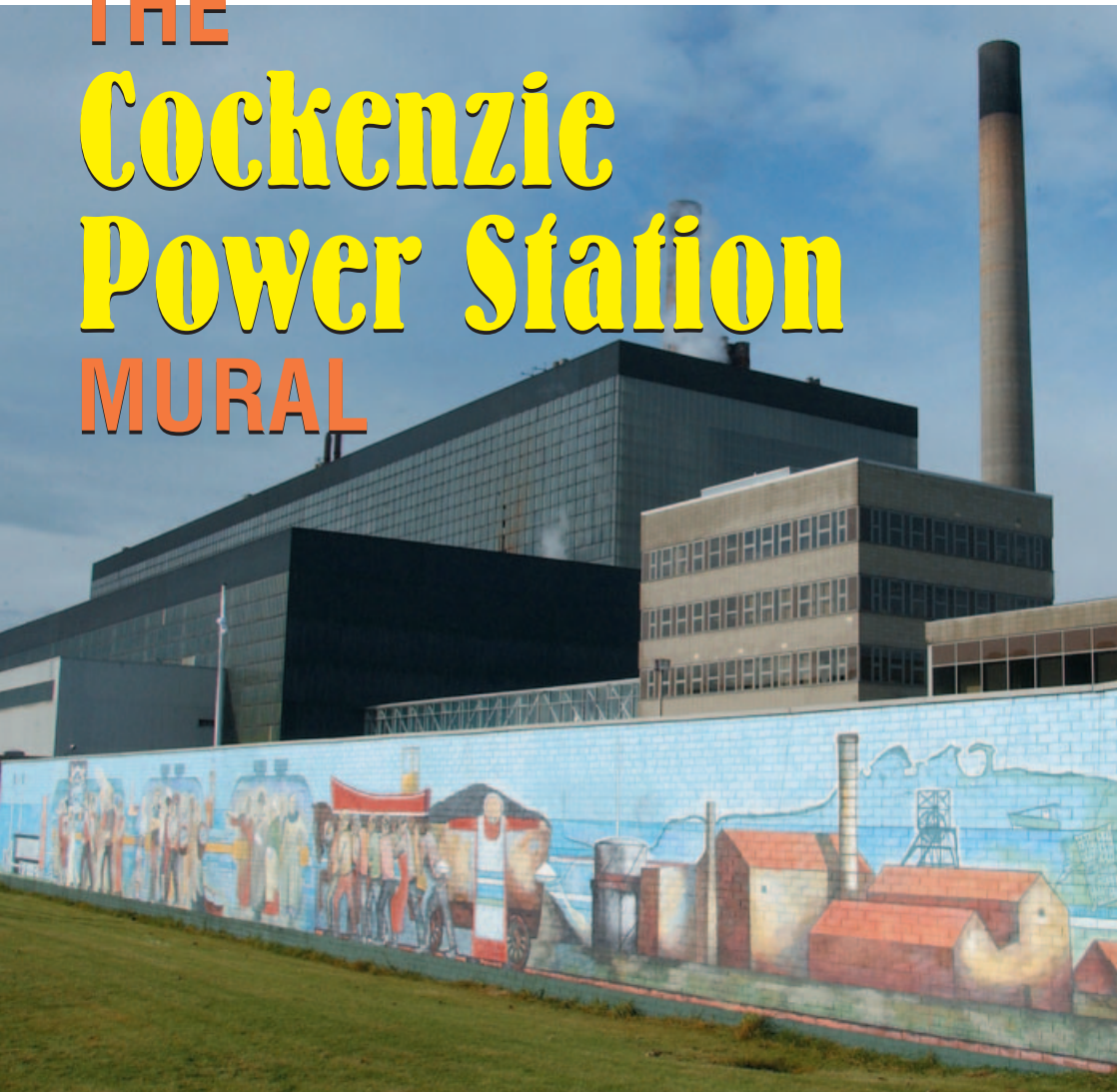
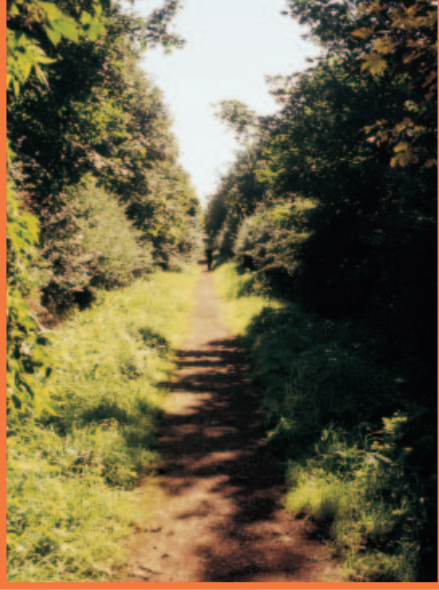


# THE Cockenzie Power Station MURAL



A VISUAL CELEBRATION OF ITS HISTORY



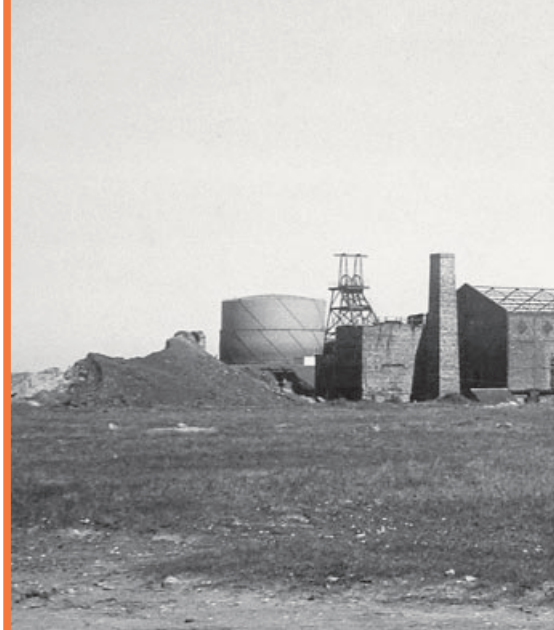
## Scotland's First Railway

Its story begins with the abortive Jacobite rebellion of 1715, when land in the area around Cockenzie was removed from the ownership of those who supported the Stewarts. Investors who were eager to take advantage of the availability of land in the area around the small fishing village of Cockenzie set up the York Buildings Company, a speculative venture financed by various investors. The harbour was rebuilt and enlarged and, in 1722, a waggonyway was built to carry coal from the mines along the line between Tranent and Cockenzie harbour. The Tranent to Cockenzie Waggonyway was the earliest railed transport way in Scotland, and continued in use for over 200 years. A pedestrian footpath and the mineral railway serving Cockenzie Power Station still follow this route, which has yet another claim to historical significance as the site of the famous Battle of Prestonpans in 1745, when the Highlanders, led by Charles Stewart, defeated the Hanoverian army led by General Sir John Cope.

## The Days of 'King' Coal

The earliest recorded history of coal mining in Scotland began in the area around Prestonpans, with the monks of Newbattle digging shallow pits to extract coal lying near the surface of the land. Over the centuries, as timber supplies dwindled, coal became the fuel for the nation. By the 1700s, the development of steam power for pumping mine water and raising coal radically increased the scale and the depth of excavations. At the height of mining operations in the 20th century, the vast majority of families in Prestonpans depended for their income on two collieries, located at either end of the town, Prestongrange and Prestonlinks. In 1951, out of an adult male population of 1,400 in Prestonpans, over 1,000 were engaged in coal mining.

*Prestonlinks Colliery*



By the mid 1960s, economic and other pressures had resulted in the loss of both these pits. The closure of Prestonlinks Colliery in 1964 marked another significant event in the story of Scotland's industries, the end of deep mining in East Lothian. With the development of open cast mining, history turned full circle: like the early activities of the monks of Newbattle, open cast mining relied on coal deposits near the surface.

## Electricity: A New Power

In the second half of the 20th century, derelict villages in the north of England and the west of Scotland were a silent testament to the end of Britain's industrial age. This did not happen in Prestonpans and in spite of the environmental issues associated with the use of fossil fuels, there

*A new industrial landscape*



is no doubt that the construction and operation of the power station at Cockenzie was a major element in the survival of our local communities.

By the 1950s, the South of Scotland Electricity Board was considering a number of sites for the construction of what was to be the largest power station in Scotland. After the closure of Prestonlinks Colliery, the site was confirmed as the preferred location and by the mid 1960s, work began on one of the few large-scale industrial initiatives to take place in Scotland during the second half of the 20th century.

The consulting engineers on the award-winning project, for both the power station and the generating hall on the landward side of the road, were Kennedy, Donkin, Strain & Robertson and the architects Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Partners. In addition, the builders undertook landscaping and sea-reclamation at the former colliery site, creating a green space





now used as an amenity by local residents. In addition to the sea water available at the site, further supplies of water were necessary. The Whiteadder reservoir near Gifford, completed in 1968, was built to supply fresh water not only to the county but also to the new power station at Cockenzie. Operational since 1967, the power station was officially opened on 24 May 1968 by the Secretary of State for Scotland, Rt. Hon William Ross MBE, MP.

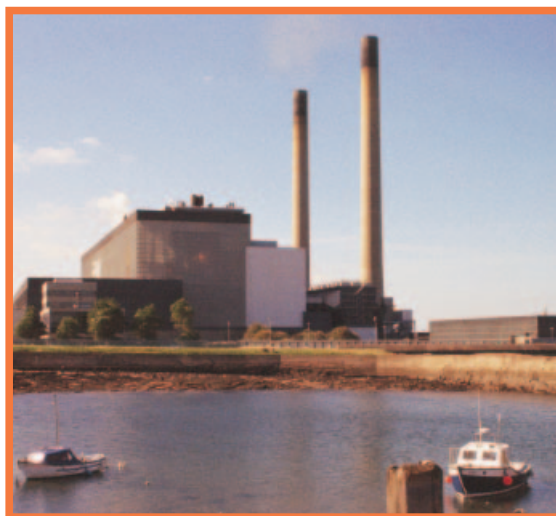
The issue of waste disposal was also addressed at the time of construction, when a site was identified at Musselburgh Links, near the mouth of the River Esk. This site was divided into four lagoons to provide a disposal site for ash generated by the power station. The site is also involved in the land reclamation process, using ash from spent fuel to reclaim approximately 230 acres of land. This site has been developed as a local amenity site and a nature reserve, and Musselburgh Lagoons are now regarded as possibly the best bird

watching site in mainland Scotland, with its purpose-built wader scrapes, hides and other visitor facilities.

Cockenzie Power Station employs 125 staff and has an annual turnover of around £50 million. Staff and management at the station help to support a wide range of community events and initiatives, through donations and practical help, such as the yearly charity donation.

## The Past Remembered

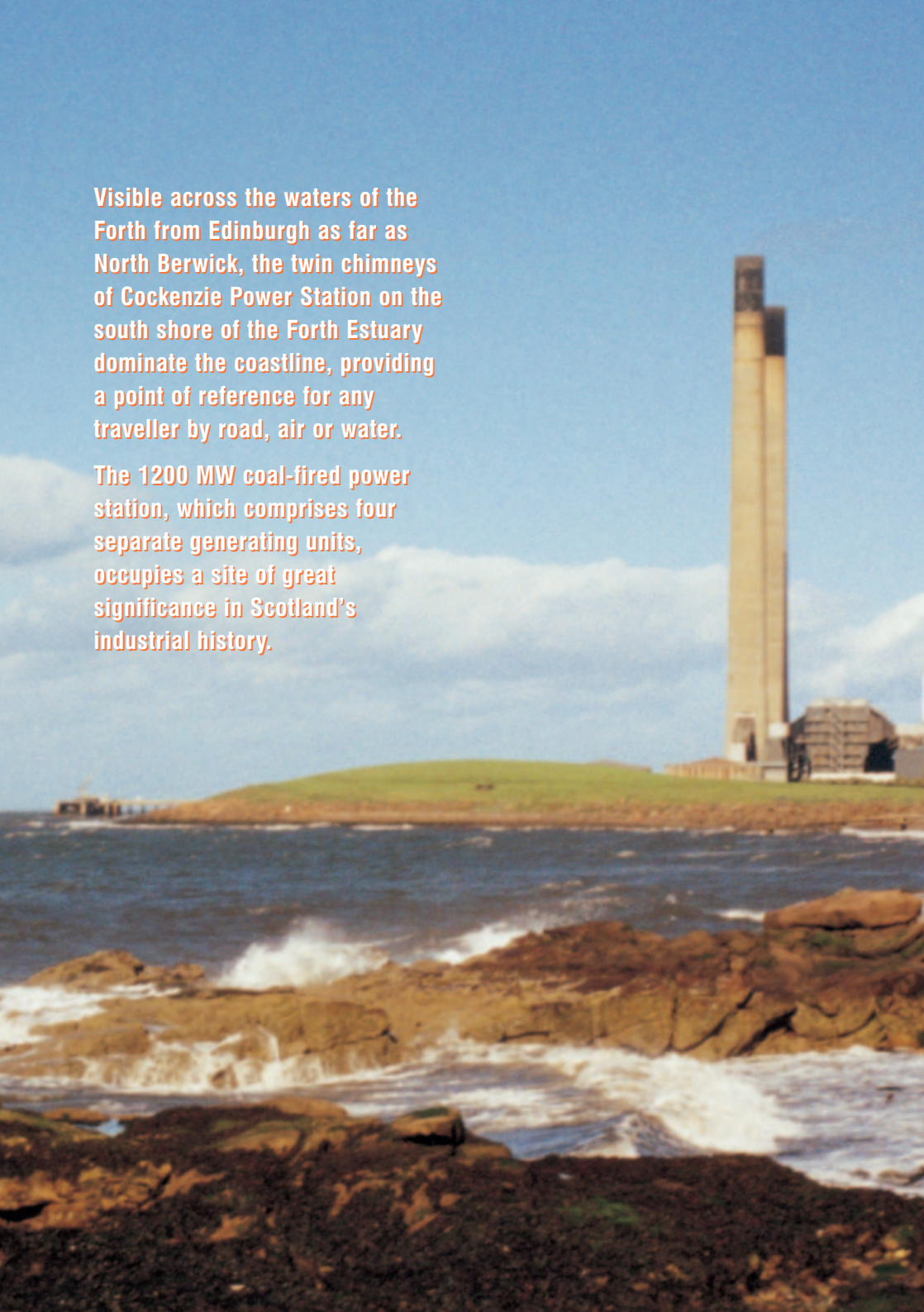
Nor is the history of the site forgotten. An annual walk of the site of the Battle of Prestonpans is led by Longniddry historian Peter Mackenzie and in May 2001, the 1921 founding of the Prestonlinks Colliery Brass Band was celebrated by the descendants of that band, the Dalkeith and Monktonhall Brass Band, at a concert in Prestonpans Community Centre.



*Cockenzie Power Station and Harbour*

Visible across the waters of the Forth from Edinburgh as far as North Berwick, the twin chimneys of Cockenzie Power Station on the south shore of the Forth Estuary dominate the coastline, providing a point of reference for any traveller by road, air or water.

The 1200 MW coal-fired power station, which comprises four separate generating units, occupies a site of great significance in Scotland's industrial history.



## The Power Station Mural

More recently, the Prestoungrange Arts Festival Society, together with Scotland UnLtd, has funded a mural on the power station walls by Andrew Crummy which offers a visual celebration of the history of the site. The mural images include elements of the social and working life of the people of Cockenzie and Prestonpans, from fisherfolk to saltworkers to colliers, as well as a visual record of the early stages of the construction of the Power Station itself. The mural is part of the Prestoungrange Murals and Heritage Trail which tells the story of the people and industries of Prestonpans and the ancient Barony of Prestoungrange.



*Artist Andrew Crummy in front of the mural. Among the images to be seen are: 1950's Gala Queen; The Cockenzie Fishermen's Association banner; Musselburgh Ash Lagoons; Fishing boats with a distinctive shape, still to be seen on the Forth; The waggonway; Chalmers Memorial Church; Prestonlinks Colliery; Generators vital to the power station; Fisher wives from Cockenzie; A priest holding salt; A miner; The bagpipe band sponsored by power station workers; The head of the Electricity Board at the time it was built, with the site architect*



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