

GLENKENS GAZETTE

incorporating news from Glenkens Community & Arts Trust

FREE IN : BALMACLELLAN ~ CARSPHAIRN ~ MOSSDALE ~ NEW GALLOWAY ~ ST. JOHN'S TOWN OF DALRY

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www.glenkensburgazette.com

You'll Never Walk Alone : The Stewartry Community Initiatives Forum

Co-operation and Communication in the Arts was the theme for a recent Stewartry Community Initiatives Forum. The Forum, expanded in scope from last October's Rural Initiatives Forum in Dalbeattie, bringing together regional MSP Alex Fergusson and over thirty other local representatives. Discussion centred on the potential for Arts in the Community at a local, area and national level.

Brian Edgar, Kells Community Council Chairman, instigated proceedings: speaking of the 'lonely path' traced by individual project groups, before appealing to his audience to 'help and support each other in the years ahead'. He also suggested that the meeting should be 'as friendly and informal as possible', to foster an environment accessible to every member of the community.

Speaking after Mr Edgar, a good humoured Mr Fergusson professed admiration for 'the proliferation of community initiatives, particularly strong in the Glenkens', that have evolved 'from the heart of the community.' The first half of the Forum moved to justify Mr Fergusson's enthusiasm. Five community initiative groups, ranging from the well established Carsphairn Heritage Group to the newly formed Laurieston Initiative, gave six-minute updates. Mr Edgar's suggestion that 'anyone over six minutes gets thrown in the river' seemed to ease self-conscious tongues.

Both the success of local groups and a growing appreciation of their need to be less hermetic, proved to be recurrent themes of the updates. Anna Campbell, representing Carsphairn Heritage Group, spoke of the Heritage Centre's 2002 Glenkens' exhibition: a move away from the Carsphairn environs bias of previous years. Mr Edgar also suggested that GCATs pledge to 'link the communities of the Glenkens' easily moves to 'linking the communities of the Stewartry.' Mr Tony Fitzpatrick from Dumfries and Galloway Council later clarified the logic of co-operation: using the old analogy that a whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

It was also hoped that with the strength of Mr Fitzpatrick's 'community mass', the 'not

so good' factors of Stewartry living could be addressed. Rebecca Coggins, Arts Manager for Dumfries and Galloway Council and Jenny Wilson, Director of Dumfries and Galloway Arts Association, talked of the national perspective and 'regeneration through the arts'. Dumfries and Galloway, post foot and mouth, with a projected 12-15 % decrease in working age population over the next ten years and youth migration, warrants such regeneration. GCAT Chairman Cathy Agnew, citing the area as 'geographically challenged', was one of the strongest voices for community-led action: 'no one else will help us unless we make the effort to help ourselves to make our community better'. She then outlined GCAT's achievements and progress over the last year.

Projected plans by the initiative groups and government bodies are exciting. Dalbeattie will host a Festival of Granite, Kircudbright battles for a full time Tourist Information Centre, Laurieston evolves a constitution and GCAT plans soon to welcome back Glenkens' "Guest Poet Laureate" John Hegley. A list that is but the tip of the iceberg.

Hugh Bryden, from the education department, also explained a newly implemented scheme of benefit to local children. Six cultural co-ordinators have been appointed on a part-time basis with a brief of 'widening the experiences available to children and young people and thereby maximising the contribution which culture and cultural activities can make to their education'.

In all, the atmosphere was one of professionalism and parochialism: the rural aroma of dung lingered around tightly packed cars on and around the Ken Bridge car park. Sir Norman Arthur, Lord Lieutenant of the Stewartry, speaking in conclusion, both congratulated the Stewartry and provided a necessary context. It is against a background of pocket deprivation and global warmongering that Dumfries and Galloway pursues its cultural improvements.

Text by Hannah Adcock, photographs by Amy Neil.



Regional MSP Alex Fergusson



GCAT Chairman Cathy Agnew and Kells Community Council Chairman Brian Edgar



Discussion in the coffee break



Lord Lieutenant of the Stewartry, Sir Norman Arthur

Donald Watson and a Lifetime of Beauty



Donald Watson at home, March 2003

For the acclaimed Dalry bird artist, Donald Watson, memories come feathered and chirping: "the ceaseless purring of turtle doves" evokes childhood summers whilst "casual bird watching when the sergeant wasn't looking" marks war time service in Burma.

Mr. Watson's eye, for over eighty years, has been for colour, light, tone and form. In 1962 he illustrated *The Oxford Book of Birds*, in 1964 became a founder member of *The Society of Wildlife Artists* and in 2002 was elected the first honorary member of *The Mall gallery*.

Presently, he is composing a fifth book. Unlike his four previous books, *A Monograph on the Hen harrier*, *Birds of Moor and Mountain*, *A Bird Artist in Scotland* and *One pair of Eyes*, this will be more a feast of a picture book and less a personal pilgrimage with delightful illustrations. A publishing date may be as soon as this year.

Although Mr. Watson is admired for technical artistry, his most impressive skill is creating compositions of balance: where birds, puffing large or flicked incidental, exist in symbiosis with their environment. In *Herring Gull Colony, Solway Cliff* (1947) seagulls, individual in the foreground, gradually speckle into the background cliff. Living creatures and landmasses married in a composition seeping intense and vital. Qualities which are surely connected to Mr. Watson's 'on the spot' technique, where wind chills both his fingers and the reeling birds he seeks to capture. It was in the cold of a 1947 winter that Mr. Watson first started

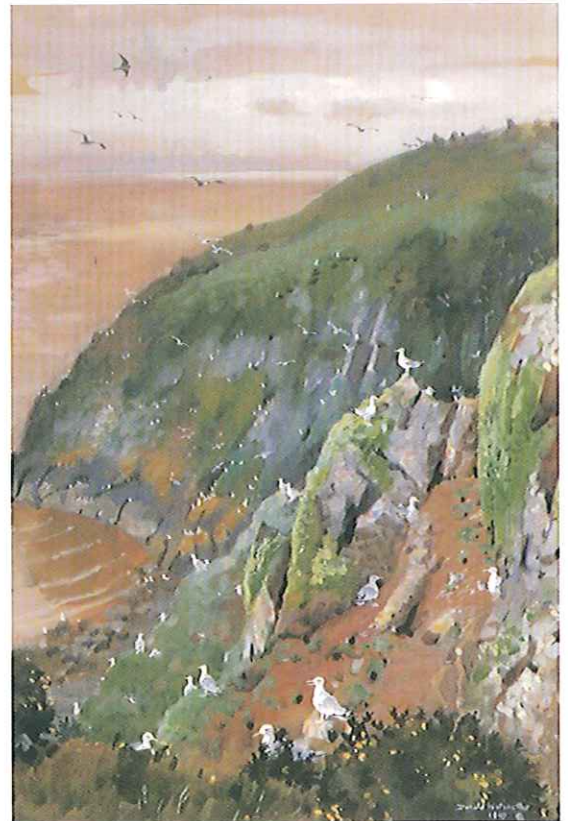
painting on the spot, "I knew this was a big moment." Compositions became less detailed but bolder: brooding atmospheres capturing an "essential feeling of Life." (*One Pair of Eyes*, p8). A phrase that springs in Mr. Watson's eyes when he smiles about the richness of February colours or the joys of a landscape.

From relatively early in his career Mr. Watson has contended with the growing divorce between his brand of realism and the fêted favourites of what he calls "The Artworld with a capital A". Branded 'Old fashioned' when young he admits that his exclusion from The Artworld does annoy him "a wee bit". However, a history of books, solo-exhibitions and increasing prices for his paintings depict a story of success not easily snubbed.

Recently New Galloway's part-time resident, Professor Breakwell, purchased two of Mr. Watson's works. Professor Breakwell is Pro Rector of The London Institute, a conglomeration of London's



Corncrake and Chicks, in St John's Town of Dalry 1955



Herring Gull Colony, Solway Cliff 1947

art schools. Perhaps the breach is healing. Although whether birds, painted rather than pickled, will ever become trendy is anybody's guess.

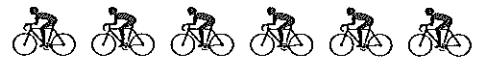
Yet 'with it' or not, today Mr. Watson's compositions have an atemporal quality that will outlast modern trends. In the introduction to *One Pair of Eyes*, Mr. Watson quotes a passage from *The Realm of the Wild*, where a child is given a pair of dead black grouse:

"My stock preconceptions of beauty and ugliness were turned upside down in the face of these miraculous colour combinations, which seemed to have been distilled from the grey of pre-history and told of the forest, the marshes, the mosses on the stones and the night sky between the boughs. One might gaze for ever into this world: it had no bottom or end." (*One Pair of Eyes*, p8)

A quotation Mr Watson distills into an artistic philosophy.

Interview and photograph by H Adcock

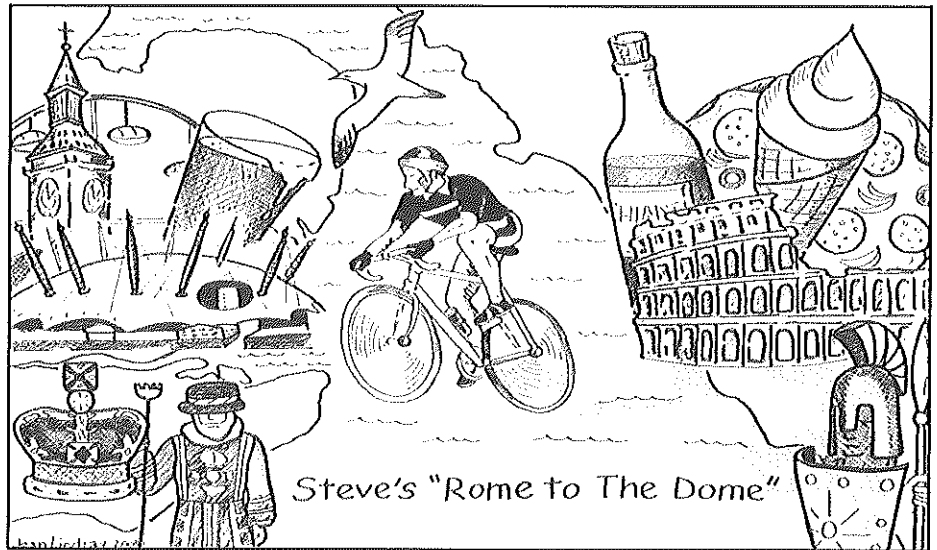
Puffing for Charity



Rome to the Dome

Steve Harfield, Glenkens health visitor and marshmallow eater extraordinaire, will be cycling over 2000 kilometres in sixteen days in June, for the children's research charity Leukemia Busters. Rather than the cycling "from shop to shop for ice cream" that Steve smilingly recalls favouring, he will be faced with up to 120 miles a day and Alpine inclines to lighten the breath at 2000 feet. The cycle tour will spin Steve from Rome to London.

Having always enjoyed cycling, Steve decided that he'd "like to train towards something: I wasn't looking for any specific charity." But it's perhaps fitting, in view of Steve's commitment to the children of the Glenkens, that he is championing a children's charity. Leukemia Busters was founded in 1989 by two mothers whose children were diagnosed as having lymphoma. The sole purpose of the charity was to fund research to enable the development of new *magic bullet* type drugs for patients with leukemia and lymphoma.



Steve envisages that the tour will give him a tale to spin "in old age", but has already been entertaining children with stories of the Charity Tour at Dalry school, where children were issued with Smartie tubes to collect coins and sponsor sheets to present to parents. The total amount for sponsorship that Steve must raise is £1250. So although the people of the Glenkens

can't strap an armchair onto Steve's bike, as he would wish, we can ease his financial pain by sponsorship.

Steve can be contacted by e-mail at SHarfield@dg-primarycare.scot.nhs.uk

Cartoon by Jean Lindsay

Tanzania Safari

It's been over a month now since I returned from Tanzania on a Safari Cycle across the African plains. In Tanzania the temperatures soared to 50 degrees; I came home to minus 6 degrees. So what took me away from our lovely Scottish winter?A Challenge, that is the answer, well actually three challenges: I decided to take part in a Sponsored Cycle Ride to raise funds for SCOPE, a charity which helps people with Cerebral Palsy, and with the challenge of that came the threefold package. I had to learn to ride a bike again after a gap of forty years, and I had to get fit enough to cycle forty miles a day. Secondly, I had to commit to raising £2500 before I was accepted, and thirdly I had to persuade family to give me their blessing (that was the hard one - Grandma "watch out for the lions!")

So on 20th January I set forth on my journey. Flying overnight to Nairobi, buses took all 82 cyclists on the five hour trip the following morning to our starting point at the foot of Mt Kilimanjaro. Bikes were provided, as was all the camping equipment, and each day we travelled further in to the Tanzanian plains. The scenery was spectacular, green vegetation with some very contented cattle being herded by the Masai people. Acacia thorns caused problems for our off road trips, and the temperature was uncharacteristically hot for the time of year,

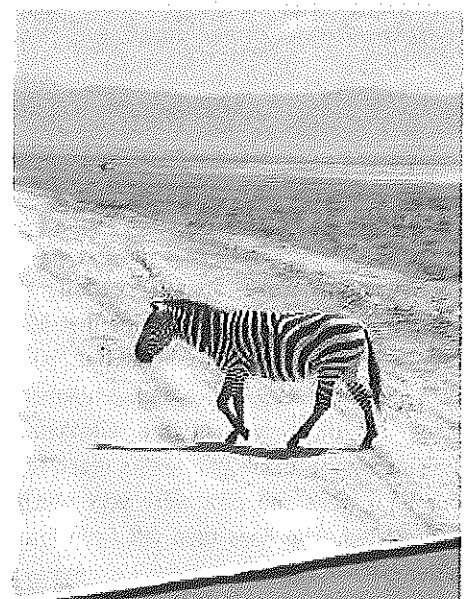
but we made our target of 300 kilometres in the end.

During the trip we saw zebras, ostriches and hyenas and on our last day we had the chance to visit the Ncoongoro Crater Conservation area where lions, elephants, hippos and many other species were easily spotted.

I am proud to say that I managed to raise nearly £4000 sponsorship, and I would like to thank all the generous people in the Glenkens who helped. I know this is an excellent Charity, as I have a little grandson who is affected by cerebral palsy and help is so much appreciated by families and carers.

The charities have found these trips are an excellent way of raising funds, providing there are enough people out there with a taste for adventure! Altogether our cycling trip raised nearly £250,000 – and we cyclists got a great sense of achievement too.

by Jean Gibbon



CARSPHAIRN SHOW

Saturday 7th June 2003

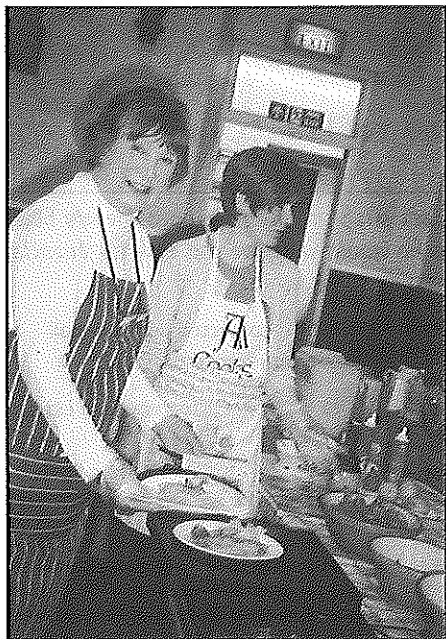
Craft tent

It is proposed to have a Craft Tent at the Show this year providing there is enough interest.

If you would like to rent a space in the Tent for selling or demonstrating crafts or produce, or for more information, please phone Jean Gibbon on 01644 460244.

"Hot Pancakes! Hot Pancakes! Savoury and Sweet!"

On Shrove Tuesday, 4th March, Balmaclellan and Kells Guild hosted their 6th Pancake lunch. The Upper New Galloway Town Hall was the venue for the third year running and this year's charity was the Glenkens Medical Practice Equipment Fund. £225 was donated to charity and nearly 200 pancakes were munched.



Climbing up from a grey, sulking day the hall glistened with colour and vitality. Guests sat like petals round coloured tablecloths while guild members buzzed round the hall taking orders and distributing pancakes. Smiles were generous and Betty McQueen's teapot, enormous.

Also on offer were a raffle and a Sales Table. The raffle, supervised by Jean Brown, included a delectable Easter cake while the Sales Table, supervised by Marion Wheelans and Margaret Johnstone, was soon decimated. The tinkling tones of Jim Mcphee on the piano proved a relaxing melody to a base line of bustle.

The amount of hard work on the part of the guild was impressive: from the making and serving of cakes and pancakes through to the downstairs itinerary. Descending to the bowels of the hall I was greeted with "we've just finished washing up". I paused. "Darn!" Chairwoman of the Guild, Joan Walker, laughingly admitted, "there are times



when we say we will never do it again", before quickly adding "we love it really!"

The Guild would like to thank everyone who supported the event: including members, friends and long suffering husbands. Satisfied pancake lovers would like to thank Mrs Primrose Morrison for making over 200 pancakes in addition to some fillings and other baking. Thanks also go to Mrs Ann Martin, Mrs Frances Godfrey, Mrs Sheila Northway, Mrs Heidi Bartholomew, Mrs Elspeth Vincent, Miss Margaret McGinley, Mrs Joan Walker, Mrs Norma Davidson, Ms Irene Godfrey, Mrs Sarah Woolhouse, Mrs Elizabeth Gray and Mrs Audrey Grieve.

The Lions' Club

The Lions awoke after a period of slumber (the Glenkens' Lions that is!) just before Christmas, to hand out 105 packages to elderly ladies and gentlemen living by themselves in the Glenkens. Judging by the thank you letters received, our hard work and gifts were very much appreciated. The Lions then fell again into a slumber.

Then, on Wednesday 5th March, they awoke once more: a most enjoyable and successful Accordion and Fiddle evening was held in the Lochinvar Hotel, courtesy of Mr Lester and Mrs Eva Pennington, raising approximately £450.

Who could organise such an evening but our Alpha male, Mr Tommy Edgar? And an excellent job he made of it, roping in many of his musically talented friends to entertain a sell out audience.

The varied programme included stories,



songs and instrumentals, a raffle of some thirty prizes, and to top it all, a buffet supper of homebaking and sandwiches; and the question most asked? When is the next one?!

Would you like to enter the Lions' Den? We don't bite and you would be most welcome! Lionesses even more welcome! Please call James on 01644 430227.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us. Andrew Frew

NEW GALLOWAY OVER 50s THURSDAY CLUB

We are open for membership for anyone living in the Glenkens area. We meet every second Thursday in New Galloway Lower Town Hall at 12.30 ish. Lunch is served at 12.45: we enjoy a convivial meal of two different homemade soups, a filled roll of egg or meat, cheese and crackers, tea and coffee. The cost of this is £1-50, including a 30p savings towards the Xmas dinner held at either the Cross Keys or the Kennure. We have a raffle of foodstuffs provided by members and for anybody interested, there is dominoes or cards afterwards, (not gambling). So we invite you to come along, sample the bonhomie, and possibly make new friends or meet old ones.

Next meeting is April 17th.

Contact numbers :
Louise Knight 450 655
Raymond Vincent 420451



The Glenkens '73 Club at the Stewartry Drama Festival

This year the club entered two one-act plays for the Stewartry Community Drama Festival held in the Lochside Theatre from 26th February until 1st March and adjudicated by Brian Marjoribanks.

The adult team performed 'Uncle Jimmy' by Harry Glass, a very well written play which, in common with many of this author's other works, explores a wartime theme with sensitivity, humour and an emotional ending. Uncle Jimmy was killed at Dunkirk in 1940, his younger sister Meg (played by Marie Davie) has never allowed him to be forgotten, keeping a framed photograph of him on the sideboard and never missing an opportunity to tell stories of his heroism to her husband Norrie (Brian Edgar) and son Martin (Ewan McIntyre). Martin arranges for his Mum and Dad to go to France to find Uncle Jimmy's grave and he stays at home to look after the cat helped by his latest girlfriend Angie (Sheila Little). The play ends with a moving scene in the War Cemetery in France when Meg and Jimmy find the grave.

The play had various difficulties in that it demanded a split set between the living room and the graveyard. There were also various flashback scenes throughout the play requiring subtle lighting and costume changes while the living room had to be equally believable set in 1970 and 1990.

The adjudicator felt that all the technicalities of the play were handled very well, praising the set, lighting, music and particularly the way Ewan handled Martin's transition to a 10 year old. He summed up by saying 'I felt that the team succeeded in creating four believable characters and the humour of them, but varied in fully capturing the spirit of the play'.

The Youth Team entered 'Cinderella, the Sequel' by Isabella C. Rae, another author we have encountered in the past. This takes a hilarious look at the household of Prince Charming (Aaron Edgar) and Cinderella (Grace Tulloch) ten years after their wedding. It also involves the Fairy Godmother (Emma Thomson), the Baroness (Melva Tyson), Buttons (Vondy Smith) and Puck (Daisy Grimwood). The King and Queen are dead and Prince Charming is about to become King, but unknown to Cinderella he wants a divorce first. After the intervention of the Fairy Godmother and Puck, Prince Charming gets paired off with the now young again Baroness and Cinderella runs away with her first love, Buttons and they all live happily ever after!

The performance of the young cast was greatly appreciated by the audience and the adjudicator summed up by saying - 'A thoroughly enjoyable performance from a cast and team with considerable talent'.

Although we did not win any trophies this year, we thoroughly enjoyed producing, rehearsing and performing our entries and look forward to next year. The winning plays from the eleven entries were Lochside Youth Theatre with 'It's Only Make Believe' by Mark Rees who will represent the district at the Western Finals in East Kilbride and at the Youth Finals in Greenock, and Crossmichael Drama Club with 'The Reckoning' by Kathy Mead who will also go to East Kilbride.

by Brian Edgar

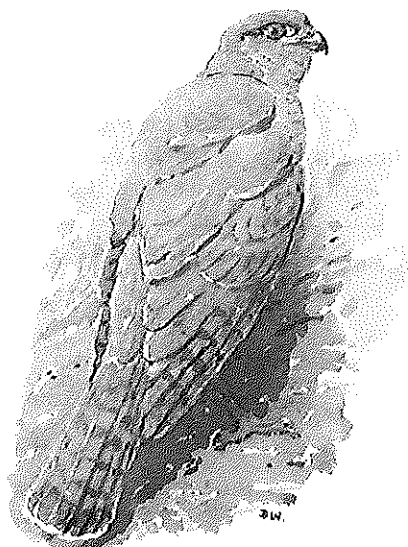


Glenkens' 73 Club and Youth Team
photographs courtesy of The Galloway News

The Limitless Enthusiasm of Gordon Yates

The Stewartry Branch of The Ornithologists' Club recently hosted a presentation by the renowned naturalist/photographer Gordon Yates. The venue for the fourteenth year running was New Galloway school and Mr. Yates performed to a full house.

Dominating the presentation this year were two of Mr Yates' films: the first a compendium of visits to recognized sea-bird colonies such as Bempton Cliffs in Yorkshire, Skomer Island off



Cock Sparrowhawk 1987, by
Donald Watson

the coast of Wales and the great stacks of Handa on the coast of Sutherland. There were wonderful views of Puffins, Fulmars, Peregrines, Choughs and many more species in these exciting locations.

The second film, 'A Pennine Forest' was equally enthralling with many close up shots of rarely observed birds such as the Long Eared Owl, Sparrow Hawk, Crossbill, Red Poll and Bullfinch, all filmed at the nest. The most unusual was the very secretive Woodcock, seen leaving and returning to the nest, turning her eggs and then, finally, the chicks hatching.

As usual, Gordon Yates displayed both limitless enthusiasm as well as a touching love for his feathered subjects. His presentation was greeted with delighted applause.

Glenkens Community & Arts Trust

LINKING THE COMMUNITIES OF THE GLENKENS

"Start Here"

The GCAT shop now has an information service with a touchscreen display. It provides details about the NHS, the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Executive, Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway and Dumfries and Galloway Council. It covers health, housing, and social issues. It is free, simple and easy to use and available during office hours. Usual office hours are 10-4 Monday to Friday.

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GCAT trained minibus drivers, photograph courtesy of The Galloway News

Trained and Ready to Drive!

On Wednesday 19th February Sir Norman Arthur presented MIDAS certificates to 9 of the first 21 drivers qualified to drive the new Glenkens Community Bus. The presentation took place at the Ken Bridge Hotel.

The bus, delivered in September, has been a qualified success. Chairman of Kells Community Council, Brian Edgar, recalled that 'one of the weeks of December the bus was out every day'. He was also pleased that the cubs saved £100 by using the bus for their annual trip to the pantomime.

The bus drivers present came from a range of organisations or as individuals. Philip Twinberrow of Balmaclellan Community

Council, hoped to help 'any group that didn't have a driver'. Jimmy McKenna has already driven for a night out in Castle Douglas as well as for the New Galloway Senior Citizen's party. Tom Plummer has now completed training as an instructor.

An enthusiastic Sir Norman Arthur congratulated the drivers 'very warmly on what you've done so far.'

Nine more drivers have since qualified, including GCAT's Project Development Manager, Andrew Ward.

Look out for the launch of the 200 Club!

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TIMES OF WORSHIP IN THE GLENKENS

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St. Margaret's New Galloway

10.30am Holy Communion
every Sunday and Wednesday.**Services for Holy Week:**Monday 14th April : Quiet DayTuesday 15th April :

Holy Communion 6.00pm

Wednesday 16th April :

Holy Communion 10.30am

Maundy Thursday 17th April :

Holy Communion 6.00pm

Good Friday 18th April :

Devotional Service 12 noon - 1.00pm

Easter Day 20th April :

Holy Communion at 10.30am

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND SundaysBalmaclellan 12.00 1stCarsphairn 10.30am 1st 2nd 3rd 4thDalry 12.00pm 1st 2nd 3rd 4thKells 10.30am 2nd 4thNew Galloway 10.30am 3rd in May

Town Hall

United Service 5th none in April and May**Easter Services:**18th April : Good Friday service

7.30pm in Kells Church

20th April : Dawn Service at War Memorialsouth of Carsphairn at 7am, followed by
breakfast in Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn.20th April : Easter Sunday Services -

10.30am at Carsphairn and Kells Church

12 noon at Dalry Church

CATHOLIC CHURCH SERVICES

Please phone 01556 610358

AN ENJOYABLE AND INFORMATIVE MOSGIEL EXPERIENCE

Following Heidi Bartholomew's article entitled 'Church exchange' in the last Glenkens Gazette, I would like to add that Elizabeth and I were able to enjoy the hospitality of the Yeomans in Mosgiel during our trip to New Zealand and Australia in December.

In Mosgiel we went to the Manse of the Presbyterian Church and were greeted by Natalie, Selwyn and Monica and introduced to the rest of the family including their elder daughter Hannah and her fiancé, who were to be married by Selwyn the following week.

As it was the last weekend before Christmas we joined some of the family that evening on a trip to the suburb of Dunedin, where most of the houses are decorated with thousands of lights every Christmas. This was a fantastic spectacle and there were hundreds of visitors like ourselves. On our way, we passed the Youth Group of the Mosgiel Church who were holding a B-B-Q at the corner of the High Street and handing out hot dogs etc to passers-by with their compliments of the Season. So in spite of the summer weather, the Christmas

Festivities were there in full.

On the Sunday, we attended the 9.30am service. Selwyn made us very welcome and greeted us warmly at the commencement of the service before a full Church. As Heidi said, the style of service covered all ages, and was accompanied by one of the youth bands. Each of the Yeoman family took some part in the service: Monica, Oliver and Emerson reporting on plans for their forthcoming youth group weekends. After the service we joined the 'coffee drinkers'. Many of the congregation stayed around in the garden and came over to talk with us: expressing pleasure about their time spent with the Bartholomew family. Heidi's care of the younger children and David's consideration during pastoral visits had been particularly enjoyed.

Before we left Mosgiel, Natalie, Selwyn and Monica asked to be remembered to all those who contributed to their enjoyment of the Glenkens, not only the churches but the meetings they had with the children and teachers at the various schools.

David Gray

**○ Another tale of the eclipse, from South Africa ○**

One of the highlights of our wildlife trip was to be a view of the total solar eclipse from a private game reserve somewhere west of the northern end of Kruger National Park. Having left the Park the previous day we had seen the preparations being made for the expected crowds, portaloos and plastic ribbons tied to trees at designated lay-bys along the roadside where normally nobody is allowed to leave their vehicle for obvious safety reasons. But for the eclipse, the authorities must have reckoned that no self-respecting animal would come near so many humans. Even the President would be there.

On the great day we duly rose well before the crack of dawn for the minibus drive to the ranch where we were taken by game-viewing trucks to the planned elevated position. On the way we could not help noticing the thick bank of cloud in the eastern sky. As totality was due at 8.20 am this was the direction of concern to us, not the cloudless sky in the south and west. We thought of the previous day's heat and unbroken sunshine and hoped the cloud would soon be burnt away. The eclipse started. Now and again we caught a glimpse of it. The bite out of the sun became ever larger. A slight wind got up

which we hoped would blow that cloudbank away. But it was not to be. If anything the cloud thickened so we had fewer and fewer glimpses of the sun and, needless to say, we saw absolutely nothing of the beautiful corona at totality. True, the darkness swept in although there was still some light over Zimbabwe, like dawn but in the west. All too soon light swept in again and that was that. Of course, later on, the cloud disappeared and we had another hot, sunny day. Sod had been at work again!

Cynthia Douglas

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Bothersome Banking Resolved

Mr Brian Cooper, Area Sales Manager for the Bank of Scotland, admitted that they had got it "badly wrong" in their recent policy of curtailment of banking hours at the Dalry Branch of the Bank of Scotland. Speaking on the 13th Feb at a Dalry Community Council meeting, he said that it was "a decision at a time of crisis": referring to the threat hanging over local banks since the Clydesdale raids.

Instead of closing the bank, as had been rumoured, Mr. Cooper proposed that the bank hours be changed to be more user-friendly. Although he stated that there were

not sufficient resources to staff Dalry branch as it has been, he offered 2 full days banking or the equivalent. Mr. Cooper is to consult the members of Dalry Community Council and the wider public on their preferences for opening days and times. A business manager will also soon be in post in Castle Douglas for the benefit of the local business community.

Despite the recent history of "distance and discourtesy" towards its local customers, Mr. Cooper pledged the bank's commitment to retaining service and social banking in the future.

FINANCIAL ACUMEN AT MOSSDALE: GOODBYE TO A SUCCESSFUL HALL COMMITTEE

At the start of 2002 the Village Hall Committee decided to run a "100 club" for the first time, to generate sufficient funds to cover basic running costs (electricity, insurance and fire protection). It did just that producing a profit of £678 against running costs of £668!

Three concerts were held at the Hall (one generously supported by GCAT): the first comprising a variety of sung pieces, the second Jazz and the third Scottish. Also hosted were two "Bingo and Beetle" evenings, a slide show on Red Kites, a book and attic sale and a barbecue lunch outdoors. An arts and crafts sale also provided a showcase for local artists with 12 out of 15 exhibitors coming from Mossdale!

Yoga courses were put on in Spring and Autumn, indoor bowls were played in the

Winter and Mossdale WRI held numerous meetings.

Despite spending £750 on capital items, refurbishment and repairs (principally new stage curtains, toilet upgrades and internal and external painting), funds were around £100 more at the year end than at the beginning. Thank you to all who supported us.

Glenkens Cub Scout Pack

At the beginning of January on a very bright, very sunny and very cold day, a car full of Glenkens cubs and their leader travelled to the Allanton Sanctuary of the World Peace Prayer Society. They were there to take part in the filming of a video with the society to promote peace on earth. Along with 20 or so other youngsters they ran along the side of a loch with the Union Flag and St. Andrew's Flag shouting the Peace Prayer motto of "May Peace Prevail on Earth". The film is to be mixed with others from the sanctuaries around the world and is to be shown on the CNN news channel. Hannah McAndrew (ACSW)

GLENKENS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL SHOW 2003
Handicrafts Section
 So that you can get started on your entries here are the items for this year's show :-
 A greeting card (no photos) ~ A decorated egg
 A knitted animal ~ An article in cross-stitch
 A dressed doll (any craft)
 A baby garment (knitted, sewn or crocheted)
 A gift-wrapped parcel ~ A decorated straw hat
 An original painting or drawing (any medium)
 Any other craft article
 The show is on Saturday, August 23rd in Dalry Town Hall and entries are open to all residents of the Glenkens. If you have any queries or would like more information
PLEASE CONTACT
HILDA McADAM ON 01644 430383.
 The full schedule for the show will be available later in the year from local Post Offices and Dalry Garden Centre.
PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL SHOW



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75th Dumfries and District Music and Speech festival: Dalry and Kells sweep the board!

Speech Festival:

Dalry Secondary entrants have enjoyed considerable success in The Speech Festival. Congratulations must go to Grace Tulloch who won both the Julia Jardine Memorial Shield for poetry and the Masque players Trophy for prose reading, and Emma Thomson who won the Loreburn United Free Church Trophy for Scots Verse. Also impressive were Victoria Birch who gained a Distinction in her poetry and a Highly Commended in prose, and Amber Halliday who gained a Highly Commended in her prose reading too.

Not to be outdone, Kells year 3-7 youngsters gathered many Distinctions and Highly Commended certificates as well as the St. John's Trophy for Choric Verse: a laudable achievement by the Senior Class. Kells Head Teacher, Mrs Plummer proudly said "all pupils have given 100% effort and the pupils are a real credit to the school and their parents."

Music Festival:

Also adding to Kell's collection of sparkling silver were primary seven pupils Molly Tulloch and Peter Birch. Molly, aged 8, played her way to the Islesteps Accordion and Fiddle Club Shield while Peter, aged 11, took first place in the Gallovidian Cup in the category for the aged 12 years and under fiddle and the Ian Kirkpatrick Quaich for the aged 14 and under March/Strathspey/Reel category.

Update ! Festival Frolics

Dalry Primary arrived at the Dumfries Music Festival feeling like novices and left feeling like champions.

This was the first time for a number of years that Dalry had taken part and the pupils and a supportive crowd of parents had a great time.

The junior group P1-4 sang "Brochan Lom" in gaelic! Bilingual, musical infants! Not bad Mrs Porteous! The senior group



Kells Speech Festival Prize Winners.

P5-7 sang the Maori song "Land of the Long White Cloud", which was composed by the wife of our visiting minister, Natalie Yeoman. P7 pupil Billy Harwood provided accompaniment on the keyboard and the pupils sang beautifully - so well in fact that they won the De Russette Shield, equal first in their group with Cummertrees Primary.

It was great to see the pupils, all the primary staff and so many parents enjoying the occasion. Morag Thomson, who conducted both groups, was so excited and so pleased with the performances that her face went the colour of her hair - bright red - a leftover from Comic Relief Day last week!!

Dalry up there with the best of them

Dalry secondary pupils were ranked ninth in the Standard Grade "league tables" for 2002 published recently in The Scotsman". All of us in school are fully aware that you cannot judge an individual or a school on exam results alone but nonetheless this was a great boost to us to be once again in the top ten nationally. We have high expectations for this year's fourth year with the emphasis being on each individual reaching his or her maximum potential.

FOOTBALL CRAZY

On the 20th February two teams from Dalry went to the Paul Jones Football tournament at Kircudbright Academy. I was in the A

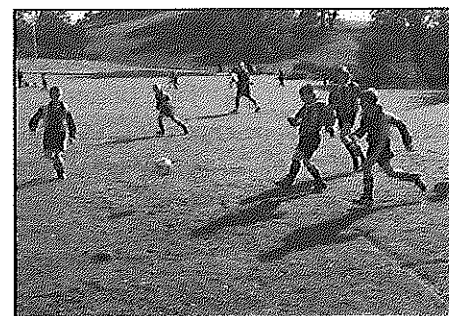
team. We first played Dalry B team. They were really good. It was the easiest match we played because we knew who was good and everyone's strengths. The next team was Springholm. They were almost brilliant. We kept a good defence up. Our next match was very difficult. I was in goal. I was doing well. Then one shot came spinning at me. I just did what I thought was best. I stuck up my hands. The ball had smacked my wrist straight back. I knew it was serious straight away. Mrs McCall took me straight to Kircudbright hospital. We didn't know if it was broken or not. The doctor just thought I had sprained it. It was still sore in the morning so my mum took me to Dumfries hospital.

Unfortunately I discovered my wrist was fractured. It was really bad luck as the school

was visiting the Ice Bowl that day. I was really looking forward to the ice hockey but I wasn't allowed on the ice. I had to stand and watch! Nae Fun!

Tamsin Tyeson

(Get better soon Tamsin!)



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Wintry Weather? It could be worse...

In front of a sizzling fire, Nettie Murray, oldest Glenkens resident and citizen of the Burgh, recalls "a terrible winter with the snow." The year is 1947 and snow drifts loom large and forbidding. Doctors must do the rounds on horseback while for Glenkens residents "fires were everything."

Weather Statistics from Glenlee

November

Wettest day 26th - 29ml.
Coldest day 16th -1.1
Sun! 16th - 5 hours clear

December

Wettest day 22 - 23.7ml.
Coldest day 19th -8.6
Sun! 8th - 4.5 hours clear

January

Coldest day 6th -8.5%

Gosh! - The total rainfall for 2002 was 6ft, 2 inches.

NB All readings are taken at Glenlee power station and so can only be a rough guide to the general weather in the Glenkens.



This photograph records the occasion during the hard winter of 1947 when Carsphairn was cut off by the heavy snow falls and special arrangements had to be made to drop milk powder and other requirements. It also shows a De Havilland Rapide flying away.

Photograph courtesy of The Stewartry Museum in Kirkcudbright

New Galloway, Our Historic Burgh

Part XIV

Into the Nineteenth Century

By Helen Bolton

One of the most interesting characters who lived in Kells Parish during the late 18th. and early 19th. centuries was Dr. Robert Trotter, known as the "Muir Doctor". A native of Tynron, he came to "Glenlee" in 1760. He was popular with everyone, and was well respected as a doctor. He treated rich and poor alike, being happy to turn out on a stormy winter's night to tend a patient in a tiny cottage high up on the remote moors, regardless of whether they could pay for his services or not.

Dr. Trotter was friendly with Hon. John Gordon of Kenmure Castle, and when, in 1775 "Viewfield Farm," was built near Kells Church he became the first tenant at a favourable rent. Some years later Mrs. Gordon called on Dr. Trotter to treat her dog! The Doctor, who was a busy man, refused to spend time on her pet dog to the neglect of his human patients. So incensed was Mrs. Gordon that she prevailed upon her husband to eject the worthy Doctor

from "Viewfield" He found a home at "Trolaine" in Dalry parish for a short spell, then returned to New Galloway, where he died in 1815.

Dr. Trotter, like most of the local population, was keen on cock-fighting, a very common sport in the Glenkens. Schoolmasters in the district used to supplement their meagre salaries by running cock-fights, and notices would appear stating "Pupils to pay-Gentlemen free". After this sport was proscribed it was still practiced in the Glenkens, and Dr Trotter was a patron to the last. Only days before he died he was carried to the Washing Green at New Galloway, and to Dalarran Holm to watch two specially important cock-fights.

During the first quarter of the 19th. century the old trackway along the west side of Loch Ken was replaced by the present road, several feet higher to avoid flooding, a frequent occurrence in olden times. The original trackway was undoubtedly one of the pre-historic routes through the Glenkens, being the continuation of the Old Pack Road which can still be traced at

Polmaddy, the ruined Medieval farm-town on the north bank of the Polmaddy Burn.

A rather sad story relates to the old road along Loch Ken. During Rev. William Gillespie's time at Kells Church (1806-1826), a Highland soldier, weary from fighting in wars overseas, was making his way home. Finding the heat of the day too much for his tired limbs, he lay down to rest by the side of this quiet road beneath the shade of the tree. There he died, and a cairn was raised to his memory, marked on the old maps as "The Soldier's Cairn". Rev. William Gillespie, a poet of some fame locally, wrote a touching poem about this incident.

The Hon. John Gordon was, in 1822, made Vice-Lieutenant of the Stewartry, and two years later the honour and titles of Viscount Kenmure and Lord Lochinvar were restored, making John the 7th Viscount. He died in 1840 aged 90 years, having been the laird for 68 years!



Glenkens' History - Can You help?

Dalry Artist

Henry John Dobson 1858-1928

Father and child are pulled into the diffusing daylight, while the mother kneels heavy in the corner, smiling gently. The life of the child crackles like electricity over the canvas.

It is a painting both homely and pathetic: or too homely and pathetic according to James L.Caw, author of *Scottish Painting, Past and Present 1620-1908*. Caw purloins W.E Henley's description of Faed's oeuvre, as "tremendous with bleat", to brandish at Mr Dobson. The equivalent, perhaps, of a handshake with fingernails.

Yet Dalry's talented son boasts all the ingredients of a successful career. He exhibited six works at the Royal Academy and sixty-two at the Royal Scottish Academy. In 1900 he shared an exhibition

at the Scottish Gallery with AK Brown and he also illustrated Sandison's *Scottish Life and Character*.

Mr Dobson also fathered two talented children. Cowan Dobson, who lived from 1893-1980, was a prestigious society painter. He specialised in 'presentational portraits': conventional interpretations of, predominantly, fashionable ladies. It is believed that in the later 1930s or 1940s Mr Dobson rented Kenmure Castle: using it as a base to entertain and paint his fashionable sitters.

The other son of Henry Dobson was the portrait and figure painter Henry Raeburn Dobson, who was born in 1901. Raeburn exhibited six works at the RA and twenty-four at the RSA.



"Her Dochters Bairn" by Henry John Dobson

Henry Dobson's painting, *The Light of the Home* (reproduced on this page), is currently exhibited at the Stewartry Museum, Kirkcudbright. The museum's curator, David Devereux, is keen to collect information on this painting and on Mr Dobson's other works and connection to the Dumfries and Galloway area. Mr Devereux was recently told by a Glaswegian lady, that two of Mr Dobson's models, from around 1912, were called Elizabeth McMillan and Jean McKie. They were paid 6d an hour. Perhaps you know more? Perhaps you know the room in *The Light of the Home*? If you have any information please contact Mr Devereux on 10557331643 or e-mail The Gazette at editor@glenkensgazette.com.

The Stewartry collection is also pleased to announce the compilation of an index for the Dalry poor register (1871-1925), courtesy of Tania Gardner.

Thank you to both David Devereux and Niall Duncan for their help with this article.



"Light of The Home" by Henry John Dobson



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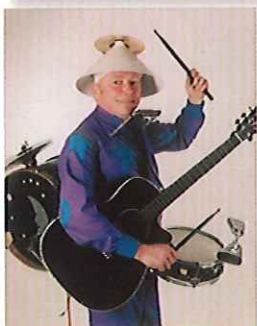
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GCAT - BRINGING GREAT ENTERTAINMENT TO THE GLENKENS APRIL-MAY PROGRAMME



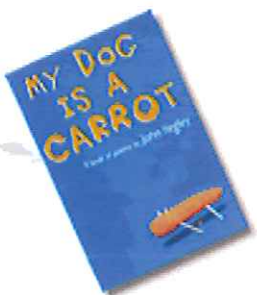
WHO: Mr Boom
WHAT: Sing and Dance in Space with Mr Boom
WHERE: Balmacellan Village Hall
WHEN: Monday, 21st April (Easter Monday) 2-3.45 p.m.
TICKETS: Adults & Children £3

Great Easter Monday fun. Pre-school and primary children join one-man-band Mr Boom for a musical show full of interactive, educational action with the focus on fun. Plus a Rory Story read by the author, Andrew Wolfe, ice creams, Rory colouring sheets and a raffle with the chance to win a Rory Story goodie bag!



WHO: John Hegley
WHAT: The Sound of Paint Drying
WHERE: New Galloway Town Hall,
WHEN: Friday, 2nd May, show starts 8.00 p.m.
TICKETS: £7
PRE THEATRE SUPPERS - Cross Keys Hotel

Back by popular demand! Described as "Fabulously funny" **TIME OUT**, "Scandalously talented" **SUNDAY TIMES** and "Bleeding marvellous" **NME**, John Hegley is widely known as one of the country's most innovative comic poets. An Edinburgh Festival sell out. Bar from 7.30, plus book signing. Pre-theatre suppers at the Cross Keys Hotel from 6.00p.m., advance booking essential. (Tel. 01644 420494)



WHO: John Hegley
WHAT: Workshop for 7 - 11 year olds
WHERE: Ken Bridge Hotel, New Galloway
WHEN: Saturday, 3rd May, 11.00-12.00 noon
TICKETS: £1

Heard recently on Radio 4s top children's programme Go For It! This writing workshop is a John Hegley/Glenkens first. Open to 7-11 year olds this is a chance to spend an hour with one of the funniest poets in the country. The author of children's poetry book "My Dog is a Carrot" brings laughs and learning. Parents can enjoy morning coffees or drinks at the Hotel.



WHO: Helen Sanderson & Susan Legg
WHAT: Simple Gifts — Voice & Guitar
WHERE: Ken Bridge Hotel, New Galloway
WHEN: Wednesday, 28th May, 7.30 pm.
TICKETS: £6 concessions £5
PRE THEATRE SUPPERS - Ken Bridge Hotel

Helen Sanderson and Susan Legg invite you to spend an evening with them, to be enchanted by the intimacy of voice and guitar in their programme of "Simple Gifts". Music which all will recognise and enjoy. GCAT in association with Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival. Pre Theatre Suppers from 6pm at the Ken Bridge Hotel: to book Tel 01644 420211



WHO: Storyteller Theatre Co
WHAT: Alice in Wonderland
WHERE: Kells Primary School
WHEN: Thursday, 29th May, 4.00 p.m.
TICKETS: £3

All round family entertainment in an adaptation of the Lewis Carroll favourite, it's magical and mad! From Alice's first meeting with the Mad Hatter this one hour musical performance brings to life fantastic Wonderland characters. In association with Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival.

BOX OFFICE: GCAT Shop, Monday-Friday, 9.30-4.00 or, if available, on the door.
TICKETS BY POST: Send full payment by cheque made out to GCAT with s.a.e. and contact telephone number to GCAT, The Old School, New Galloway, OX7 3RN.
FURTHER INFORMATION: Tel. 01644 420374.

GLENKENS DIARY FOR ALL EVENTS

APRIL

SATURDAY 12th:
Scouts' Annual Jumble Sale,
Scouts Hall NG
MONDAY 21ST: Mr Boom,
Balmacellan Town Hall.

MAY

FRIDAY 2nd: John Hegley,
New Galloway Town Hall
8pm
SATURDAY 3rd: John Hegley
Workshop for 7-11 year
olds, 11-12 noon at The Ken
Bridge Hotel
WEDNESDAY 28th: Helen
Sanderson and Susan Legg
7.30pm at The Ken Bridge
THURSDAY 29th: Alice in
Wonderland, Kells School 4pm

JUNE

FRIDAY 6th: Glenkens and
District Music Society host
a fiddle, Harp and Voice
evening. 8pm Dalry Town Hall.

SATURDAY 7th:
Carsphairn Show.

TUES 10th AND WED 11th:
Bugsy Malone, performed by
Dalry Primary School pupils.
Dalry School 7pm.

JULY

THU 24th to SUN 27th:
Glenkens Annual Art
Exhibition. Dalry Town Hall.

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editor, who reserves the right to encourage the expression of a variety of views on subjects of interest to the local community.

The Glenkens Gazette aims to represent the whole of the Glenkens area

Any dates for the diary or submissions about clubs, societies or features are more than welcome. If you feel under-represented please get in contact so we CAN represent you.

There is an events diary in the GCAT shop to note events. Also, and for other enquiries, please either e-mail Hannah at editor@gazette.com or ring 01644 420 374.

I have very much enjoyed guest-editing this issue and will be guest-editing the next. I apologise for mistakes or omissions. I make no pretence to infallibility but do try my best.

Hannah Adcock

Deadline for June / July Issue 16: Tuesday 13th May.

Please contact the Editor on 01644 420374
or by e-mail : editor@glenkensgazette.com




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