

Bernard Hunter – 75 years and still going strong

Bernard Hunter, the mobile crane hire firm which is responsible for lifting the Mound Christmas tree into place, has celebrated an important milestone recently.

The company, which is also one of the earliest recycling firms, is the largest private sector employer in Gilmerton and its 75 year anniversary was recognised by burying a time capsule at the company headquarters.

Those who helped create the capsule include Ian Murray MP, Drum Field Archers, Club McKendry a Gilmerton Spin club, and Gilmerton Chinwag Group. Bernard Hunter has worked with all of these groups over the years.

The firm has also produced a book charting the history over the decades since it began in the early 1950s with the purchase of a 10 ton Coles EMA crane. Based originally in Leith by the charismatic founder Bernard Hunter Sr, the business moved to the former site of Gilmerton Colliery in the early sixties.

At a ceremony Ian Murray joined the father and son management team, Chairman Jim Rafferty and Managing Director, Mark Rafferty.

The time capsule contains a copy of the book, a copy of the motion of congratulations passed by The City of Edinburgh Council, an arrow from Drum Field Archers and mementoes

provided by the community council.

Mark Rafferty, Managing Director of Bernard Hunter said: "I'm immensely proud of the amazing achievements of my grandfather Bernard and all of our family.

"We have worked very hard to make Bernard Hunter a company that has an outstanding reputation for customer care, and a company with a strong commitment to our employees and to the local community. We felt it was important to commemorate this anniversary, and a time capsule seemed the perfect way to mark 75 years of success. We've created a lot of local history in Gilmerton and across Scotland, and these items will give a future generation a unique insight into our extraordinary story."

Ian Murray MP said, "I am very proud to have been asked to take part in this ceremony with one of Edinburgh's most successful family firms. As the largest private sector employer in Gilmerton, Bernard Hunter has provided jobs for generations of local residents, but it's done way more than that.

"The company has always played a full role in supporting the local community from decades of support for Ferniehill Football Club to supporting the Drum Field Archers and the McKendry Spinners. When Drum Archers outgrew their initial home at Gilmerton's Society Hall it was Bernard Hunter that stepped in to help keep them in the area and they did the same when Club McKendry was made homeless just recently.

"I can think of no other company that has done so much for the community in which it is based. The company's also helping deliver a much-needed health centre and other facilities that will make Gilmerton better for its residents as part of the Gilmerton Gateway development. I congratulate Bernard Hunter for their 75 years of success and wish them many, many more years of success."



The photo includes family members Mark, Jim, John and Angela Rafferty pictured with Ian Murray and representatives of community groups from the Gilmerton area. In names running left to right are Hazel King, Head of Finance, Bernard Hunter; Jean Duncan and Elaine Scott of Chinwag; Janis McKendry of the McKendry Spinners; Angela Rafferty (family, Bernard Hunter); Ian Murray MP for Edinburgh South; Mark Rafferty (family, Bernard Hunter); Lesley Gibson-Eaglesham of Gilmerton and Inch Community Council; Jim and Liz Rafferty (family, Bernard Hunter), Pauline MacFarlane (Drum Field Archers); Jim Rafferty (family, Bernard Hunter).