

Milngavie in Bloom

'Milling about Milngavie'



www.milngavieinbloom.org

Milngavie-in-bloom@hotmail.co.uk

www.facebook.com/milngavieinbloom

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Milling about Milngavie

Milngavie owes its origins to the Allander Water, a small river that rises in the Kilpatrick Hills, and runs east through the village to join the River Kelvin, near Balmore.

Milngavie started with a water driven corn mill in the time of King David I in the 12th century. Farming in the area prospered, providing employment for people on the nearby estates of Mugdock, Mains and Dougalston.



Bleaching fields were started in the mid-eighteenth century, a cotton mill about 1790 (a number of workers arrived from Deanston, Perthshire, in 1795 to work at the mill), and then a calico print works. The dye works was started at Burnbrae about 1840; the cotton mill was converted to a paper mill about 1867.

In 1856 work was started on the Mugdock Reservoir, bringing water from Loch Katrine to Glasgow.

In 1863 the railway line was extended from Westerton to Milngavie; after this it developed as a residential area as well as a manufacturing centre. In 1790 Milngavie had a population of about 200, currently it has over 13,000.

1. The Fraser Centre is organised by the Milngavie Old Peoples' Welfare Committee. Milngavie Gas Works, started in about 1851, was located near the Centre. **Outside the Fraser Centre the beds and containers are planted up and maintained by Milngavie in Bloom.**



The Community bed was initiated by Milngavie in Bloom to showcase various community groups and organisations each year.

2. Milngavie Cross is at the junction of Main Street and Douglas Street; it features the War Memorial, built in 1922 and the bronze figure of a female holding the Lamp of Liberty is by the acclaimed Scottish sculptor George Henry Paulin. **The six barrels surrounding the Memorial are planted with flowers in the colours of the Royal British Legion for the greater part of the year and red poppies for Remembrance Day.**



3. The Copland & Lye clock, formerly located outside the department store of that name in Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, was presented to Milngavie Burgh by Raymond Gillies in 1981.

4. The Douglas Arms Hotel stood in Douglas Street, facing down Main Street, where the Royal Bank of Scotland and adjacent shop now stand. **Note the barrels outside the Royal Bank of Scotland.**

5. The Marks & Spencer's Food Hall is located in what was originally part of The Black Bull Hotel (built about 1827). The hotel was the terminus for horse drawn coaches from Ingram Street, Glasgow; at one time it housed the Courts of the Justices of the Peace. The first printer, John McLellan, started in the Black Bull Yard (The Allander Press) – about 1910.



The tall planter located in Main Street between Marks & Spencer and Boots is one of six such planters provided by Milngavie Town Centre Business Improvement District, which was established in 2014. Walking down Main Street, southwards from the Cross, **passing several large planters** and bearing right, passing the Talbot Arms public house.

6. If you turn right by the Cancer Research shop and cross over Park Road, you will find a small area of local authority sheltered housing with gardens, open grassy areas and **two raised beds erected by Alzheimer Scotland**. Volunteers maintain the community areas and plant brightly-coloured, dementia-friendly flowers in the raised beds.



7. The tall building on Main Street housing Finsbay and Oxfam was formerly the Douglas Picture House, started after the First World War by Mrs Breckenridge, mother of a former Provost. **In front of the building is a heather bed with a mixture of heathers, azaleas, spring bulbs, acers and silver birch.**

8. Continuing on Main Street, past the telephone exchange and turning right, a white single storey building is seen – it was once part of Corbie Ha' Farm in the mid-19th century, and is now the home of Milngavie Pipe Band.



9. Further down Main Street was the location of the Milngavie terminus of the tramcar system (1934 to 1956), near the site of the Scout Hall in Lennox Park. **Opposite the terminus is a raised stone bed that features a statue of a striding walker making his way to the start of the West Highland Way. This statue was erected in memory of Tom Hunter who proposed the idea of the Way.**



A bed within Southgate was revamped by a resident and supported by Milngavie in Bloom during lockdown in 2020.



10. Further down Main Street, past Milngavie Police station and before the roundabout, is the **Antonine Garden** relocated from the Glasgow Garden Festival of 1988.

11. From the Scout Hall, turning right into Lennox Park, passing the new skate park. We continue down the hill, across the bridge and along the bank of the Allander to emerge into the Tesco car park at Gavin's Mill – on the site of the original grain mill from which Milngavie gets its name. Parts of the present building date from the 17th century; the



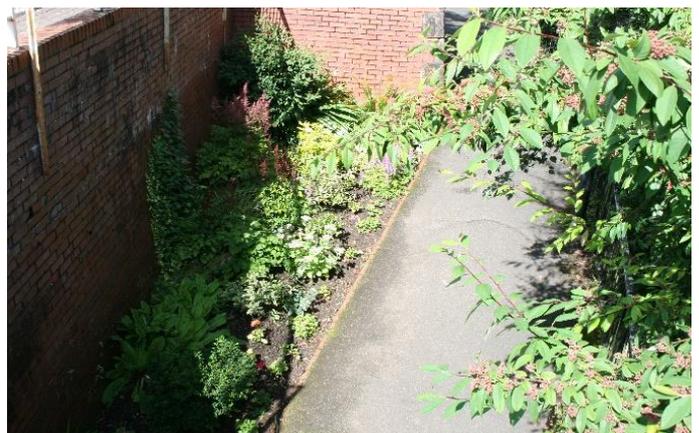
Mill was in operation until the mid-20th century.

From a weir in the river, at the top of the salmon ladder, water was carried by a lade to power the wheel. Originally it was undershot, the wheel being driven directly by water in the river. The building was a restaurant for many years but lay empty for several years and was re-opened in March 2017 by Sally Magnusson as a Fairtrade charitable organisation. **Volunteers from Baldernock Gardening Club and Milngavie in Bloom have helped to restore and maintain the garden area.**



12. Making our way carefully through the Tesco car park to the far end we come to the Fish Pass completed in 1999, to allow salmon once more to migrate up-river. The Fish Pass is downstream from the line of a basaltic intrusion (Milngavie Sill). **The barrels and raised bed at this location are planted with vegetables and herbs in conjunction with Milngavie Community Development Trust.**

13. Following the course of the Allander downstream we pass the **Hidden bed** and continue under Gavin's Mill Road Bridge to emerge in the car park again. Turn sharp right, walk across Gavin's Mill Road Bridge, cross the road at Kwik Fit and take the pathway to the railway station.

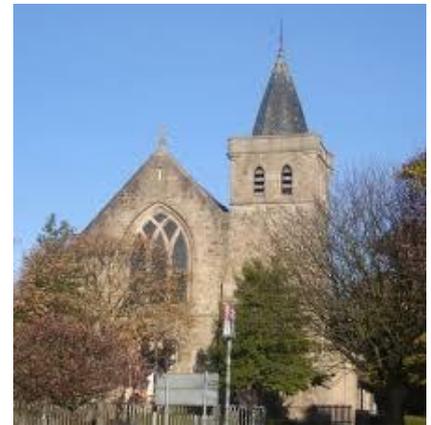




14. Milngavie railway station was built by the former North British Railway when the railway line was extended to Milngavie in 1863. **Milngavie in Bloom is a ScotRail Station Adopter. Note the beds outside and inside, the barrels and the Wee Train.** The murals in the underpass opposite the station depict scenes relating to Milngavie. Leaving the station take the footpath that rises up to

Woodburn Way and cross the road at the pedestrian crossing. Turn right and cross over Buchanan Street to the Town Hall.

15. Further up Buchanan Street, on the left, is Cairns Church, built as the United Free Church in 1903, when the Mugdock Road church was no longer satisfactory. From the top of Cairns Drive, Ben Lomond, the most southerly Munro, can be seen - a distance of 31 km. **Church members who are Milngavie in Bloom volunteers maintain the church grounds.**



16. The Town Hall at the corner of Station Road and Buchanan Street is the second to be built on the site. In 1875 Mr Ripley Ker of Dougalston financed the building of a town hall on condition that the village became a burgh. It was accidentally burned down in 1940. The present town hall and Lillie Gallery were opened in 1962. Robert Lillie was a banker and enthusiastic amateur painter, and

gifted funds for the building of the gallery; there is a self-portrait of Robert Lillie at the entrance. Milngavie ceased to exist as a burgh in 1965, when it joined with Bearsden. Bearsden and Milngavie District ceased to exist in 1996 when East Dunbartonshire was created. **Note the beds outside the entrances to the Town Hall and the Lillie Art Gallery.**

17. At the eastern end of Station Road is Strathblane Road (a toll road, built about 1800) and the New Town. Milngavie Parish Church was built here in 1906, and named St Paul's in 1929.



18. At the top of Baldernock Hill is the Doocot, one of the last remaining buildings of the old Douglaston Estate. (The roof was replaced in 1973). The estate was bought by James Glassford, one of Glasgow's Tobacco Lords, in 1767.

19. Further up Strathblane Road is the Craigmaddie Reservoir of the Waterworks completed in 1896. From the embankment can be seen Tinto hill, near Biggar, a distance of 57km.

20. Crossing Buchanan Street again we pass St Joseph's Church, **passing several railing planters**, as we return to the precinct by Station Road. On the right, at the top of Hillhead Street is Milngavie Primary School, opened as Milngavie Public School in 1875, starting with 319 pupils. **Milngavie in Bloom maintain the large bed outside Graeme the Chemist which is on two levels.**

21. Continuing along Station Road, looking on the right up Kirk Wynd you can see the Old Parish Church (1841); rebuilt as St Paul's. The building was used for various community purposes during the Second World War, and is now converted into flats. **Note the beds on either side of the Wynd.**



22. Continue along Station Road passing several **large planters** and turn right into Mugdock Road. Near the foot of Mugdock Road, at Milngavie Youth Centre is Mill Square – a car park that was at the entrance to the old paper mill. **Note the bed adjacent to Bullands Coffee House.**

23. A short distance up Mugdock Road from Mill Square is Barloch Moor, where open air services were held (on the Preaching Braes) from about 1788, before the first church was built - on the Moor – in 1799. The congregation became Cairns, Church of Scotland. The doors and windows of the houses adjoining the church can be seen in the wall on the moor side of the road.



24. Further up Mugdock Road is Tannoch Drive and Tannoch Loch - built by John Woodburn about 1895, and used as a water supply for his hydro-electric scheme; beyond the houses are the Milngavie Reservoirs, opened by Queen Victoria in 1859. **Friends of Milngavie Reservoirs and Milngavie in Bloom have helped to restore the old climbing roses on the building walls.**

25. Mugdock Road continues to Mugdock village and castle, originally built by the Earl of Lennox; its main feature is a 14th century keep; it is situated in Mugdock Country Park that was gifted by Sir Hugh Fraser.

26. Continue through Mugdock Road car park by the side of the Youth Centre and cross Ellangowan Road at the pedestrian crossing. Looking to the right is the **Ellangowan Bed** on the corner and in the centre of the roundabout a **new large metal planter replacing our old barrels and soon to be planted up**. Ellangowan Court is built on the site of the former Garvie's soft drinks factory that closed in 1985.

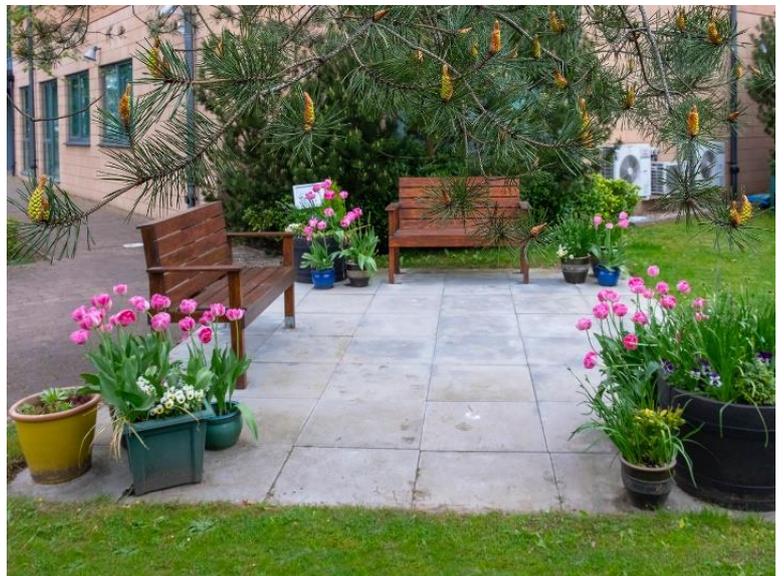


Ellangowan Bed

Mugdock Road roundabout



27. Behind the wall is the peaceful oasis called the **Carers Link Wellbeing Garden** maintained by volunteers from the charity and Milngavie in Bloom.





28. Turning left down the path we join the West Highland Way back to the precinct.

The beds at the start of the Way have been replanted by Milngavie in Bloom with the assistance of the Bearsden & Milngavie Ramblers to provide year round interest and colour.

29. Just round the corner to the right is a path to the **Allander Estate and the Italian Garden**. It has been recently restored with help from Beautiful Scotland, Milngavie in Bloom and local residents.



30. Crossing the car park at the rear of the shops we continue up the ramped path, **past several railing planters**. We go beneath the West Highland Way portal, to emerge into Douglas Street, where there is an Obelisk marking the start of the West Highland Way – about 152km (95miles) to Fort William; officially opened in 1980. The route follows the old drove roads, military tracks and new footpaths through private estates.



31. In 2019 Milngavie in Bloom saved the old telephone box and Milngavie & Bearsden Mens Sheds are currently transforming it into our noticeboard. In February 2020 it was decorated and lit for the winter festival.





32. Turn left towards the Bank of Scotland. **Note the barrels outside the Bank of Scotland.**

33. The building on the south side of Douglas Street after the bridge was part of the Calico Printworks (about 1820 to 1887), which, with the print field, occupied a large area south of Station Road. Retrace your steps to the Obelisk.



34. Ellangowan Road (named after the Paper Mill) runs under Douglas Street on part of the route of the old single track railway line from Milngavie Station to the paper mill; the line goes to the Community Education Centre and Library, and continues as the West Highland Way. Beside the Centre is the old paper mill pond, and beyond it are its refuse dumps of lime that was used in the

bleaching process, now colonised by trees and bushes. The swan nest on the mill pond has recently been replaced by volunteers with the assistance of East Dunbartonshire and Mugdock Country Park Rangers.

35. South of the Community Education Centre a footbridge goes over to Clober Road, where the West of Scotland Laundry, started in 1882, was situated.

36. Further along Clober Road, beyond the Iron Footbridge, were the Clober Bleachworks, started by James McGregor about 1763. James Watt (pictured), Mr MacGregor's son-in-law, introduced chlorine for bleaching here in 1787. The Bleachworks closed around 1928. The footbridge leads to the West Highland Way – up the east bank of the Allander; a path also goes to Mugdock Road and Tannoch Loch.



37. Douglas Street runs westwards over the Allander at the (Print) Field Bridge. The steel beams (seen from the south wall of the bridge) protruding from the side wall, carried a water channel, supplying water to a turbine – part of John Woodburn's hydro-electric generating system, using Tannoch Loch as a reservoir. John Woodburn was a former Provost, and the first speculative house builder in Milngavie. The houses were constructed using stone from the many sandstone quarries nearby. Continue along Douglas Street to return to the Fraser Centre.



Acknowledgements

Milngavie in Bloom acknowledges the original document that was produced by Milngavie Civic Trust with assistance from the Millennium Commission *Awards for All* Scheme, with text by Nigel Orr, photographs and design by Alex Scott.

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