

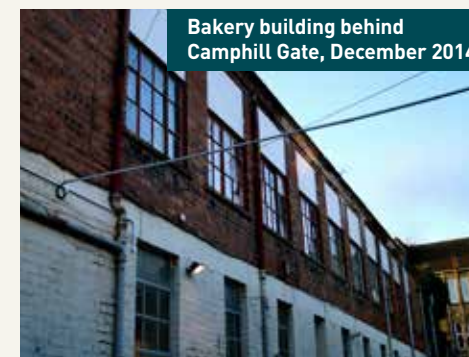


The **Crossmyloof Bakery**, situated in a lane behind the Camphill Gate tenement was established by Neale Thomson (1807 - 1857) in 1847.

Thomson was born on the Camphill Estate at Queen's Park, Glasgow in 1807 and after his older brothers passed away, took over the family's cotton business in 1843. The Crossmyloof Bakery started out with Thomson's intention to provide his workforce with nutritious, affordable bread. This was at a time when bread tended to be of poor quality yet was expensive. The bakery soon became a prosperous establishment. The delivery of the "Crossmyloof Bread" was reportedly awaited by large crowds in front of the stores. Although the bread was at first only available in Crossmyloof the business soon expanded their delivery radius to other areas on the South Side to meet the rapidly growing demand.

Besides his bakery Neale Thomson also gained recognition for his responsibility regarding the wellbeing of his workforce. This included reducing the weekly working

hours for his staff long before the law enforced the restriction of the hours of work. By introducing the idea of a savings account it was said, Thomson convinced his workers to start saving up a part of their wages. To do so, Thomson himself would add to each employee's account the exact equivalent of the amount they had saved over the past year. This would in some cases even add up to as much as £5 and prove to his workers the benefits of savings in the bank. For this reason Neale Thomson became known for his energy and the interest he took in the wellbeing of his workforce, a rare effort in times where the exploitation of workers through long hours, poor quality food and brutal working conditions were common in the industrialising world¹⁶.



Bakery building behind Camphill Gate, December 2014

Mosaic floor in Linen



OUTLOOK

With the assignment of Shawlands as a Conservation Area, an important step towards preserving the area's historical character has been taken. Recognising the historical built environment, its changes as well as the rich social and cultural history of Shawlands will help to prevent further deterioration of the area. Especially with a focus on the retail environment's decline and the deterioration of residential buildings, residents will benefit from investing into the idea of conservation. Protecting the built environment in the Shawlands Conservation Area can make a difference and significantly impact the future of Shawlands as a destination for tourism, shopping and prospective residents.

Lamp outside the Corona Bar



GLASGOW CITY HERITAGE TRUST'S BUILDING REPAIR GRANTS

To ensure the preservation of the built environment and prevent further decline of the town centre, Glasgow City Heritage Trust offers Building Repair Grants to support residents with critical maintenance of listed and unlisted buildings to fully develop the potential for Shawlands as a town centre.

Detailed information on Building Repair Grants for residential and commercial buildings located within our priority areas, such as Shawlands, can be found on our website www.glasgowheritage.org.uk. Useful links and further guidance for Building Repair Grants can be downloaded from our website to help you find out whether your building may be eligible for grant aid.

FURTHER READING AND RESEARCH RESOURCES

Development and Regeneration Services, *Shawlands Cross Conservation Area Appraisal*, (Glasgow: Planning Services, City Design Group, 2014). The PDF of this document is available online to download.

Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1840 - 1980. This resource is available online:

www.scottisharchitects.org.uk and provides multiple search options.

Historic Scotland Listed Buildings search is available online: www.data.historic-scotland.gov.uk/pls/htmlldb/f?p=2200:10:2614622295355754 this website allows for specific listed building searches.

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- 1 Peter Reed, 'The Tenement City', in *Glasgow: The Forming of the City*, ed. Peter Reed (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), p. 116.
- 2 Frank Worsdall, *The Glasgow Tenement: A Way of Life* (Glasgow: Richard Drew Publishing, 1989), pp. 36-37.
- 3 Rudolph Kenna & Anthony Mooney, *People's Palaces. Victorian and Edwardian Pubs of Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Paul Harris Publishing, 1983), p. 110.
- 4 Carol Foreman, *Glasgow shops: past and present*, (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2010).
- 5 Lindsay Lennie, Historic Scotland, *Traditional Shopfronts. A short guide for shop owners*, (Edinburgh: Technical Conservation Group, 2010).
- 6 Charles McKean, 'Between the Wars', in *Glasgow: The Forming of the City*, ed. Peter Reed (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), p. 136.
- 7 Bruce Peter, *100 Years of Glasgow's Amazing Cinemas*, (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1996), p. 13.
- 8 Glasgow Evening Times, 'In the picture', May 15, 1985, p.8 and The Glasgow Herald, 'Those jelly jaur days', February 7, 1983, p.6.
- 9 Bruce Peter, *100 Years of Glasgow's Amazing Cinemas*, p. 73. See also www.scottishcinemas.org.uk
- 10 Interview with John Ball by Janet McBain, 1 July 1983, Scottish Screen Archive, Reference 8/48.
- 11 The Scotsman, 'CINEMA FIRE: Thrill for Glasgow Tenants £25,000 Damage', April 23, 1931, p. 7. See also, Bruce Peter, *100 Years of Glasgow's Amazing Cinemas*, p. 73.
- 12 Bruce Peter, *100 Years of Glasgow's Amazing Cinemas*, p. 74.
- 13 Ibid, p. 74, see also www.scottishcinemas.org.uk/glasgow/elephant.html.
- 14 Ibid, p. 76.
- 15 Ibid, p. 76, see also www.scottishcinemas.org.uk/glasgow/embassy.html
- 16 James MacLehose, 'Neale Thomson', in *Memoirs and portraits of 100 Glasgow men who have died during the last thirty years and in their lives did much to make the city what it now is*, ed James MacLehose, (Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1886), pp. 323-326.

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Traditional hanging advertisement sign outside Granary public house