

Born in 1909, and having lived in the same house opposite the School since she was 3 years old, Miss Alison Laidlaw had connections with James Gillespie's that dated back over 94 years. From her first day, at the age of 5, Miss Laidlaw was to attend the school until she was 18 and then return again, as a teacher, until her retirement. Affectionately known by her pupils as 'Ladybird' because she was ladylike, polite and simply because they loved her, she was certainly a favourite teacher amongst the pupils who graduated through her classes. This is reflected in the fact that once her story became known, through this project, 12 of her former pupils, from as long ago as 1945 and as far away as the South of France and Calgary in Canada, came forward to write to her and make contact again. When still living in Lauderdale Street, she watched from her window as the 'new' school was built and delighted in observing the students pour down the road, outside her window, every day. Her obituary was published in The Scotsman on 22 May 2007.