

Willie Cameron (1927-2016), an appreciation by Sandy Harvey.

It is with great sadness that we mark the passing of one of our oldest and most loyal members, Willie Cameron. Willie passed away just over a week ago after a short illness. He was a great friend and supporter of Falkirk Fiddle Workshop and for many years a very regular and enthusiastic attender.

The workshop was only about three years old when Willie first started coming along, then a sprightly youth of seventy three! Indeed, his youthful enthusiasm for Scottish music was something that stayed with him until the end. He was unstinting in his praise of performers both young and old. Only once did I ever hear him being critical of anyone and, while it came as a great surprise, it showed that his enthusiasm was based on a genuine understanding of the music and not to be taken for granted.

In recent years Willie became less and less able to attend the workshop and he devoted himself to nursing his wife, Etta. The love and dedication with which he tended to her was a shining, but only one of many examples of how was one of the kindest and most selfless people I have ever met.

It would be true to say that Willie was a character and his personality exhibited many traits, most of them charming, but some with a distinctly macabre hue. Although born in Dundee, Willie grew up in the village of Dallas in Morayshire. In many ways he remained a country boy at heart, despite rising to become a Chief Clerk of Works with Falkirk Town Council. He would often talk of people as if I should know them, even though I had no idea of who they were. I don't think this was because he was in any way parochial in his outlook. Rather I think it was because, having grown up in a small tight knit community where everyone knew each other, he valued this and carried it with him for the rest of his life. Willie also had a great fecundity of tales relating to death, funerals, disease and ailments. I recall one journey to the Glenfiddich Fiddle Championships at Blair Castle during which ten deaths were recounted before reaching the Broxden Roundabout! I admit I had difficulty in understanding this trait but I don't believe Willie was really one to indulge in morbidity for its own sake. All of these tales related to people he knew and cared about. He always showed great compassion for their sufferings and it was clear this pained him greatly.

My last conversation with Willie actually related to the Glenfiddich Championships. He called me about three weeks beforehand to arrange a lift, but unfortunately I couldn't go as I was working that weekend. Sadly, Willie never made it either. It still came as a great shock to us that we would be going to HIS funeral so soon.

We will always remember his kindness, enthusiasm and generosity. Our thoughts go out to his family and friends.

Rest in peace Willie, fiddler, gentleman and friend.