

Visit to Gatehouse by "Creamola Club" (1947)

We are grateful to Donald Tait who sent us a copy of the following article which is from the Christmas 1947 issue of the staff magazine of the now defunct Creamola Company, based in Glasgow. Creamola made a number of dessert products, eg custards, but were probably best known for the soft drink Creamola Foam - very popular in its day. The article came from the archives of Glasgow University, and it describes a staff outing to Gatehouse, mentioning a number of local places they visited.



This year, under the auspices of our Welfare Department and "Creamola" Club, we held a holiday camp at Gatehouse-of-Fleet. Some forty of our employees attended this camp, which proved a most successful venture. Everyone seems to have enjoyed themselves tremendously, so much so, that a number of the girls have been back to Gatehouse again for the September week-end to renew friendships made during the summer.

Everyone in Gatehouse was extremely kind and helpful and they extended a most hearty invitation to the girls to return again next year. However, as these camps are run in conjunction with the Glasgow Educational Department, who have been extremely helpful and generous in this matter, we may find we will be given a choice of camps in the north of Scotland, as the various camps arranged by them like to move around to a different place each year.

The following are extracts from a diary submitted by Miss I McJury, Packing Flat, one of the girls who spent the fortnight at Gatehouse.

"We arrived on Saturday, 19th July, about 5-30 p.m. and found a grand tea awaiting us. A number of us went down to the local dance and the prospects of a happy holiday were very promising. The next day, Sunday, most of us went to church after breakfast, and in the afternoon had a long walk around the country side. The following day was wet, but most of us either managed a swim or a visit to Cardoness Castle.

"On the 22nd July, we hired a bus and went down to a lovely stretch of sand known as sandy beach, where we sun-bathed or swam about all afternoon. And so most of our days passed. The weather was very kind to us and the more we got to know the townspeople of Gatehouse, the more delightful they became.

"Unfortunately, one of our girls developed a sore throat and she was taken to hospital, the doctor placing us in quarantine for some 48 hours, however, it was proved not to be infectious and we were able to continue our holiday.

"On the 28th July, we all went for a four hour bus run and passed by many interesting places such as, Bonny Galloway, Black Douglas Castle, Cairnharrow, Solway Firth, and the driver was constantly pointing out places of interest such

as the house of Mr. Firth of Sheffield fame. We stopped at a large model dairy and were invited to walk through by the old lady and gentleman who were the owners. It was most interesting as they showed us the cows being milked and then butter making. We then visited the McLelland Castle and the Paul Jones Cafe.

"On the way home, we stopped at Dundrennan Abbey and the Garden of Memories.

"On July 31st a number of us were invited to the manse, where we had a delightful tea and spent a very pleasant afternoon indeed.

"It was with regret we left Gatehouse on the 2nd August, it had been the happiest holiday that many of us had ever had, and we would like to thank the people of Gatehouse for all their kindness to us."



The photo on the right is of teachers at Gatehouse School outside the "Pre-fab" classrooms in 1956. We don't know where the Creamola group stayed during their visit to Gatehouse, but the photo on the left seems to have been taken outside the Gatehouse School building.

It is likely that the "sandy beach" was in fact "Sandgreen".

The "Mr Firth of Sheffield fame" presumably relates to the Firth family who ran an extensive stainless steel cutlery business. They are believed to have rented Knockbex House for some time from the Browns, who had built it. The "large model dairy" would have been at Corseyard - "the coo palace", whilst the "old lady and gentleman who were the owners" must have been the Browns.

The "manse" would have been Anwoth Manse where the minister was John Turnbull – he is at the centre of the middle row in the above photo. We believe the lady on his left is his wife, Susan.

The man at the back and in the centre is David Thomson, the school janitor.

Leo McClymont said that the arrival of a large group of young ladies in Gatehouse caused great excitement among the young men of the town – they attended dances and were known as "The Creamola Girls".