Thank You
We wish to record our thanks to Dr. John McKay, whose 1984 PhD thesis, “The Social History of the Scottish Shale Oil Industry” inspired and guided much of this project. Thanks are also due to many others who have made material for inclusion in this exhibition including:

West Lothian Council Local History Library, especially Sybil Cavanagh
Stenlake Publishing (for use of the McGraw family photo from Stankards Rows)
Guthrie Hutton, mining historian
Midlothian Local Studies Library, especially Ken Bogle
The National Library of Scotland, map library, especially Andrea Massey
“Paddy the Cope” by Patrick Gallagher. The Devin-Adair Company, New York. (1942)
The Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments
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The Shale Villages project was possible thanks to the energetic participation of many throughout West Lothian, and adjoining shale districts, in projects to research and record their local heritage.

Oh, that was a red-letter day! The gala day! That was the only thing we had! The gala day you had your rufflers and your frills and a cap and a tie on it, oh yes... A new print hood and rubbers... and, oh boys, is the name of them now... Oh, we looked forward to the gala day! You had a bag of toys and your tinnie of tea, and then you had Racing, and five-a-side football, and then it finished up at night with a dance.

And at Christmas time, we never got any toys at Christmas time, we were very poor. We used to go fishing down in the reservoirs and in the burns... we used to go to Almondell... we walked from Broxburn and we had a basket with us... food and lemonade and that... we had lemonade and there were crowds of children.

Helen took a very long time to get ready for the gala day, she was a working-class scamp. And she put on her white dress, and you'll never guess where we all went! Up to the cemetery! Uphall cemetery! We went for long walks... and we used to go to Almondell... we walked from Broxburn and we had a basket with us... food and lemonade and that... we had lemonade and there were crowds of children.

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We used to go fishing down in the reservoirs and in the burns... and we knew the names of all the birds in the woods... and we knew what all their eggs looked like... we played conkers, with old chestnuts from the orchard in Livingston... and we made kites... we played a lot of marbles, we didn't have television and some people were lucky and had a wireless...

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A project by the Almond Valley Heritage Trust