

GLENKENS GAZETTE

news from Balmaclellan, Carsphairn, Mossdale, New Galloway and St John's Town of Dalry

April/May 2011

ISSUE 63

FREE

BRAND NEW BUS!

The Glenkens Transport Initiative (GTI) are delighted to announce that they have a new community bus.

As a result of the generosity of a London-based family Trust Fund, GTI have been able to purchase a brand new VW 17-seater wheelchair accessible minibus.

The Trust Fund had heard about the activities of GTI through a local resident who is a member of their Board and realised that because of our success, we were in need of a second vehicle.

The Bus is a lifeline for many within the Glenkens, and is so popular that often trips are booked up before they're even advertised! George Colbenson, Dalry resident and regular

GTI Bus user, says:

"The Bus makes a lot of difference to me and to a lot of older people in the Glenkens who can't drive anymore. There is a great social side to the Bus - my wife Barbara and I see a lot of people we otherwise wouldn't get to see. A lot of trips get fully booked, but with two buses, everyone who wants to go should be able to, and we can have a great party on the way!"

Information is available from The CatStrand on how to become a driver, how to form a 'user group' and the role of Community Transport in the area at a time when public services are under threat.

The present minibus was purchased in 2002 and in the last few years



Regular Bus user George Colbenson trying out the new bus.

the demand for its services has steadily increased. Working with Dumfries & Galloway Council to provide transport in a rural area is an important role GTI play as well as being involved with many other aspects of life in the Glenkens.

If you have queries about the GTI please do not hesitate to contact Keith Cooper at The CatStrand (01644 420 374) or email k.cooper121@btinternet.com

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL LIBRARY

Earlier this year, the regional Council was considering closing a number of libraries across the region due to budget cuts.

Dalry Library was one of the libraries on the list. In light of this, Glenkens residents got together to show their support.

The Council decision was made not to close any libraries this year, much to the relief of residents, and a Friends of Dalry Library group has been formed to discuss various ways in which the library can be used more.

As a result of an appeal for support by local childrens' author Cathy Cassidy, the Library recieved letters, posters, pictures and even books signed by a variety of well known childrens' authors. Some authors who responded were Darren Shan, Michelle Harrison, Debbi Gliori and Andy Briggs, along with many others. Local library lovers would like to thank everyone for their wonderful support!

If you would like to find out what's on, call the Library on 430 234, or to show your support and become involved visit Friends of Dalry Library on Facebook.



Local Playgroup children; regular library users.

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DALRY HOUSING

Reports suggest that Dalry is about to experience a house-building boom. Quite how many houses will eventually be built is impossible to say but there are currently three projects, one planned by a public body - Dumfries & Galloway Housing Partnership (DGHP) - and two by private developers. As far as can be ascertained this is the situation as it stands...

The proposal by an Ayrshire firm to quarry 40,000 tonnes of rock and build 10 houses on a site between the school and the Manse was given provisional approval by the Council in November 2009. This resulted in a wave of protest and a well-supported petition that was presented to the Council. The Council's Operations Manager has now indicated that no agreement has yet been reached with the developer over the conditions attached to the provisional approval of the plans. Until that happens; "there is no planning permission for the development". Local protesters are awaiting further news but, if permission were to be eventually granted, are determined to mount a legal challenge.

In February Dumfries & Galloway Council gave approval by 9 votes to 6 to a proposal by DGHP to build 29 houses on a marshy site on the Moniaive road next to Whinnymuir.

This is in addition to an earlier planning application and means that provisional permission has now been given for 35 houses to be crammed onto this very small site. It is difficult to find information about the plans of the private developer who had previously advertised houses for sale on the same land but it seems that DGHP now owns about half of the site. The private developer (whom I am told is now using the name Dalry Properties) apparently still owns some of the land, including that needed for a flood prevention scheme, and could also build more houses next to Wayside.

There were many objections to the DGHP proposal as it stood but it is most important to say that the objectors were very much in favour of affordable family houses being built on the site. However, they believed that the DGHP plan was for housing at too high a density and of the wrong type.

A settlement has existed at Dalry for the best part of a thousand years. In that time the village has grown slowly to have a population today of around 400. Buildings have been added, a few at a time, in response to local need for housing and services. This demand for new buildings varied as employment opportunities in agriculture, forestry, hydro-electric power and service industries waxed

and waned.

In recent years a gradual reduction in the size of families has meant that the building of additional houses has not led to any significant rise in the population. Many of the existing houses in Dalry were built at a time when overcrowding was the norm. It was not unusual for large families to be raised in one or two-bedroom houses, but nowadays most such dwellings have just one or two occupants. If we want to encourage the development of a lively, mixed community it is obvious that more houses suitable for families are needed. DGHP seems intent on pushing through its plan of building the maximum number of small houses on the Whinnymuir site, rather than engaging with the Community and coming back with a modified plan. I think we have a right to expect better of such a publicly funded body.

However, now that the decision to build the DGHP development has been taken, it is most important that the community comes together to welcome the fact that some of the houses at least will be suitable for families and to press for them to be allocated to those families in the area who are in desperate need of suitable housing. Above all, I hope that whoever occupies these houses they will (as my family was many years ago) be welcomed into the community, and encouraged to take a full part in it.

Andrew Mellor

Get Your Skates On

New Galloway Skate Park has got the go-ahead and is nearly ready to start rolling...

The Glenkens Youth Project (GYP) group have recently been granted planning permission for the park, and are

now raising money for fencing and hedging around the site so that it is in keeping with the rest of the park.

In order to raise funds, GYP have been holding fundraising events. A Zumba session was held in Kirkcudbright where £280 was raised. £400 was also raised through a ceilidh/disco in New Galloway - these may become a regular event, with money raised going towards GYP trips.



The first ever Day of the Region to take place in the UK is happening right here in Dumfries and Galloway with the Glenkens as one of five locations in the Stewartry taking part.

This is your chance to find out more about what's happening where you live, get involved, have a go and maybe even try something new!

Activities will be happening in the Glenkens throughout the spring and

summer, culminating in a weekend of special events on the first weekend in October.

Whether you are interested in sports, arts, crafts, music, drama, cooking or the outdoors, this is your

opportunity to share your skills or learn new ones from others in our community.

Three workshops took place in February encouraging local individuals, groups and organisations to get involved. So far there has been a great response from people around the Glenkens who are keen to take part. We hope that many more will get involved.

WIN £50! There is a £50 prize

up for grabs for someone in the Glenkens! Register your details now by emailing dayoftheregion@dumgal.gov.uk or call 01387 850228 and you will be asked to complete a short survey about our community for a chance to win in the Day of the Region prize draw.

If you have an event or activity that you would like to include under the banner of Day of the Region please contact Rachel, Ros or David. Programmes of activities will be developing throughout the year so look out for the Day of the Region logo on posters and flyers to find out what's going on. We hope you'll join in!

To find out more contact: Rachel Thompson on 01644 420374, Ros Hill on 01644 420632 or David Whyte on 01644 460296.

BIRD TOWN UPDATE

We have good news to report on the planned Dalry Bird Town project.

In addition to the £10,000 already received from the Big Lottery for a Project Development Officer, a grant of £9,000 has been awarded by Scottish Natural Heritage. We are also awaiting the final outcome of an application to Rural Dumfries & Galloway LEADER for over £40,000 as this would complete the funding package for the next stage. We are actively seeking office space in the village.

We want to concentrate on two key elements; first and foremost, we will be putting together the funding package for the purchase and

refurbishment of Barone, the former Watson family home. This will take time to come to fruition, which is why we have a second element; a series of events to keep the pot boiling so to speak.

A date for your Diaries: Friday 30 September to Sunday 2 October will be the dates of the first Dalry Bird Festival. We have lots of ideas to appeal to all of the family, all ages, all abilities and all interests. Among the ideas for indoor events being developed are a children's fancy dress parade, talks about the birds of The Glenkens, demonstrations on how to make bird feeders and bird boxes, a chance to see Donald Watson's original studio, art exhibitions by children as well as

professional artists, a book stall, and a chance to buy cards, calendars and posters all created by local children. Outdoor activities being considered are guided walks to bird locations, visits to Donald Watson's favourite painting sites and how many birds can you spot in the village. In the evening we are considering concerts around bird song and bird related music. So if you have ideas please let me know. More information will be available over the coming months.

The Steering Group set up to lead the project comprises: Cathy Agnew, Chris Rollie, Louise Watson, Andrew Mellor, Gill Khosla, Steve Davie and Roger Crofts.

If you have ideas, free time to help or wish to know anything please contact me on roger@dodin.idps.co.uk or 07803 595267.

Roger Crofts, Steering Group Chair

Dalry Community Council: The CC was informed that two officers have been appointed for the Biosphere project, one from Dumfries & Galloway and the other from East/South Ayrshire. It was confirmed that the library will remain open for the time being, any decision being deferred until at least next year. *Next meeting: Mon 4 Apr, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall.*

New Galloway & Kells Community Council:

It was agreed that a donation of £25 be made to the children's party arranged by Balmaclellan Community Council. Discussion took place regarding the painting by DR Pelly, currently in store, which is intended to be on permanent display in the Town Hall; the necessary permission to be sought from the Council. *Next meeting: Mon 11 Apr, 7.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall.*

Balmaclellan Community Council: The A712 is in a terrible state, and repairs are being done. Because it's so narrow, it is being closed (7am-7pm) for repairs. This follows an earlier closure – in December – and more to follow. It was asked whether there any way weight restrictions could be introduced to cut down on the heavy traffic. Cllr Peter Duncan said probably not but he would raise this with the traffic department. *Next meeting: Mon 25 Apr, 7.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall.*

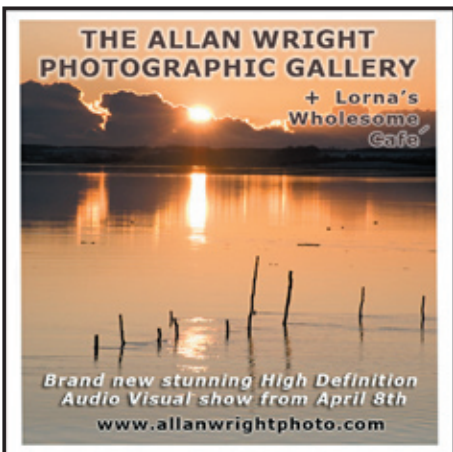
Carsphairn Community Council: Cllr Peter Duncan indicated that upgrading of the B729 would be

Full minutes of local Community Council meetings can be viewed at Dalry Library.

paid for from the Strategic Road budget, although the Council were negotiating a contribution from Timber Transport. A meeting will be requested with the Roads Department to consult and to clarify what would be included in the upgrade. The Roads Department agree in principle to there being signs warning of heavy transport vehicles.

A SEPA representative discussed the additional flow to through the Galloway Hydro Scheme. Under the new EU Water Framework Directive the river flows from Loch Doon are classified as 'good', but at Tongland are classified as 'bad' and need to be upgraded to 'good'. The preferred solution indicates 0.45% extra flow throughout the length of the Scheme. In theory this should not increase banks erosion, flood risk and sewage disposal.

The CC queried this, particularly when water was released from Drumjohn. It was suggested that although the official objection deadline has passed, letters from the CC and individuals could be submitted to SEPA East Kilbride where they would not be formally recognised in SEPA's determination of the application but, as it was likely to go to appeal to the Scottish Executive, they would probably be considered at that time. It was agreed that a letter be sent from the CC detailing concerns about banks erosion – particularly at Woodhead Bridge - flood risk and sewage disposal. *Next meeting: Mon 25 Apr, 7pm, Lagwyne Hall.*



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WORLD BOOK DAY

In celebration of World Book Day, Dalry Library extended its opening hours to welcome visits from Dalry Primary classes and author Cathy Cassidy.

Cathy shared heartfelt and humorous stories with the children about her own passionate relationship with books and libraries. Speaking affectionately of her local library she told them: "It's small and friendly and every book can open up a new world of imagination".

Jane Banner, school librarian, and Angela Miller, librarian at Dalry Library, are working together to encourage local children to join and use Dalry Library, which was recently threatened with closure.

With this in mind, back at school, Primary and Secondary pupils took up the call of 'Friends of Dalry Library' and chose an author each to write to, asking for a message of support for the Library.



Cathy's talk keeps children enthralled.

Seeing Stars

As part of their topic on 'Space', Primary 7 from Dalry Primary and Primary 6/7 from Kells Primary visited the Glasgow Science Centre. It was a great day, which was enjoyed by both classes, it complimented the work that the children had been learning about well and followed on from their talk from Dr Bellerby from the Galloway Forest Astronomical Society.



Regional Cross Country Championships

On the 3 March, sixteen secondary pupils from Dalry School travelled to Bladnoch Park, Wigtown, to compete in the annual regional cross country championships. The sixteen S1 to S3 pupils put on their running shoes to compete amongst the large number of competitors on the day.

The testing course put all runners under pressure, but this was no challenge for the Dalry runners who all finished strong. A finishing official reported that Dalry pupils were the happiest and wore the biggest grins when they crossed the finishing line. A huge "well done" to everyone who took part!

Ski Trip 2011

Six brave S2's - Amelia, Kirsty, Sarah, Alexander, Fraser and Oliver - set off for Italy, Aprica, along with Mr McKenna and Mrs Biggar for an extremely busy week of skiing.

They had each been following an exercise plan for 6 weeks before setting off as well as attending a few meetings about the trip organised by the trip leaders, Mr Findlater and Mr Sloan from Dumfries Academy.

Each day they were out skiing or snowboarding for five hours, glad for the exercises now! The weather was perfect - clear blue skies and loads of fluffy white snow over the slopes. The progress the pupils made was impressive with Paulo's group soon leaving the nursery slopes behind and cruising down the



Panoramica piste. The other groups including the beginner boarders were quick to follow.

Apres ski ranged from an evening at the indoor bowling to a night out at the pizzeria with some karaoke to follow. A great chance for our pupils to make many new friends from the other participating schools.

Talented Teens

In February a second exhibition of artwork from Dalry School was held - another celebration of the wealth of talent within our school community.

The exhibition was built around the expressive and design units produced by the 10 pupils entered for the SQA art and design examinations in the summer of 2010.

Alongside this was fabric design work produced by S2 pupils which was a collaboration between art and HE.

We are always proud of the pupils at Dalry School, but the CatStrand exhibition offers us the opportunity to share their wonderful work with the whole community.

SPANISH CLASSES

S1 at Dalry Secondary have a new and exciting opportunity; to learn Spanish.

The Modern Languages Department was given support by the Languages Fund, and pupils started their lessons after Christmas.

Pupils were surprised by how many words they already knew, but have added to their repertoire with greetings, numbers up to 20 and some basic grammar. Olé!

Skipathon

P4/5 pupils at Kells Primary participated in a skipping challenge to raise money for Britain's heart charity.

The children spent six weeks in training to build up stamina and skipping skills for the big day. The skipathon morning was spent in stamina skipping, obstacle and relay races, paired and fancy free skipping activities.



Kells school children supporting the skipathon.

Clachan Fair

Plans are progressing well for this year's Dalry Clachan Fair. The dates are 5 to 11 June. Events so far are:

Sunday 5: Donkey Day & BBQ
– Carminnows Lodge Songs of Praise – Kirk or Newfield Green, 6.30pm

Monday 6: Bingo Supper – Community Centre

Tuesday 7: Quiz Night – Town Hall, 7.30pm

Wednesday 8:
Pet Show and BBQ – Newfield Green, 7pm

Thursday 9: Scottish Night – Town Hall

Friday 10: Treasure Hunt
– Venue to be confirmed Domino Night – Clachan Inn

Saturday 11: Clachan Fair
(parade, stalls in the street, Mulloch Race, games and lots more fun). Dance.

Note: There is also a Farmer's Market on Sat



Things could still change so watch out for further information and confirmation of times and venues. If you'd like more details, to enter a float or offer to help during the week please contact Mike Kaye on 01644 430162 or clachanfair@1stforweb.co.uk

Diabetes Support

People in the Glenkens who have been diagnosed with diabetes are being encouraged to join a local support group.

This region has the highest proportion of diabetics in Scotland and there are fears the numbers could continue to spiral.

The Diabetes UK Stewartry Support Group offers diabetics the opportunity to learn more about the condition and how to live with it at a series of talks held between March and December.

The next meeting takes place on Monday 28 March when the guest speaker will be Imran Arain from Castle Douglas Health Centre who will talk about public health programmes currently available in the Stewartry.

Duncan Ferguson, chairman of the group, said: "We would like to see more people from the Glenkens coming to our monthly meetings. The meetings are open to people diagnosed with both type 1 and type 2 diabetes as well as members of their families and their carers."

Currently, Scotland is said to be on the verge of a diabetes epidemic and, according to the latest NHS statistics, Dumfries & Galloway has some of the highest figures.

At the start of 2010, a total of 7,348 people in the region were registered with the condition, representing five per cent of the population; the highest rate of any health board area in the country.

The next meeting of the group takes place on Monday 28 March in the Gordon Memorial Hall (adjacent to St Ninian's Church), Whitepark Road, Castle Douglas at 7pm. Admission is £1 and refreshments are provided. There is also a fund-raising raffle.

Any money raised by the group is donated to Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary's Endowment Fund to be spent specifically on diabetes care in this region.

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Glenkens Business Association (GBA)

The long awaited Glenkens Business & Community Directory has been hand delivered to the majority of homes within the Glenkens, and is available from local shops and other outlets for those in outlying parts of the area.

With over 40 businesses and 50 community organisations featured, we are receiving really good feedback and enquiries from people and groups not currently included.

We were amazed at the number of organisations within the area, many of whom told us they would be pleased to have new members. So if there is something there that you think you might like to join just contact them - especially, of course, the GBA!

As you will read elsewhere in the Gazette, the GBA is linking with GCAT to facilitate the Day of the Region. This will be a really good opportunity to show off your business or organisation in a practical way. The GBA AGM will be on 4 May. To join the GBA contact David Whyte on 01644 460 296 or email davidwhyte@btinternet.com

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING)

In December we submitted a proposal to the Stewartry Area Committee to take over the management of the Town Hall.

We were told that there would be a further look at the works needed to ensure the building is wind and watertight and that there are no outstanding health and safety issues. At going to press we are awaiting this report.

Before we sign any agreement with the Council we will hold another open meeting to make certain we have both the ongoing support of the local community and the volunteers to manage the project.

Ros Hill, LING Chairman



CatStrand Highlights

The wait is over and by now you should have got your hands on our new season March – June Events Guide.

As the days start to get longer there is plenty going on at CatStrand during April and May to keep you busy and entertained.



On 14 April Edinburgh based Plutôt la Vie visit with their brand new show By The Seat Of Your Pants; a fast, visual, funny show in a clown style for ages

7/8+ and their families. After the performance there will be the opportunity to explore your own inner clown with a performance skills workshop for 9-15 year olds!

Join storyteller Anne Errington on Thursday 21 April for an evening of love stories with a twist. Tickets include a glass of wine/beer or soft drink so you can sit back, relax and hear how the stories unfold.

This year's Easter Puppet Theatre performance will be Cloud Man, presented by Ailie Cohen which tells the story of cloud expert Cloudia and her search to see a rarely sighted Cloud Man. A blend of puppetry, storytelling and sumptuous visuals, this is an Easter Monday treat not to be missed.

One of the hottest bands on the Americana circuit is North Carolina based Woody Pines who pay us a visit on 27 April with their "rollicking, engagingly idiosyncratic amalgam of American old-time, blues and jug band sensibilities".

We are extremely excited by a visit on 30 April by ThickSkin with their production of Blackout by Davey Anderson. This hard-hitting and highly visual production enjoyed sell-out success at the 2010 Edinburgh Festival Fringe and wowed critics, receiving five star reviews.

4 May is 'Star Wars Day' and to celebrate, the Dumfries & Galloway Science Festival will offering a fascinating lecture demonstration exploring the Science of Star Wars with Dr Martin Hendry – May the Fourth be With You! (see article on back page.)

A special event in association with the Dumfries Film Festival and dg Arts will take place on 5 May with the opportunity to see Speaking the Land, a "lens and story-based work" by international artists Dalziel & Scullion who have created three short films looking at the landscape of Dumfries & Galloway.

The film will be introduced by dgArts Public Art Officer Jan Hogarth and tickets include a glass of wine/ soft drink.

Formidable Flamenco – Jazz Virtuoso Eduardo Niebla visits on 11 May presenting music from

his new album 'My Gypsy Waltz', together with music from his acclaimed 30 year career. We are also delighted to be hosting Dick Gaughan & Annapurna Dance Theatre as part of the Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival.

For more information or tickets please call the CatStrand box office on 01644 420 374 or visit www.catstrand.com



Random Aspekts

On 19 January, break dancers from Random Aspekts visited Dalry Primary and Secondary schools to lead students in dance workshops, showing them some moves including Break Dance & Body Popping. Random Aspekts & Cypher Dance went on perform their shows Rock-a-Bye Bboy and Box Fresh at The CatStrand on 20 January.



THE BUS : GLENKENS TRANSPORT INITIATIVE

SATURDAY 14 MAY – GTI Trip to the Isle of Arran.

MONDAY 23 MAY – GTI Trip to Dawyck Gardens, near Peebles.

WEDNESDAY BUS SERVICE (REGD. ROUTE):
CONCESSIONARY BUS PASSES ARE ACCEPTED ON THIS ROUTE, SO PLEASE MAKE USE OF THIS EXTRA SERVICE

Timings are as follows:

1900 Dept Dalry (Underhill)

1910 New Galloway

1925 Mossdale

1935 Laurieston

1940 Townhead of Greenlaw

1947 Castle Douglas (Market Street)

1950 Arrive Castle Douglas (Tesco)

The return journey :

2045 Departs Castle Douglas (Tesco)

2047 Castle Douglas (Market Street)

2052 Townhead of Greenlaw

2100 Laurieston

2110 Mossdale

2125 New Galloway

2135 Arrive Dalry

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BOOK THE COMMUNITY-BUS OR IF YOU WANT ANY MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT KEITH COOPER, GTI ADMINISTRATOR ON 01644 420374.

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Double Decker Dreams

With project number one, the skatepark, well under way, the Glenkens Youth Project (GYP) are looking into future developments that will benefit the young people of the Glenkens.

With little provision for young people in the area, the group are hoping to raise enough money to buy a double decker bus that they can turn into a mobile youth cafe (complete with juke box and table football!). The bus would then be able to turn up and provide a space for young people to meet up with friends.

Anyone who has gone though Dalry on a Friday night will have seen all the young people congregating at the park in all weathers.

If the group manage to raise the money needed, Friday nights will never be the same. The mobile cafe bus would be able to



turn up and provide shelter and somewhere for a hot chocolate and hot snack. The group are looking to raise around £8000 to buy and convert the bus. If anyone is interested in donating, or would like to sponsor/advertise on the bus please get in touch on 420327 or gyp2@btinternet.com and help us make this happen!

This is a fantastic project for young people to be involved with - it will make hanging out with friends easier, more relaxed and fun, and will also help to develop skills and volunteering opportunities. Children of all ages will love it!

STOP PRESS! GYP received its first bus donation; £250 from Scottish Power. GYP would like to take this opportunity to thank them for being the first to support the bus-cafe project: "The Youth Cafe will be amazing when it gets going and give the young people of this area something fun, funky and fabulous!"

New Galloway Golf Club

Open Competitions for 2011:

Thurs 28 April - Glenkens Cup - 15 hole mixed foursomes

Mon 2 May - May Day Greensomes - gents

Thurs 19 May Glenkens Trophy - Mixed Greensomes - over 55

Sun 29 May - Natural Power Mens Open

Thurs 2 June - Belhave Senior Mens Open

Sun 31 July - Tilhill Open Fourball

If you are interested in any of the above opens please contact the Match Secretary 01644 450265 or jeffsutcliffe@btinternet.com

NOTICE TO LOCAL VILLAINS

There has been yet another break in at the clubhouse. It is now becoming a similar pattern by local villains who smash the window and gain entry stealing bottles of cider. Luckily this time it is understood that the culprit was arrested by police.

For the attention of the villains, the club house is fully alarmed and is shortly to get its own closed circuit cameras, so if you want a drink without spending time in jail, please go to one of the pubs in the High Street!

Jeff,

Vice Captain & Match Secretary

NEW GALLOWAY SWRI

At New Galloway Rural we are looking for new members to come and enjoy our yearly programme of speakers and social events.

The Rural is a registered charity with no religious affiliation and is a non-political organisation. Its members are interested in a wide range of subjects including crafts and cookery, gardening, the environment, health, exercise and sports. The latter can be pursued through events organised by the Stewartry Federation. Our speakers cover a wide range of topics to reflect members' wishes.

If you are new to this area and want to meet people, or newly retired and need new interests, we would be very happy for you to come to a meeting or two with no obligation to join.

If you've moved up from England and belonged to the WI, you'll feel at home - and its cheaper! Our fundraising lunch on 20 April would be a good opportunity to meet us (look out for posters). Otherwise we will be meeting on the 3rd Wednesday every month from 2-4pm (except July and August) usually in New Galloway Lower Town Hall. Please ring Jenny Repath on 01644 420 235 for more information.

FUNDRAISER FOR SW SCOTLAND RnR

St Margaret's Ladies' Guild are holding a plant and cake sale at the church on Kenbridge Road on Saturday 30 April from 11am - 3pm in aid of SW Scotland RnR. This local charity provides holidays for wounded personnel as part of their rehabilitation.

Please come and buy our plants and cakes and help us support this worthwhile cause. Donations of produce for us to sell will be gratefully received beforehand or on the day. For further information ring Jenny Repath on 01644 420 235.

Stewartry Camera Club

The best 'Handicap Score' was shared by

Hazel Groome and Mary McIlvenna.

For further information contact Mary McIlvenna 01644 420613 or George Wishart 01557 870090.

The Club's latest competition 'Movement' was judged by local photographer Phil McMenemy, who has a gallery in Laurieston. Phil said many of the prints made him think, and one or two got him laughing out loud, so he thoroughly enjoyed looking at the competition entries.

The star of the evening was John Smith who had the best overall score with his two prints. The 'Best Monochrome' was by Mary McIlvenna, the 'New Member Best Print' was shared by Jenny Armstrong, Pete Middleton and John Repath. The 'Best Landscape' was shared by Alec Blackadder, Alwyn Howes and Mary McIlvenna.



'We're Only Playing' by John Repath

LOCAL HISTORY

The Glenkens King

Cairn Edward, smothered as it is in forest, when viewed from the east, looms like a great pudding across Loch Ken or above New Galloway.

The hill's name is of Gaelic formulation since in English or Scots it would be 'Edward's Cairn'. The question is – who was Edward? It has been unconvincingly attributed to Edward I of England but a less likely individual for Scottish commemoration is difficult to imagine since it was he whose invasion of Scotland in 1296 led directly to the Scottish Wars of Independence. Venerated as a great king in England, he is characterised in Scottish historiography as a cruel and bloody tyrant who was responsible for the English occupation of the country and the vicious execution of William Wallace.

John Gordon Barbour of Bogue House near Dalry asserts that in his day (1824) the locals pronounced Edward, Ethart, possibly influenced by Gaelic Eideard. He relates the tale of how Edward Bruce, brother of King Robert, victor at Bannockburn, climbed the hill and, admiring the magnificent view over Ken and Dee, exclaimed that he must one day take possession of such a beautiful vista. Accordingly a cairn was erected on the summit and Edward Bruce, in due course, became Lord of Galloway. However he was a hot-headed warrior who is depicted as something of a maverick and folk do not usually name places for their enemies.

Glenkens was Balliol territory and the Bruces were their sworn foes.

The families fought one another on several occasions and the Bruces, when they gained the upper hand, wreaked havoc on the glen.

Balliols and Bruces were competitors for the Scottish kingship in the 1280s and '90s. Edward I, having been asked by the Scots to decide the case, selected John Balliol as the man with best title in 1292, ruling until deposed three years later. It is the latter's son who is most likely to be remembered in Cairn Edward. Edward

Balliol, grandson of Dervorguilla, Lady of Galloway and great grandson of Alan Lord of Galloway, was recognised by the English and not a few Scots as King Edward from 1332-56, albeit his title was much disputed. The true king was David II, son of Robert Bruce. Balliol was king only with English support and so can be seen as the 'Young Pretender' of the fourteenth century. Local hero he undoubtedly was, but he lived a somewhat futile and pathetic life.

There was a failed conspiracy to place him on the Scottish throne in 1320 in opposition to Robert I who had insisted that landholders possessing estates in England must surrender them or face banishment, and must decide whether they were Scots or English. He thus created a seriously dissident group known as 'The Disinherited' who continued to support Balliol for a generation. After his father's deposition young Edward was subjected to rather luxurious detention in England. He was godson of Edward I, a sometime playmate of Edward II and the pawn of Edward III.

In 1332 he was invited back to Scotland by a man whose name looks like a Galloway spoof – Twynam Laurison!

He began well, winning the battle of Dupplin Moor in which he "displayed a bold spirit of enterprise, and a courage superior to all difficulties"; he also inspired a revolt in Galloway. He was crowned King of Scots at Scone, celebrated in English propaganda as, 'the very and true king of Scotland, as by heritage and right line'. David II was eight years old and so, as a minor, deemed by some unfit to occupy the kingship. By year's end the Bruce party had driven Balliol out of Annan Castle, uncomfortably straddling a saddleless horse "with one leg booted and the other bare". However, he recovered, to win further victories at Berwick and Halidon Hill, only to face defeat at Culblean in 1335.

Once David II began his personal rule Balliol was little more than an English pensioner. For the rest of his life he was a spent force whom

English commentators dismissed as a pseudo-king, manipulated at the whim of Edward III for his own nefarious purposes. Balliol based himself at Hestan Island in Fleet Bay and at Burnt Isle in Loch Ken.

His 'kingdom' amounted to little more than an extended Glenkens, specifically Buittle, Kenmure and Kirkandrews.

The last-named included Balmaghie, Parton and Crossmichael while he also controlled Kenmure Castle and the Earlston estates. Eventually, in 1356, he was forced to alienate the whole of the south of Scotland to Edward III, as well as, unforgivably, his own kingship, "roaring like a lion, almost beside himself with anger [he] burst out in words more bitter than any conceivable death", lambasting "the Scottish people, that most unsympathetic of nations who have rejected me as their ruler". So saying he handed over his crown and a handful of Scottish earth and stones.

Thus the ambitions of the last of the line of the Lords of Galloway ended in dust.

He lived for a further eight miserable years. Glenkens should memorialise its one king for History's victims deserve to be remembered alongside her heroes even if, as the chronicler wrote, "On this matter it should be noted that he gave away nothing for his part, because he had no right in the beginning". For more information see Amanda Beam, *The Balliol Dynasty 1210-1364* (Edinburgh 2008).

Ted Cowan

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Alexander Gordon of Earlstoun

He at times hid in the Earlstoun

The local Church of Scotland congregations are planning to set up a Covenanter trail around the Glenkens.

Curious to know where the noted Covenanter Alexander Gordon of Earlstoun was buried, I was browsing through the Gordon family papers in the Ewart library, Dumfries, when I came across the following lines:

'He died at Airds (Parton parish) 1726 and was buried in Dalry Churchyard, south side near the dyke, on which spot his grandson Sir John Gordon intends raising a monument to his Memory with the following inscription: 'To the Memory of the very worthy Pillar of the Church of Scotland, Sir Alexander Gordon of Earlstoun, Bart. who, after many years sufferings, died 1726 aged 76'.

There then followed a lengthy epitaph composed by his grandson. His grandson arranged for the erection of a stone with a similar epitaph over the grave of his great-grandfather William Gordon of Earlstoun, who was buried in Glasford churchyard, Lanarkshire after being killed at the Battle of Bothwell Bridge; but the family were going through hard times financially after the years of persecution and it would seem that he never managed to erect the stone in Dalry churchyard.

After the Battle of Bothwell Bridge Alexander was outlawed. For a time troops were billeted in Earlstoun Castle and when they were absent he sometimes returned to sleep in his own bed, only quick actions enabling him to elude capture on a number of occasions.

oak, which is still there, just hanging on to life; and he had a hideout nearby in the woods where he often slept. In the end he was arrested on board ship while on a mission to Holland for the Covenanting Societies and spent six years in jail in the Edinburgh area, including time on the Bass Rock.

It seemed very appropriate to me that there should be a memorial to Alexander in Dalry churchyard, perhaps as one of the central focal points of the proposed Covenanter trail.

So I approached the Scottish Covenanter Memorials Association to see if they would take on the project. They have been very helpful and have offered a grant of £1200 to the project, but that will still leave us short of what is required.

There are two possible ways of taking the project forward; the more ambitious one would be to erect a memorial stone like the one pictured. This contains a good portion of the epitaph, though with twelve lines missing from the centre of the poem. The owner of Ayrshire Memorials, who is a member of SCMA, has quoted £3345 for the preparation and erection of such a stone. Normal cost for such a stone would be over £5000. The other option would be to leave the poem off the stone, which would reduce the cost considerably but would leave us with a far less eye-catching stone without these inspiring words which bring it to life.

It is proposed to erect the stone just to the left of Dalry Session House, as you face it from the front. It is also hoped to prepare an information board on the

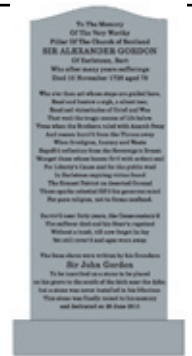
Gordons of Earlstoun which could be attached to the Session House itself. There could be possibilities of having the poem on the information board; but that would be a far less enduring memorial and subject to vandalism.

I would value feedback on what you think we should do. I would also be grateful of any pledges from people willing to help us reach the amount required for the more expensive stone.

There are 32 lines of text and, alongside grant support, you could perhaps think in terms of sponsoring, say, a line for £50 to help us reach the total. If there is support for it I would certainly favour the first option.

There will be a Conventicle in Dalry churchyard on Sunday 26 June at 3pm. This could conceivably be for the dedication of the new stone if the project comes together quickly. Otherwise it will be a milestone on the road towards the erection of that stone, and will highlight the connections which the churchyard has with Covenanting times.

David Bartholomew



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Burns Returns

A memorable evening toasting the Bard was enjoyed by all those who attended the first Burns Supper to be held in Balmacellan village hall for 31 years.

The tradition was re-kindled by the recently formed Hall Committee and their hard work was clear for all to see. New Curtains and table cloths made by Sandra Dempster and beautiful flowers by Lee Cawthorne along with new crockery and tables financed by the Stewartry Area Committee led many locals to say they had never seen the hall look so well as they were welcomed at the door by Jim Kirkpatrick and a glass of fizz.

Chairman Neil Cawthorne welcomed everyone to the hall and the evening was started with the Selkirk Grace by Reverend David Bartholemew.

The Haggis was piped in by John Hilsley and a rousing address was

given by Robert Mcturk.

Professor Ted

Cowan gave the immortal memory, bringing a Glenkens theme to his words. Amazing renditions of Tam o Shanter and Holy Willie's Prayer were provided by Stewart Park from Sanquhar. Brian Edgar gave the toast to the Lassies with Maybelle Thompson replying on their behalf.

The toast to agriculture was given by Alex Ferguson MSP.

Between the speeches all present were entertained by Eileen Cawthorne and Robert Lind who gave a beautiful recital of some of Burns' most popular songs.

All agreed that it was a night to remember and look forward to it becoming an annual event once again in the village.



The Best of Burns

A packed Lagwyne Hall at Carsphairn enjoyed what was termed "One of the Best Burns Suppers Ever" on the Thursday before Burns Night. And this was the 43rd of these annual events!

Andy McCartney piped in the Haggis, with Irene McCreath acting as Poosy Nancy, Darrel Wilson addressed the Haggis very ably and Dr Bartholomew gave the Selkirk Grace.

The meal was prepared by Committee Members and as usual in Carsphairn, the men of the Hall Committee served the tables.

Robert McTurk was Chairman for the evening and introduced Grierson Dunlop who proposed the Toast to Robert Burns.

Laura Luke from Kilmarnock sang two Burns' songs beautifully and unaccompanied, and Andy Campbell gave a scary and lively rendition of Tam o' Shanter. This

was followed by David Finlay proposing a toast to "The Lassies" which had his audience in stitches (and David too) and Cathy Agnew suitably replied on behalf of the lassies, closing with a toast to "The Laddies".

Community singing followed, with Margaret Sloan at the piano and this led in to David Gibbon giving the Vote of Thanks to the artists. David prefaced this by asking Anna Campbell to present Andy McCartney with an engraved glass bowl in recognition of piping at Carsphairn Burns Supper more years than most people could remember - at least 40!



The top table.

Tartan Day

Pupils in

Primary 7 at Dalry School organised a 'Tartan Day' to celebrate the life of Robert Burns.

The children came into school dressed in tartan and each class took part in Scottish related activities. Primary 7 organised an assembly about Robert Burns, which included Scottish songs and performances of Tam O'Shanter and Address to a Haggis. Primary 7 then went on to cook their own Burns Lunch of haggis, neeps and tatties, with shortbread for pudding. The children worked well together to cook a fantastic lunch, which everyone enjoyed.



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GLENKENS DIARY

MARCH

Mon 28, Diabetes Support meeting, Gordon Memorial Hall (adjacent to St Ninian's Church), Whitepark Road, Castle Douglas, 7pm, see p5

APRIL

Sat 2 April – Thurs 12 May, Exhibition: Anthea & Derek Summers, The CatStrand

Wed 6, Make a Scarecrow Workshop, 10am-1pm, The CatStrand

Thurs 7, Film: Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1, 2.30pm, The CatStrand

Wed 13, Spring Fling: Bunting Making Workshop, 10.30-12.30, The CatStrand

Thurs 14, Plutôt La Vie: By the Seat of Your Pants, 2.30pm, The CatStrand

Thurs 21, Storytelling with Anne Errington, 7.30pm, The CatStrand

Mon 25, Ailie Cohen: Cloud Man, 5-7+, 3pm, The CatStrand

Wed 27, Woody Pines, 7.30pm, The CatStrand

Thurs 28, Golf: Glenkens Cup - 15 hole mixed foursomes

Sat 30, St Margaret's Ladies' Guild plant & cake sale, 11am - 3pm, the church on Kenbridge Road, see p7

Sat 30, ThickSkin: Blackout by Davey Anderson, 8pm, The CatStrand

MAY

Mon 2, Golf: May Day Greensomes - gents

Wed 4, GBA AGM, 7pm, The Ken Bridge

Wed 4, May the Fourth – The Science of Star Wars, 7.30pm, The CatStrand

Thurs 5, Film: Speaking the Land, 8pm, The CatStrand

Sat 7, Kells Primary School PTA Spring Family Fun Day, 11am-2pm

Wed 11, Eduardo Niebla, 7.30pm, The CatStrand

Sat 14 May – 30 June, Exhibition: Carol Taylor, The CatStrand

Sat 14, GTI Bus Trip, Isle of Arran, see p6

Thurs 19, Golf: Glenkens Trophy -

Mixed Greensomes - over 55

Thurs 19, Glenkens RNLI Fundraising Group, 'Hats at Sea', 7pm, Dalry Town Hall

Fri 20, Dick Gaughan, 7.30pm, The CatStrand, New Galloway

Mon 23, GTI Bus Trip, Dawyck Gardens, near Peebles, see p6

Fri 27, Annapurna Dance Theatre, 7.30pm, The CatStrand

Sat 28, THE Fun Dog Event of The Year, Barstobrick equestrian centre, Ringford, see p12

Sun 29, Golf: Natural Power Mens Open

JUNE

Thurs 2, Golf: Belhove Senior Mens Open

Fri 3, Welfare Rights Benefit Surgeries – phone to book, 9.30am-1pm, The CatStrand

Sun 5 to Sat 11, Clachan Fair, Dalry

REGULAR EVENTS:

Glenkens Ramblers: Mon, 1.30pm, outside the Bank, Dalry

Scouts: Mon, 7-8.30pm, New Galloway Scout Hut

Mother & Toddlers: Tues, 9.45-11.15am, New Galloway Town Hall

Beavers: Tues, 6.30-7.45pm, New Galloway Scout Hut

Glenkens Walking Group: Wed, 1.30pm, outside the Bank, Dalry
Stewartry Camera Club: Wed, 7.30pm, The Tolbooth, Kirkcudbright

Mossdale Painters: Wed, 9.30am, Mossdale Village Hall

Cub Scouts: Wed, 6.45-8pm, New Galloway Scout Hut

Thursday Lunch Club: 12.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall, fortnightly starting 6 Jan, £3, contact - Raymond Vincent, 01644 420451.

Lions Club monthly quiz: alternating between The CatStrand & Lochinvar Hotel, contact - Andrew Frew, 420 323

The CatStrand, New Galloway (for info call 420 374)

Exercise to Music: Mon, 10-11am

Play it by Ear: Mon during term time, 1.30-2.30pm

Children's Dance Classes with Margaret Morris Movement: Mon during term time, 3.15-4pm (pre-school), 4-5pm (ages 8-12)

Carers Coffee & Chat: Tues, 10am-12noon

Teen Spirit: Tues during term time, 7.30-9.30pm

Taking the First Step in Computing: Wed, 5.30-7.30pm

Boxercise: Wed: 7-8, New Galloway Town Hall, £4

Zumba: Wed: 8-9pm, New Galloway Town Hall, £4 - **£6 combined price for Boxercise & Zumba**

Gentle Yoga & Relaxation: Thurs, 10-11.15am

Sing it Out: Singing Workshop: Thurs, 11.30am-12.30pm

Afternoon Tea Club: 2nd Fri each month, 2pm

Saturday Art Club: 2nd Sat each month, 10am-12noon

Circus skills swapping share: 3rd Sun of the month, 1-3pm

Catstrand Youth Players: Sun during term time from 3-5pm

CatStrand Playstation Tournaments: contact The CatStrand for info.

Dalry Community Centre (for info contact Sarah on 430 393)

Glenkens Playgroup: Mon-Fri, 9.15-11.45am (contact - Julie Moore 01644 460 687)

Paint & Art: Mon, 1.30-4.30pm

Ballroom & Latin Dance drop-in class: Mon, 7.30-9pm, £5

Ballroom & Latin Dance course: Mon, 9-10pm, for more info tel Sam Hood on 01644 420672

Good Neighbours Club: Tues, 2pm

Kickback Martial Arts: Tues & Thurs, 7-9pm, both adults & children welcome

Glenkens Mother & Toddlers: Wed, 1.30-3pm

Craft Class: Thurs, 2-4pm

Brownies: Wed, 5.30-6.45pm

Guides: Wed, 5.30-7pm

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Sundays: Balmaclellan:

12noon 1st, Carsphairn: 10.30am

1st 2nd 3rd 4th, Dalry (April): 12noon

1st 2nd 3rd 4th, Dalry (May): 9am 1st

2nd 3rd 4th, Kells: 10.30am 2nd 3rd 4th

Special Services/Events:

17 Apr, 6.30pm: Glenkens Church

Choir with Stainer's Crucifixion,

Balmaclellan Church. 22 Apr,

7.30pm: Good Friday Service, St

Margaret's Church, New Galloway.

24 Apr, 7am: Easter Dawn Service

at Carsphairn War Memorial,

followed by breakfast in Lagwyne

Hall, Carsphairn. 6 May, 7.30pm:

Quiz Night, Dalry Town Hall. 29

May: 10.30am: United Service with Choir in Dalry Church.

Communion Services: 1 May, 12noon: Balmaclellan Church.

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Communion - 10.30am every Sun

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Sun, 9.30am. Dalbeattie: Sun,

11am. St Ninian's, Castle Douglas:

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Fri:

11:15am -

1:15pm

then

2 - 4.30pm

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STAR WARS Over the

past few years, 4 May has come to be known worldwide as 'Star Wars' day; an affectionate pun on the iconic greeting which is spoken in hushed tones by the likes of Luke Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi in the Star Wars films.

It is perhaps a sign of how strongly the Star Wars saga has impinged on popular culture over the past 30 years that the phrase "May the Fourth be With You" immediately evokes thoughts of Jedi knights and lightsabre battles!

But just how much science is there behind the science fiction of Star Wars? Could we ever travel to other planets, traversing the vast distances between star systems using shortcuts through hyperspace? What kinds of alien worlds might exist elsewhere in our Universe, and could they bear lifeforms that resemble the exotic creatures found in the Star Wars cantina? Could a Jedi Knight really use a lightsabre to fend off blasters and energy weapons? Could the Death Star really blow up another planet?

On May the Fourth 2011 Dr Martin Hendry, an Astrophysicist from the University of Glasgow, will give a talk on the 'Science of Star Wars' at The CatStrand as part of the Dumfries & Galloway Science Festival.

As a lifelong Star Wars fan, Martin has always been fascinated with the exotic worlds, spaceships and alien life depicted in science fiction - and how they might relate to what science tells us about the real Universe. He currently holds a Science in Society fellowship from the UK Science and Technology Facilities Council, the aim of which is to lead an international programme of science outreach on the theme of 'Exploring the Dark Side of the Universe'.

The aim of this project is to engage schools and the wider public with some of the biggest questions in science: How did the Universe begin? What will be its eventual fate? Is there life on other planets? Why are we here..?

Perhaps above all what he has learned from 25 years as a scientific researcher is that the real Universe is even weirder than anything science fiction has dreamed up. Come along to The CatStrand on 4 May to find out more...

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