

INTRODUCTION

The songs were written as part of the Fruits of Their Labours project, supported by Heritage Lottery Fund supported Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership. Find out more and listen to songs online at www.clydeandavonvalley.org

Billy Stewart's father and brothers were fruit growers and nursery men in the Clyde Valley as were many other members of his family and this provided the inspiration for this project which ultimately led to this CD.

Oral histories were gathered from people who were involved in the industry over the years and these formed the basis for many of the songs. The majority of the songwiters had no previous knowledge of the fruit growing and horticultural industry of Scotland's Fruit Basket and the oral histories and their own research inspired the fine songs to be found on this CD.



1 JEELIE JARS (Bob Bradford)

(Guitar and Vocals)

I've lived in the Clyde valley most of my life and fruit growing (along with the dreaded picking) and jam making were always part of my childhood. Over the years, I've seen the changes to the landscape along the valley and have seen glasshouses and orchards fall into disrepair and eventually disappear. As soon as I settled in my own wee bit of the valley I promised myself some old Clyde valley apple and plum varieties in my garden as a connection with the past. Strawberries, rasps, currants and even rhubarb all find their way into my stock of jeelie jars. My jam always tends to be labour saving – it runs to the sides of the bread rather than needing spread – maybe one day I'll get it to set.

2 THE PICKING O' THE BERRIES (John Young)

(Guitar, Vocals and Bhodran)

Long before my day, my Gran (Jean McTavish) used to set off for Lanark from Glasgow on the train to pick the fruits of the Clyde Valley during the harvest season. This jaunty little ditty recalls the social friendship and memories of such ventures and the variety of fruits adorning the braes o' the Clyde.

3 WE WANT SOME JUICE (Frank Rae)

(Frank Rae on Guitar and Vocals, Kirkfieldbank Primary School Choir on Vocals)

As part of a songwriting exercise with Kirkfieldbank Primary School, the children were given a demonstration of the art of apple juice making by a member of the local Clyde Valley Orchards Group. All the equipment, ingredients and techniques used in juice making were demonstrated in a very much hands on way and concluded with everyone getting a drink of some very nice apple juice. As a way to help the children, and myself, remember all the intricacies of the process I wrote them this little song. I would like to thank the children for assisting by singing on the CD.

4 JAM (Robin Laing MCPS/PRS)

(Guitar and Vocals)

Very near where I live is Orchard House, once the home of the Scott family who created Scott's of Carluke, the famous jam-making empire, now a care home for the elderly. I did some songwriting workshops (with The New Makars Trust) a few years ago with some of the residents and made some comment about them living in the Palace of Jam – which led to a general discussion about jam. This song came out of that

5 GATHERING THE BERRIES OF THE CLYDE (Robert Armour)

(Robert Armour on Guitar and Vocals, Sarah Wilson on Fiddle)

This song follows the journey of the Clyde from its origins on to the Clyde Valley and celebrates how nature and people have worked in perfect harmony to bring about the wonder that was the Clyde Valley and it's orchards and fruit fields. It's also a personal reflection upon a big part of my own childhood going on a day trip to pick fruit and the warm and special memories I have of that time.

6 BERRIES GROWN IN KENT (THE FRUIT FARMERS LAMENT) (John Malcolm)

(Guitar and Vocals)

My experience of fruit growing was limited to doing some berry picking in Angus during my student days in Dundee so I headed to Lanark library to see what I could find out. The local history section had several old reports and newspaper articles about fruit growing in the Clyde Valley. I suppose what hit me most was the sadness of a rewarding way of life coming to an end. The song describes some of the problems faced by local growers in competing with fruit from the south and beyond.

7 SENTINELS ON GUARD (Billy Stewart)

(Billy Stewart on Guitar and Vocals; Alan Jones on Whistle; Jack Bethel, Hammer Dulcimer; Ian Walker, Banjo and Backing Vocals and Moe Walker, Backing Vocals)

Billy Wrote this song following a Lanarkshire Songwriters meeting. On his way to the meeting Martin Coffield travelled through the Clyde Valley and when he arrived he asked what were the wee houses with chimneys next to them. These were the boiler houses and chimneys that would have served to heat the Tomato Houses that had long been removed but the boiler house and chimney was left standing.

There were many to be seen at one time along the Clyde Valley and there are still a few today. Billy thought of the chimneys as Guardsmen watching over the history that passed and the song followed. Someday they will all disappear.

8 DOWN IN THE VALLEY (Ian Walker)

(Ian Walker on Banjo and Lead Vocals; Moe Walker, Harmony Vocals; Billy Stewart, Harmonica; Jack Bethel, Hammer Dulcimer, Alan Jones on Fiddle and Andy Munro on Percussion)

For centuries, the Clyde Valley witnessed commercial enterprises come and go from the cotton mills to coal mining and fruit growing.

Over many generations ordinary working people saw their lives and the fortunes of their families affected by the rewards from both regular and seasonal work. Throughout the good times and the bad their worth is borne with a pride in themselves and their Valley.

"Jacob's Ladder" is a well known stepped pathway in Overtown.

"For Man Beast, Fowl, Better Cannae Be" was an adverstising slogan on the wall of Garrion Mill.

"Crazies" were sunbonnets worn by women working in the strawberry fields.

9 THE CAIRTER'S SONG (Dougle Semple)

(Dougie Semple, Hunter McConnell and Kenny Oliver; otherwise known as Touchwood)

Known collectively as 'Touchwood', this song attempts to illustrate that you don't need beauty or brains to succeed. Just auld fashioned Gumption. Based on a true story - in a round about way.

10 ALL THE WAY TO CARSTAIRS (Ian Mairs)

(Ian Mairs on Guitar and Vocals; Andy Munro on Drums and Bass)

The fruit growers in the Clyde Valley used to send truck loads of fruit to a depot in Carstairs; and before there were trucks they sent the fruit in horse drawn carts. From Carstairs it was taken by rail to Glasgow and Edinburgh. Some was also shipped to Northern Ireland, I imagine that during the fruit growing and harvesting seasons there would have been plenty of casual labour available for both men and women. As well as blossoming trees there may well have been some blossoming romances. This song is about one such affair.

"Love is a fruit in season at all times and within the reach of every hand." Mother Teresa.

11 DOON BY THE CLYDESIDE (Chris McCulloch)

(Chris McCulloch on Guitar and Vocals; Andy Munro on Drums)

Inspiration for the song came mostly from My own personal experiences working down the Clyde Valley From a young age. Remembering all the different people and characters from the past I worked with in the Fields picking and planting fruit and veg and the many different Garden Centres I worked in.

Remembering things, I had long since forgotten like Stampeding donkeys, exploding fireplaces, none existent health and safety, dreaming of giant man eating strawberries and last but not least the Midges who can forget the Midges.

A lot has changed in the short period from when I worked in the Clyde valley the industry that I worked in is all but gone the landscape has changed somewhat Most of the Green houses and chimney stacks have gone new houses are popping up everywhere and some of the Garden centres have gone. But the Clyde Valley that I remember in my song will always be there.

12 A HALF OUNCE WEIGHT (Gordon Neil)

(Gordon Neil on Vocals with Andy Munro on Guitar, Bass, Drums and Harmonica)

My Great grandfather, John Steel, had tomato houses and a fruit business based in Lanark. For a time the business was successful, however, as the song says, all that's left is 'a half an ounce weight'.

13 HAMESANG (Martin Coffield)

(Martin on Guitar and Vocals; Colin Bulloch on Mandolin and Aoife McGarrigle on Fiddle)

When I set out to write a song for this project I had an idea that I might do a love song, set in the Valley in full bloom. While doing a wee bit of research I was given a collection of verse called October Sunset by William Graham. Graham was born in Carluke in 1913 and wrote in English and Scots. One poem called Hamesang jumped off the page. In it Graham describes the feeling of loss and longing for the Valley in 'blossom time'. Written in Scots, I found myself beguiled by the imagery. I may not have understood all the (Scots) words, but I got the feelings expressed. The first time I read Hamesang a little melody sounded in my head so I decided to put Mr Graham's words together with my melody. If he's listening, I hope he approves.

14 THE ORCHARD (Robin Laing MCPS/PRS)

(Guitar and Vocals)

The part of the Clyde Valley where I live is called Orchard, for fairly obvious reasons. There are hardly any commercial fruit growers left but many of the old orchards are still there. Living in a fairly remote place, surrounded by trees and fields makes me very happy – I feel closer to nature and am more aware of the changing seasons; also, the peace and quiet means that my home is a refuge and a haven. I grew up as a city boy and I travel quite a lot with my work so these things are important to me. The song expresses some of these things and was partially inspired by reading George Monbiot's book 'Feral', which stresses the importance of re-opening our lives to nature and 'the wild'.

15 THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS (Ian Walker)

(Ian Walker on Banjola and Lead Vocals; Moe Walker, Harmony Vocals; Billy Stewart, Guitar; Jack Bethel, Hammer Dulcimer and Alan Jones, Alan Jones, Bazouki)

This is the story of a German Soldier who was consigned to work in the Clyde Valley as a prisoner after the war. On a bothy wall he replicated "The Bridge of Sighs, Venice" (c1740) a painting by Giovanni Canal better known as Canaletto. Mura Davidson of Sandyholm recalls being amazed when she first saw the painting when she was a little girl. Over time, the soldier became a hardworking and respected figure in the Valley community.

16 DID YOU REALLY WANT TO WORK ON THE LAND DAD (Billy Stewart)

(Billy Stewart on Guitar and Vocals; Alan Jones on Bouzouki; Jack Bethel, Hammer Dulcimer; Ian Walker on Banjo and Backing Vocals; John Young on Bhodran and Moe Walker on Backing Vocals)

Billy Stewart wrote things song about his Dad, Johnny Stewart. Johnny was the middle son of three. While his brothers worked at home which was Catcraig, Johnny served his apprenticeship as an engineer being employed at Dalzell Steelworks in Motherwell.

He became one of only a handful of people to be called up from Dalzell during World War 2 and served with the Royal Engineers. When the war ended but with the threat the Army could call him up again he became a Nurseryman like his father and his brothers. He owned Upper Callander at Overtown.

During the time when fuel prices soared and Foreign imports began to seriously affect home grown prices, Johnny returned to his first love....Engineering. He eventually retired from Ravenscraig but continued his interest in all things mechanical.

Recorded and mixed at The Old Repeater Station, Libberton, South Lanarkshire ML11 8LX (Spring 2017) Sound Engineer and song order aligner, Andy Munro.



Photograph taken circa 1920, near Kirkmuirhill. At the back: James Clelland, fruit grower. In front of him, his son, Thomas Clelland, fruit grower, with his left hand resting on the shoulder of Mary Clelland, Thomas' wife.

To her left: Mary Clelland, Thomas' sister. Others unknown.