Probus talk 9 January 2025

# Big Houses of Bearsden and Milngavie

## Donald Shankland

The following big houses were the subject of Mr Shankland's talk;

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| Mugdock/Craigend Castles | Kilmardinny House |
| Garscadden House | Mains Estate House |
| Craigmaddie House | Garscube House |
| Dougalston Housel | Killermont House |
| Clober House | |

When the houses were built, they were often referred to as 'the Hooses'. At that time the New Kilpatrick parish was much larger than now, and the houses were regarded as country homes and estates. This lent a more master/serf relationship between owners and employees.

Between 1800 and the present Glasgow City Council's area increased from 96 acres to 39,725 acres, representing a significant encroachment of the original parish that itself was then divided as new churches were established to serve the needs of a growing population.

Details were given of the original owners of each house and the history of the houses' development. This reflected the very significant growth of Glasgow in international trade, and the desire of the successful industrialists to have what they regarded as suitable homes near the city but in country settings. In a number of cases the owners of the houses were related either by marriage, or where a wealthy family had sons, each of whom wanted their own property. Mr Shankland showed images of old maps with the locations indicated, and many archive photos of the houses.

After the wars maintaining the houses became impractical, especially with taxes. Kilmardinny, Mugdock, Craigend, Garscadden and Dougalston, were donated by their owners to the respective local authorities. The Mains Estate was split in the1930s. Some land was sold to developers. Douglas Academy was built on part and the Douglas family still retain some of the land.

Only Craigmaddie House – the smallest - is still used as a domestic dwelling. Kilmardinny was left to the Council to be used as an Arts and events centre. Killermont is now the club house for the Glasgow Golf Club, and the tower of Mugdock castle is kept as a historic monument. All the other houses have been demolished or are in ruins. The era of the "Big Hooses" has passed.