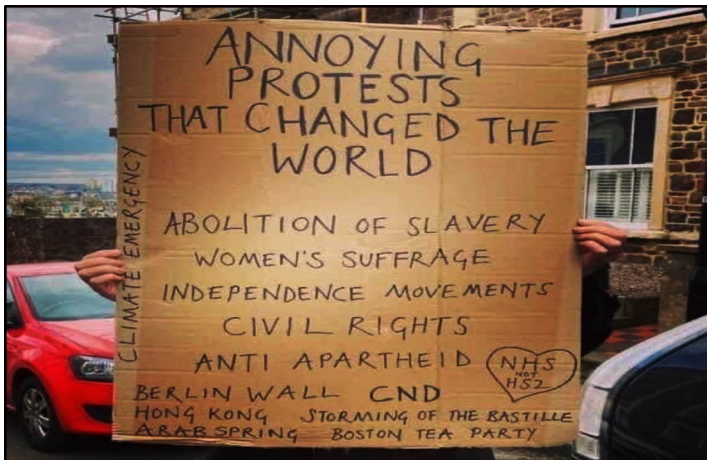




**ANTI POLL TAX DEMO**  
May Day, 1989. Part of a powerful exhibition on Cranhill Arts, at Street Level Gallery until 19<sup>th</sup> October



**GOT A STORY? Email [glasgowkeelie@riseup.net](mailto:glasgowkeelie@riseup.net)**

# GLASGOW KEELIE

No.55 October 2025 Keep Glasgow Revolting Priceless

# IMMIGRANTS DON'T PUT UP YOUR RENT: LANDLORDS DO!



Photo: livingrent.org



## Keelie Quips

The top 50 richest families in the UK now hold more wealth than the poorest half of the population, comprising more than 34 million people

*When empathy goes,  
barbarism grows*

With Trump angling for a Nobel Peace Prize, we are reminded that Hitler was nominated in 1938. (He refused the nomination, as the prize had previously been given to a concentration camp prisoner).

## THE DETERMINED CAMPAIGN to save Ruchill Community Centre continues!

Every Saturday between noon and 1pm protestors have gathered in rain, hail or shine in the long running struggle to re-open the Centre.

Now, more than ever, the community needs a place to meet.

• Save Ruchill Community Centre on Facebook



On 24 February 1909, Ethel Macdonald was born in Motherwell, Scotland. She later moved to Glasgow, worked in retail, and became a socialist.

When the Spanish civil war began in 1936 she travelled to revolutionary Barcelona and wrote for Scottish newspapers. She described how factories and villages were collectivised and how churches were turned into hospitals, libraries, and schools.

Her writings also contain interesting details that help us to picture life at the time: British volunteers tended to get drunk upon arriving in Spain “perhaps... because they are unaccustomed to wine”; men and women soldiers were indistinguishable in dress, except that “all the girls had beautifully permed hair and were strikingly made up.”

She also achieved fame as the

English language voice of the CNT union radio station. Her reports were listened to around the world and her Scottish accent proved especially popular in the US. In May 1937 the Communist Party began to purge the anti-fascist movement of revolutionaries who didn't agree with the Moscow line. In Barcelona, Ethel helped anarchists defend the barricades against CP troops, and later she smuggled food and letters to imprisoned comrades. She helped foreign anti-fascists escape Spain and the UK press dubbed her the “Scots Scarlet Pimpernel.”

Soon she too was imprisoned by the CP, and upon her release she went into hiding, moving from house to house as she sheltered among Barcelona's anarchists until she managed to get to France, and from there back to Glasgow.

After the outbreak of WWII she received call up papers for Women's National Service. She returned them with the words “Get Lost.” When she received further papers, she wrote back, “Come and get me.” Authorities decided against chasing the Scots' Scarlet Pimpernel.

She remained active in the radical movement until her death.

• The Keelie Folk Club are having an event to commemorate Ethel in November. Watch for details.

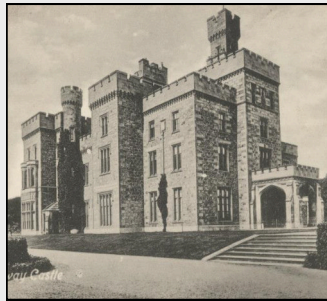
## THE CASTLE THAT OPIUM BUILT

**STORNOWAY CASTLE**, built in 1844 by Sir James Matheson, from his ill-gotten gains from the drug trade.

He not only bought the land for the castle, he bought the whole Isle of Lewis.

He made his fortune selling opium to addicts in China, and he had the heaviest enforcers for back-up in the world: **the Royal Navy**.

China, trying to protect its population from widespread addiction and serious social and economic disruption attempted to clamp down on the illegal drugs trade, but the British government



went to war in the name of 'Free Trade', not once, but twice.

The treaty that ended the first war led to Britain gaining control of Hong Kong.

**Just one of the many, many inglorious episodes in the bloody history of the British Empire.**



**MOTHERS AGAINST GENOCIDE** staged a powerful protest at the Drying Green, near the People's Palace, on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September.

Clothes lines were set up on the historic Green, owned in common by the people of Glasgow. Children's socks were pegged on, each one bearing the name of a child killed in Gaza.

Over 20,000 children have died in the genocide during the past two years. Another 30,000 have been injured.

• **Check Mothers Against Genocide Scotland on Instagram for latest news**

Then let us pray  
that come it may,  
As come it will  
for a' that,  
That Sense and Worth,  
o'er a' the earth  
Shall bear the gree  
an' a' that.  
For a' that, an' a' that,  
It's comin yet  
for a' that,  
That Man to Man  
the world o'er  
Shall brithers be  
for a' that.

**SCUNNERED BY THE OUTBREAK OF 'HATE-RIOTISM'**, Robert Burns buffs have taken to the lampposts to slap the last verse of 'A Man's a Man for A' That' under Saltires that have appeared.

Famous for its expression of egalitarianism and internationalism, the song is known world-wide, and was renowned for being sung on the barricades in Germany during the revolutions of 1848.



[spiritofrevolt.info](http://spiritofrevolt.info)



[IWW.ORG.UK](http://IWW.ORG.UK)

# WE'RE ALL ON THE SAME BOAT

**OVER 100,000 Asylum seekers sought refuge in Glasgow between 1845 and 1852, with 50,000 arriving in 1847 alone.**

They were seeking asylum from the Great Irish Famine, following the disastrous potato blight, and they were from both the Catholic and Protestant populations.

**They were joined by many thousands more trying to escape from similar harvest failures in the Scottish Highlands and Islands.**

A typhus epidemic in 1847 killed many thousands, with a large proportion of the casualties being the new arrivals. And a cholera



**Irish and Highland famine memorial at the People's Palace**

epidemic in 1848 added to the misery.

**The newspapers of the day talked about an 'IRISH INVASION', and of immigrants 'squatting in swarms on the river banks beside the bridges'**

But eventually a combination of soup

kitchens and mutual aid in the new communities led to a meagre improvement.

And in the 1850s the massive expansion of the shipbuilding and engineering industries led to the new arrivals playing a vital part in building the foundations of the Glasgow we know today.

Many of us are the

descendants of the desperate, displaced people who arrived in Clydeside around 175 years ago.

**We should remember our history and show solidarity to the refugees of today by being at the forefront of the battle against the bigots, racists, and self-serving demagogues.**



**Memorial Sculpture of The Great Hunger (An Gorta Mór) at St Mary's in Abercromby St**