

## W.H. FINDLAY - LIFE HISTORY

**William Hall Findlay was born in Glasgow on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1911. He was educated at Allan Glen's School – for eight years, including junior and senior schools. The first two years were in the wooden annexe in North Hanover Street. At this stage he showed an early interest in botany, gaining as a prize for his wild flower collection “The Open Book of Nature”, with embossed school crest, signed by his teacher, Miss Walker and the Headmaster. However, he was more at home on the sports field than in the classroom. He shone at both athletics and rugby, and was junior school sports champion (under-15), for which he gained a gold medal.**

**Before leaving Allan Glen's, he realised he did not have university entrance qualifications, so had to spend a year being tutored in Latin (for Lower Latin) and studying for Higher Maths.**

**He entered Glasgow University in 1931 – and immediately showed potential by winning the John Hunter medal for practical botany at the end of his 1<sup>st</sup> year. He qualified MB ChB with commendation in 1936, then assisted elder brother Tom in general practice in Thurso for 9 months. Three years later he qualified in Public Health (DPH), also at Glasgow University.**

**W. H. F. became Resident Medical Officer at Knightswood Hospital 1938. He transferred to Mearns Kirk as Resident Medical Officer in 1939, gaining his DPH at this time. On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939, in charge of evacuated patients from Mearns Kirk, he sailed from Renfrew Pier for Millport. In November 1939, he was appointed Assistant Medical Officer of Health, and Tuberculosis Officer for Stirlingshire.**

**At the end of the war, he was appointed Deputy Medical Officer of Health and Tuberculosis Officer for Perthshire, and took up this position on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1946. Transferring to hospital service in 1948, on creation of National Health Service, he spent the rest of his professional life as consultant in chest medicine in Perth, taking the opportunity of early retirement in 1970.**

**The other side, or sides of his life were notable. Firstly, photography played an important part in his daily activities. Having passed his examinations for Associateship of the Royal Photographic Society, he became qualified as a professional photographer. Applying this qualification to his existing interests in architecture, history and archaeology, he produced, over a period of fifty years, a pictorial record of the City of Perth. A founder-member of the Perth Civic Trust in 1967, he was for a lengthy period its official photographer, recording in a professional capacity, for example, the restoration of the Roundhouse of the old waterworks.**

**He was President of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science for ten years, and of the Society's Photographic Section for three years. Also a Rotarian for 25 years, he supported the Rotary movement wherever possible. He was particularly active in Community Service, both in a voluntary capacity, and in his daily work – tuberculosis, as a community disease associated with poverty, gave ample opportunity for those with a caring approach to lend support. Until 1970 Perth did not have a "Probus" Club for retired professional and business men. W. H. F. was, through Rotary, appointed chairman of a committee given the task of setting up such a club. As a result, the Perth Probus Club was set up on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1971. Perth now has several very successful Probus Clubs. Also through Rotary, he was the selected recipient of the Cairncross Trophy, for service to Perth, in 1999.**

**From the early 1950s he had built up an extensive photographic record of the Perth townscape, including all its listed buildings. In the year 2000, the remaining copies of this record (totalling over 6000 signed prints, many with descriptive captions) were handed over to the A.K. Bell Library for the use of the public.**

**His book, Heritage of Perth, published in 1984, used many of these photographs and was an immediate success, and earned him the D. K. Thomson Award for his contribution to Perth's cultural life in that year. The book ran to a second edition in 1996, with a generous foreword by Magnus Magnusson. A leather-bound, signed copy was presented to the Prince of Wales at the ceremonial opening of the A. K. Bell Library.**

**Perhaps his most notable creation, in 1992, was the Bertha Trust, formed to help families in need in Perth and Kinross. The Trust was started in memory of his wife Marjorie, who died in 1991. In the first ten years of the Trust's existence, over 700 families received help, many of them single-parent families. Until his death, Scott Gardiner did sterling work as Secretary and Treasurer of the Trust, now carried on by his son Peter, and Betty Bridgeford continues as the Trust's vital link with the Social Work department. It is intended that the Trust continue its good works for many years to come.**

**Despite failing mobility following a fall and illness in the spring of 2003, he retained an active and creative mind, and published a 2005 Tay Calendar with pictures from his slide collection. A devoted team of carers and regular visits from his son and daughter allowed him to live happily in his own home until he passed away in his sleep on the morning of 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2006.**