

GLENKENS GAZETTE

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

February/March 2012

ISSUE 68

FREE

Wild Winter Weather

John Redpath



The weather over the past few months has been pretty dramatic, and not in the white Christmas kind of way.

There has been flooding, gales and power cuts throughout the Glenkens, with some people being without power for up to two days.

The photograph to the left shows Scottish Power valiantly making their way to fix someone's power (we hope!) on the stretch of road between New Galloway and the Ken Bridge, just before the bridge. But where is the road...?

Carsphairn Community Pub Venture

On Monday 19 December, a public meeting was held in Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn, to discuss the potential for Carsphairn Community to buy Greystones, their village pub.

The pub has come to the village's attention as the previous owner died recently, and his executor approached the Community Council as he knew the community may be interested in buying the building. Community-owned pubs are a hot topic at the moment, with schemes such as 'Pub is the Hub' going strong, and boasting the support of people such as the Prince of Wales.

There was a large turnout for the Carsphairn meeting – around 70

people – and a lot of ideas were aired. The overall consensus reached was that running the building as a pub only would not be a realistic option, and it would have to have some other community use as well. So it was decided the next step would be a professional study looking into a variety of options for the premises – landlord accommodation, restaurant, renovation costs, etc.

The Community Council has agreed with the executor that he will wait while research is carried out and that the community will keep him closely informed as things develop.

The group chosen to carry out the research is the Creetown Initiative, and a meeting was held with Andrew Ward, who runs the project, where he explained

what would be involved.

Matt Hickman, Chairman of Carsphairn Community Council, says: "The community will be working closely with the executor of the estate and hope to come to a decision about purchasing the pub within the next six months".

Hopefully the initial study will be carried out over the next couple of months and there will be a further update in the next Gazette.



Win a Meal For Two!

Here at the Gazette we're starting a 'Photo of the Issue' competition, where the best photo of the Glenkens (or a Glenkens person, activity, etc) each issue wins a meal for two at a local eatery.

Drop your photos into the CatStrand, or email them to glenkengazette@hotmail.co.uk.

This issue, the winner will receive a meal for two at The Ken Bridge's Sunday Carvery.

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Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING)

After MSP Alex Fergusson's successful intervention in persuading the D&G Council to improve the appearance of the Town Hall, members of the LING committee met with officers of the Council to hear the current plans.

The Town Hall is to be kept as a 'flagship' building; the council will review whether any of its own services can be accommodated within the building, followed by further discussions with the local councillors and the local community to determine the most appropriate use. Watch this space ...

Ros Hill, Chairman

Dalry Community Council: Next meeting: Mon 6 Feb, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall.

New Galloway & Kells Community Council:

The condition of the car park has deteriorated with large potholes now spreading out into the surface of the adjoining road, recent flooding from the Mill Burn had also caused problems at the lower end of the car park.

A general discussion took place on the Crayfish problems in Loch Ken, and the lack of any information on what is being done. It was agreed that a meeting of interested parties including our neighbouring community councils around Loch Ken (Balmaclellan, Balmaghie, Crossmichael and Parton), also Glenkens Business Association and SEPA. Next meeting: Mon 12 Feb, 7.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall.

Balmaclellan Community Council: Next meeting: Mon 27 Feb, 7.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall.

Carsphairn Community Council: Cllr Prentice complained about the speed of heavy goods vehicles in the area through the village, and this is to be passed on to the traffic department.

The proposed reduction in cutting the Kirk yard grass from 15 to 3 times a year was discussed, and it was agreed the CC would object to the proposals and request that they be consulted before any final decisions are made.

David Whyte confirmed his resignation as Secretary, and there was a discussion on whether the post should be paid or not. A notice is to be placed in the Village Shop. Next meeting: Mon 27 Feb, 7pm, Lagwyne Hall.

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

GTI WEDNESDAY BUS SERVICE

(registered route)

Outward Journey:

19:00 Dept. Dalry (Underhill)
19:10 New Galloway
19:25 Mossdale
19:35 Laurieston
19:40 Townhead of Greenlaw
19:47 Castle Douglas (Market St)
19:50 Castle Douglas (Tesco)

Return journey:

20:45 Dept. Castle Douglas (Tesco)
20:47 Castle Douglas (Market St)
20:52 Townhead of Greenlaw
21:00 Laurieston
21:10 Mossdale
21:25 New Galloway
21:35 Dalry

To book a GTI bus or for more information please contact Keith Cooper, GTI Administrator, on 01644 420374.

FHB Fencing

Dalry

**Domestic and
Agricultural
Fencing**

**01644 430 495 (Peter)
or 07767 795 498
(Jonathan)**

The Future of Glenkens Playgroup

The future of our local Playgroup may be rosier than it seemed a few months ago.

At a meeting of mums and members of the Playgroup committee on Tuesday 17 January, various options for the future of Glenkens Playgroup in 2012/13 were raised.

It was decided that a sub-committee of the Playgroup committee would form to look into the potential for continuing

the Playgroup, perhaps with reduced days, and perhaps with a lower number of paid staff, depending on the funding which can be generated now that the Regional Council has cut the core funding.

The feeling among mums is one of determination to make something work if at all possible, and the coming year will be key to seeing whether continuing to run the facility is feasible without Council funding.

Santa's Little Helpers



Santa has moved into the 21st century... Stuart Jamieson, with the help of local mum Izzie, started an informal 'quad' Santa two or three years ago.

Chris Jamieson, Stuart's wife, says: "Stuart just likes to give something back to the children. He got lots of little gifts and put them into Santa's sack, and then Jamie Murdoch dressed as Santa, Stuart was the elf driving the quad, and Izzie was the other elf, and they knocked at all the houses in New Galloway that we knew had children. The kids seemed to really enjoy it, and next year we might try going to some of the other Glenkens villages." *If you would to be involved, get in touch with Chris or Stuart on 420 401.*

Glenkens Business Association (GBA)

Following the well received first issue of the Glenkens Directory guide to local businesses and community groups the committee is now looking to produce Issue 2.

If you are a local business who would like to join the Association or a community group who would like an entry please make sure you contact us immediately.

To join the GBA contact David Whyte on 01644 460 296 or email davidwhyte@btinternet.com

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During the winter months enjoy a light meal in front of our open fire with home-made pies, scones and soups, and rolls with hot or cold fillings.

We hope soon to introduce a range of gluten & wheat free pastries and cakes.

Our garden has a wonderful view and the tea room is open all-year round.

Opening Hours

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Saturday - 8am to 6pm

Sunday - 9am to 5pm



Take-out menu available - ring in your order and we can have it ready for collection.

Glenkens Freecycle

sponsored by natural power



EVERYTHING listed on the Glenkens Freecycle page is **FREE** - you just need to contact the owner and go and pick it up!

Anyone can list an item they no longer want, and hopefully someone else in the area is looking for just that thing and will come and collect it. You can also list items you are looking for, in the hope that someone else is getting rid of something similar and will get in touch with you. If you would like to list something on this page, please get in touch with Sarah on 07727 127 997 or email glenkengazette@hotmail.co.uk.

Please remember that people list their items in good faith that they will go to an appreciative home - items are not to be collected simply to sell on.

Furniture

Large Desk - grey 'wood effect', about 5ft by 3ft with three drawers at one side. Also, matching four drawer filing cabinet, not perfect but does the job. Contact: 460 244

Various

Clipboard - A4 - Black. Contact: 440 657

Table Tennis table. Home-made (no net). Contact: 440 657

A4 lever arch files - blue - 65mm. Contact: 440 657

A4 ring binders - blue - 25mm. Contact: 440 657

Drawing/draught board. Contact: 07796 268 995

Filing cabinet files - small and large size ones. Contact: Sarah 430 138

Four Tensa Barrier Crowd Control posts. Black with red retracting band. In need of a little TLC. Contact: 440 657

Lexmark all-in-one printer in working order and with cartridges. Contact: 460 516

Portable stage. 1m x 2m with folding 30cm legs. Lightweight, covered in black cord carpet. Contact: 440 657

Unicol projector stand. 1.2mt high. Black. Needs some TLC. Contact: 440 657

Man's bike, three-speed hub gears, old but everything works. Contact: Ian on 450 618.

Draper folding step ladder. Contact: 440 657

Childrens'

Pair of children's Clarks sandals in size 2, light brown. Contact: 430 004

Reclining Armchair. Pale green velour 'Parker-Knoll' armchair. Contact: Jane 430 199 or 07768 481554

DIY/Home Fittings

Aspidistras, around three healthy plants available to good homes. Ring Sue in the evenings on 07554 644 993

Large concrete coal/log bunker. Two compartments. Very heavy and needs to be dismantled. Contact: Alan on 07769 680938

Pedestal hand basin and close

coupled WC both in Champagne colour. Contact: 440 657

2 Mahogany coloured curtain poles complete with rings (8ft and 6ft). Contact: Alan on 07769 680938

Handles for wood windows plus catches and keys, in brass: 11 left hand and 14 right hand. Contact: 460 516

Door. Hardwood, internal, fully glazed with small panes. Contact: 440 657

WANTED

Any old/spare buttons, zips, buckles, fastenings (see Guides article on back page). Contact: 430 393

Wooden supports for 4 poster bed. Contact: 07796 268 995

Any fabric, curtains, etc. for recycling into bags (see Guides article on back page). Contact: 430 393

Cellular cotton baby blanket. Doesn't matter if it's a bit tatty as just wanted for the material. Ring Sue in the evenings on 07554 644 993

New Tricks for Old Dogs

Chairman of Dumfries and Galloway Canine Rescue Centre, Diana Lord, is launching an appeal to help homeless canine golden oldies.

Diana (pictured here with her 13 year old rescue collie, Sally) says: "The plight of old dogs that find themselves without a home really tugs at my heart strings - perhaps because I am a senior citizen myself!"



When an old dog comes into the kennels, we would really like to have a foster home available as soon as possible. Old dogs are often confused by the dramatic

change in their circumstances after many years of companionship in a familiar home, and can't get the rest that their systems need because of all the hustle and bustle in this alien environment. If you might be able to offer temporary foster care to an older dog, please contact us.

Understandably, vet costs for older dogs do deter some potential adopters, so the Centre offers some help with vets bills for older dogs. We know that cash is in short supply for many at present, so we are asking people to donate old CDs and DVDs so we can sell them to a recycling company. You can drop off your CDs at WCF in Castle Douglas, or drop them in to the Rescue Centre at Glencaple.

For further info contact Diana on 01387 760556 or email dianalord@btinternet.com.

Eco Feature

sponsored by natural power 

Each issue, this section will highlight a pertinent 'eco' issue, with information that will be useful to local readers. This issue we have a few tips and facts to get you thinking and hopefully save you energy, and money.

- On average every person in the UK throws away their own body weight in rubbish every 7 weeks.
- Every year an estimated 17.5 billion plastic bags are given away by supermarkets.
- A single tree will absorb one tonne of carbon dioxide over its lifetime.
- Fix hot water leaks - a dripping tap wastes at least 5,500 litres of water a year: that's enough water wasted to fill a paddling pool every week for the whole summer.
- Only boil the water you need
By everyone just boiling the amount of water needed when making a hot drink we can save enough energy to power over 7 million TVs for a year.
- Switch appliances off at the wall. Avoid leaving TVs, videos,

computers or music systems on standby and remember not to leave appliances such as mobile phones on charge unnecessarily. Even while on standby, most appliances use electricity, so switch off and save up to 8% of your electricity bill.

- The average household wastes £37 each year by leaving appliances on standby. Across the UK this is equivalent to the annual output of about 2½ 700MW power stations.

- Households in the UK now spend around 10% of their electricity bill on standby power.

- The average household has up to 12 gadgets left on standby or charging at any one time.

- In the UK around 15million TVs are left on standby for 20 hours per day. If they were all switched off, we'd save enough energy to decommission an

entire power station

- £90 million of bakery waste is thrown away by Scottish households every year - that's enough to make everyone in Scotland a sandwich a day for the next 6 months.

- £70 million of fresh fruit waste is thrown away every year - that's the equivalent of an apple a day for every school child and teacher in Scotland for a year and a half.

- £130 million of meat and fish waste is thrown away by Scottish households every year - that's enough to make everyone in Scotland a bacon buttie every Saturday for the next year.

- £93 million of dairy waste is thrown away by Scottish households every year - that's enough for everyone in Scotland to have milk on their cereal for the next 6 months.

Twin Support for Local Charities

Following a successful stall at the Autumn Fayre in Castle Douglas, St Margaret's Ladies Guild are delighted to be helping not one, but two local charities.

Both Dumfries & Galloway Befriending Project and Sports for Special Needs received a cheque for £250 from the Guild.

The Dumfries & Galloway Befriending Project matches selected and suitably qualified adult befrienders with vulnerable young people, with

the aim of making a positive difference in the young person's life.

Sports for Special Needs promotes and develops sports and recreational activities amongst children, teenagers and adults with special needs.

President of St Margaret's Ladies Guild, Christine Rankin, says:

"Outreach to our community is the backbone of the Ladies Guild and we are so pleased to be in the happy position of being able to support two such worthwhile causes".

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CatStrand Highlights

There is plenty to keep you entertained during these chilly winter months here at CatStrand.

On Sunday 5 February we are delighted that award winning writer **Janice Galloway** will be appearing to talk about her latest book 'All Made up' an autobiography. Janice Galloway is the author of eight books of prize winning prose and we are very much looking forward to hosting her at CatStrand (tickets £7/£5).

Our **CatStrand Open Stage** is gaining a reputation as a hotbed of local talent so make sure that you don't miss the next instalment on Thursday 16 February (£3/2 including a drink). Come along and perform – singers, musicians, poets etc all welcome or just come along and support those who are performing – it's a friendly laid back atmosphere and a lovely way to spend a mid week evening.

Rounding off our season on Saturday 25 February is **Lorna Reid's Jazz Cafe** making a welcome return to CatStrand and creating the intimacy and relaxed feel of a jazz street cafe. Lorna was nominated as best Jazz vocalist in the Scottish Jazz Awards 2011/12.

Our new season starts in March

so make sure that you look out for our new Events Guide which will be hitting the shelves in early February.

We're very excited to be hosting two of Scotland's most exciting young theatre makers, **Kieran Hurley and Gary McNair**, with a double bill presented by The Arches (one of Scotland's most exciting theatres) - **Hitch and Crunch** - (Saturday 3 March, 7.30pm £10/8).



Hitch

Kieran Hurley's autobiographical performance, *Hitch*, asks questions about the meaning and purpose of political protest, the limits of personal power, and the genuine possibility of change. Gary McNair (who visited the CatStrand with the RSAMD last year) presents *Crunch*, a hilarious solo show. Gary believes you've got what it takes to complete his five-step programme and that you can be liberated from the tyranny of money forever. Is it a lecture? Is it a test? Is

he really serious? Find out in this entertaining and thought-provoking live experiment about the value of money.

Come and celebrate St Patrick's Day with us on Friday 17 March with Irish performers **Méabh O'Hare, Pauline Scanlon & Friends** (7.30pm £10/8). Though only 27 years old, Pauline Scanlon is capable of making the oldest ballads sound immediate and fresh while granting newer material a timeless resonance.

On Wednesday 29 March, we're delighted to welcome the **Rua Macmillan Trio** (7.30pm, £10/8). Fiddler Rua MacMillan has quickly made a name for himself as one the rising stars of the world of Scottish contemporary Music. In 2008, Rua was awarded the prestigious title of BBC Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year.

The European Arts company present a double bill of Harold Pinter's classic short black comedies, **The Dumb Waiter & The Lover** on 30th March (7.30pm, £10/8). These two plays by the Nobel prize winner still pack the same punch as when first written.

These are just a few of the highlights, make sure you pick up an Events Guide and call 01644 420 374 or visit www.catstrand.com for tickets.

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Busy Bus

Plans are already being made for Glenkens Transport Initiative (GTI) to organise bus trips to new places this year including Edinburgh Zoo, Loch Lomond, Dunoon, Appleby Horse Fair and Dumfries House as well as repeat visits to popular venues.

The programme will start with a visit to the Hobby Craft Exhibition in Glasgow on Thursday 8 March (tickets cannot be booked until Wednesday 1 February) and on Monday 19 March we will travel to Edinburgh to visit the Scottish

National Portrait Gallery and again on Monday 2 April to visit the Zoo (tickets for the Edinburgh trips can be booked on or after Thursday 1 March).

CONDITIONS OF BOOKING TRIPS: No bookings will be accepted prior to the date shown, all tickets must be paid for within seven days of booking or at the time of booking if this is within seven days of the trip and no refunds will be considered unless the ticket can be re-sold to someone on a waiting list or if the trip is cancelled by GTI due to lack of numbers or adverse weather conditions.

In these difficult financial times GTI will continue to strive to meet the needs of the Community in

relation to transport issues, but any comments or suggestions you have will be welcomed by your Committee – Bob Peace (Chair), Brian Edgar, Ann McLaughlin, Roy Hooker, Steve Davies, Jon Nimmo and Keith Cooper (Administrator).

I hope you all enjoy another good year using our minibuses - please remember the drivers are mainly volunteers who last year gave up over 1,000 hours of their time to fulfil many obligations that we have – many thanks to all of them and to all those of you who continually support GTI and have made it one of the best Transport Initiatives in South West Scotland.

Keith A Cooper, GTI Administrator

GTI Administrator Keith Cooper

A Good Catch for Dalry

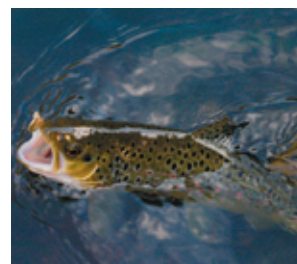
The new season starts on Thursday 15 March and it is hoped that Carsfad will be stocked before it begins.

After the AGM, which was better attended than usual, we were able to form a Committee and a

new Treasurer kindly agreed to take office.

We hope that our past problems are over and look forward to a good season. To Anglers everywhere - tight lines.

Barbara Johnson



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School Festivities

In the lead up to the Christmas holidays the Glenkens Schools were in a flurry of activity.

On Friday 9 December, Dalry School held their annual Coffee Morning. Stalls included, baking, bric-a-brac, raffle, Christmas Crafts and lots of games. A total of £609 was raised and the school would like to say thank you to everyone that helped make the day a success.

On Thursday 15 December, Dalry School held their Christmas Concert. Performances included

P4/5/6/7 singing the opening song 'Christmas Has Started', and then songs about Christmas in Victorian times and how this is different from the Christmas today.

The Nursery and P1/2/3 performed the Christmas show 'Whoops-a-Daisy Angel', which was a story about an angel who always got things wrong, until the day she was given the job of telling people about the birth of Jesus. There were also musical performances from the Secondary classes too.

Christmas parties were held on Monday 19 December, and the Primary children had a special visitor - Santa came along and the boys and girls were very lucky as Santa had a present for everyone.

To end the term, children from the three Glenkens schools - Carsphairn, Dalry and Kells - came together at Dalry Church for their Christmas service. All the children, staff and parents returned to Dalry School for hot chocolate and shortbread.



The Nursery performance of 'Whoops-a-Daisy Angel'




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90th Anniversary for New Galloway Rural

Founded in 1921, New Galloway Rural was one of the earliest Institutes in the Stewartry, gathering a large membership from the Glenkens area.

In December its 90th Anniversary was celebrated, with a Lunch Party in New Galloway Town Hall. We were honoured that the National Chairman, Mrs Isobel Robertson, and the Federation Chairman, Mrs Rita Riddick, were both able to be present along with former members and guests from neighbouring Institutes.

Now that people are returning to craft work and economical ways there is plenty to learn at Rural meetings. There are opportunities to join in with Stewartry Federation events such as craft classes, sporting competitions, walks, outings and public speaking. Organising and running meetings also provides an opportunity for those who wish to keep up their office skills or maintain their

confidence during a break from work.

New Galloway Rural meets on the third Wednesday of the month, except July and August, and details of meetings are posted in the shop. The new syllabus starts with a Burns Lunch to be followed in February and March by talks about bee-keeping and travel.

Visitors and potential members are welcome - please ring Jenny on 420235 for more information.

Cutting the cake at the Anniversary celebration - from left to right, Mrs Isobel Robertson, Mrs Primrose Morrison and Mrs Rita Riddick.



Glenkens Sofa Sessions

The CatStrand Café has a whole new feel, with comfy sofas, carpet and a brand new fancy coffee machine! And to celebrate, for February if you buy a coffee you get a free piece of home-made shortbread. Why not try a latte macchiato or a frothy cappuccino... Catering Manager Eileen Edgar says: "Why not come along and read the Gazette while you're enjoying a coffee!"

In celebration of the chilled-out atmosphere, and good coffee, the CatStrand Café will be hosting Glenkens Acoustic Sessions once a month. On the last Sunday of the month, from 2-4pm, local musicians can come along and showcase their work, have a jam, and just generally enjoy playing live music in a friendly setting. So come along and soak up some great local music! The first Session will be Sunday 26th February. See you there!



Community Exhibition Boards

10 bespoke exhibition boards, suitable for displaying framed artwork are available to borrow free of charge for community use.

The boards are 4 x 8 foot, freestanding and painted white.

The boards were purchased for the community through the Leader Day of the Region Project.

There is no charge for hiring the boards but you may have to arrange transport.

For more information or to book them please contact the CatStrand 01644 420 374 or info@catstrand.com

STEWARTRY SNAPPERS IN THE GLENKENS

The Stewartry Camera Club's 'Nature Competition' was judged by photographer Keith Kirk.

Three Glenkens residents had successful results;: In Group 1, John Houfe came second with 'Stormy Weather', in Group 2, Karen Kubran came first with 'A Winter's Morn' and fourth with 'Bloomin' Marvellous', and John Repath was second with 'Exmoor Oaks'.

The Club's 'Panel Competition' was judged by Allan Wright. Members had enjoyed an evening visit to Allan's Parton Gallery in October when they watched his audio-visual show and listened to his talk 'Approaches to Photography'. This was rounded off by Lorna's delicious home-baking whilst viewing

the gallery. Allan is a well known and respected professional photographer from the area and his views were welcomed by members. Glenkens winners were John Repath in second place with 'Sloely Does It', and Mary McIlvenna in fifth place with 'Flower Tutti-Frutti'.



'A Winter's Morn' by Karen Kubran

AGNES COOKS...HAGGIS

Welcome to our new feature 'Agnes Cooks', written by local award-winning cook Agnes Holden. In this issue, Agnes will be cooking something truly Scottish...

I am writing this in early January although I am aware that you are reading it in February / March. The idea of this column is to look at seasonal food and suggest a few ideas. I have decided to use haggis for this edition. Although, strictly speaking it is not "seasonal" I am surrounded by it at the moment and it is available all year round. Love it or hate it, it is Scottish winter fare!

The first recipe is a supper dish which can be increased or decreased depending on the quantity of people you are feeding and the size of your haggis! The second recipe is good as a nibble with drinks and as a wee taster for those who are trying haggis for the first time. Both recipes can be made using a meaty or vegetarian haggis.

Haggis Shepherd's Pie

1 Haggis

Tin of red kidney beans (or other - chick peas are good too)

Approx 500ml beef or vegetable stock

Packet of spinach (about 300g)

Quantity of mashed potatoes

Finely grated cheese (cheddar, parmesan or a combination of any hard cheese)

Take the haggis from its casing and put into a small casserole dish. Mash down with a fork and spread over the dish (*you can put the haggis into the microwave for a minute or so and it will soften enough to mash - but make sure it is out of its casing first or it will explode!*) Drain and rinse the beans and mix into the haggis. Add the stock and stir through. Wash and drain the spinach and put into a pot with no added water. Put onto the heat to soften - you want to take the "bounce" out of the spinach but not actually cook it. Take it from the heat and spread over the haggis. Top with the mashed potatoes and sprinkle over the



cheese. Put into the oven 190C /mark 7 for about 40 mins and nicely toasted on top. Larger quantities will take longer so you might want to loosely cover with foil if it is getting too brown on top.

Haggis Puffs

Roll out a sheet of puff pastry and using a 6/7cm round cutter cut out circles. Put a teaspoonful of haggis on each round and top with a little mango chutney (other chutneys work well too). Brush the edges with a little water and fold one half over to make a semi circle. Crimp the edges with a fork and brush the tops with a little beaten egg. Make a small slit in the top of each and cook for about 12 mins at 200C / mark 6. As with all haggis these need to be eaten hot. They can be cooked in advance and frozen. Just defrost and reheat when needed.

PANCAKE LUNCH 2012

Balmaclellan and Kells Guild will be holding their 15th Pancake Lunch on Shrove Tuesday 21 February, in New Galloway Town Hall from 12 noon to 2pm.

This has become a very popular event in New Galloway over the

years and a different charity has been chosen to benefit each year.

This year it is to be The British Heart Foundation (BHF). Please come along for your pancakes and support this charity.

At the Guild meeting the

following month, on Wednesday 14 March, a speaker from the BHF will be coming to receive a cheque and to give a talk about their work. This will be an open meeting for anyone who is interested in this vital work.

Joan Walker, Balmaclellan & Kells Guild

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07834 321789

Piano Success for 2011

Zarah Groves, local piano teacher, would like to congratulate her pupils for their achievements in 2011.

"This was a brilliant year for the talented young pianists in the Glenkens, with some fabulous results in the Associated Board of Royal Schools of Music piano exams.

"Some examples are Emily Jones who passed Grade 3 with a Merit, and Kirsten Wallace who passed Grade 4 only one term after

passing Grade 3, and Lowena Lindsey who passed Grade 6 Theory, which is a particularly difficult exam that hardly anyone takes."

I'm afraid there just isn't space to include all the names of pupils and their achievements, but Zarah did mention everyone, so don't feel left out if you don't see your name. Zarah goes on to say:

"I would like to congratulate all my talented and extremely hard-working pupils. Anyone who has ever tried to learn to play an instrument knows how difficult it is, that it requires a great deal of dedication and practice.

"And passing these exams is difficult - they require a very high level of performance standard and to be able to cope with the nerves that are associated with performing in front of a stranger on an unfamiliar piano.

"So, I would like to say to all my wonderful pupils a very big 'Well Done' and all the best for more successes in 2012."

If you would like to get in touch with Zarah, you can call her on 01644 460636.



Pupil Bronnen

New Year, New You!

Some tips from local Nutritionist & Dietician Lorna Willock:

1. Eat plenty of vitamin C to keep those winter viruses at bay.
2. Include more zinc in your diet - it is an essential mineral for our immune health. High sources are shellfish, seeds, lean meat and nuts.
3. Look for a supplement containing immune boosting foods such as elderberries.
4. At social events you could carry a tissue with a few drops of tea tree and eucalyptus essential oils to kill some airborne bacteria and viruses responsible for colds & flu.
5. Keep stress levels down; stress greatly undermines our immune health making us vulnerable to illness.
6. Try and to add in some extra exercise - go walking or hill climbing - take advantage of living in this lovely area!

For further health information see www.foods4life.co.uk or call Lorna on 470 218.

SPINDLES - a quirky, humorous fictional story written by Gordon and Geoff Hill. Below is a short excerpt...more to follow in future issues.

A new type of book has been developed by an inventor in the Glenkens. It's an electronic intelligent book that tried to behave more like a real book but that also gives you lots of help when you need it. Local voices can read it to you if you wish. Amongst others you can chose Romantic Rosalind for a cosy approach, the Professor for an academic angle, the Minister for a serious approach or Rainy Day Roland for a weather forecaster's structured take. I went across to their office to see how the early customers were getting on with their intelligent books and listened in to some telephone calls:

"Spindles Electronic Bookshop. Good morning"

"Do you have a copy of 'Pride and Prejudice'?"

Click click Tum- tum -tumpty -tum- "Yes, here we are. One copy in stock but it's got a flat battery. We'll have to charge it before we send it out. We'll do that when War and Peace has been topped up. Should be with you Thursday, sir. Would you like it

Moroccan covered or plastic? We always think the leather looks better on the shelf."

"Yes, the leather please."

"And who would you like to read it to you? Options on this one are Amorous Amanda, Serious Sydney or Romantic Rosalind."

"Rosalind. She was really cool with Wuthering Heights. Just the right inflection for Heathcliffe."

"We'll slot her in for you then."

"Thanks. Bye."

"Spindles Electronic Bookshop. Good morning"

"Hello. Can you help me?"

"We aim to please. What's the problem?"

"I've dropped a glass of vodka on the book and now the reader is slurred and he laughs at all the jokes. I'm supposed to do the laughing."

"It's the new absorbent chips they use now. It makes the speech smoother. Alcohol isn't good for them. We'll probably have to replace the old one and send it off for rehab."

"Will that cure the stutter?"

"Ah, you've got one of those have you? I'm afraid that's one of Intrel's little jokes. One book in a thousand gets a speech defect. The last one lisped badly and there was one that put an expletive at the beginning of every paragraph. Unfortunately, he was reading Wind In The Bloody Willows. Bring it in and we'll give it some therapy."

"O.K. Bye."

"Spindles Electronic Bookshop. Good morning"

"My cookery book doesn't smell right."

"Perhaps you've left the virtual fridge door open?"

"No. I look up sausages and get the smell for marmalade and when I turn to the recipe for chicken curry, I get burned toast. My reader says it makes him feel nauseous and he's threatened to shut down and throw up."

"You've obviously got the wrong smell module installed. Bring it in and we'll change it for you."

"I'll do that. Bye."

Alexander Gordon Memorial Stone

In last year's April/May issue of the Gazette, the idea was floated of erecting a memorial stone to the noted Covenanter Alexander Gordon of Earlstoun in Dalry churchyard.

It was mentioned how he survived the times of persecution and was buried in Dalry churchyard in 1726, but no stone ever raised over his grave.

I mentioned how his grandson had prepared an inscription and poem for such a stone (the words of which are preserved in the Gordon papers in the Ewart Library, Dumfries), but lack of money had prevented him from fulfilling his plans.

It was most encouraging to see the way local people rallied round this project and the stone was erected in November.

On Sunday 27 November a service was held in Dalry Church, followed by the dedication of the memorial stone and the unveiling of a plaque on the Gordons of Earlstoun, which is attached to Dalry Session House alongside the stone.

The stone was funded by a generous grant of £1200 from the Scottish Covenanter Memorials Association, by a grant of £500 from Dalry Community Council (drawing on a bequest from Miss Jean Gibson, who always took an interest in the history of the Glenkens) and by donations

from many local individuals.

Thanks are also due to Russell Brooks of Ayrshire Memorials for producing the stone for a considerably reduced price. A grant of £500 from the Galloway Association of Glasgow largely covered the cost of the plaque.

We are sure Sir John Gordon would be delighted with the memorial to his grandfather, inscribed with his own words. Now some 240 years after he failed to realise his own plans we have raised a memorial to a valiant man who lived through those troubled times. It is hoped the stone and plaque will form a focal point for the proposed Glenkens Covenanter trail.

David Bartholomew

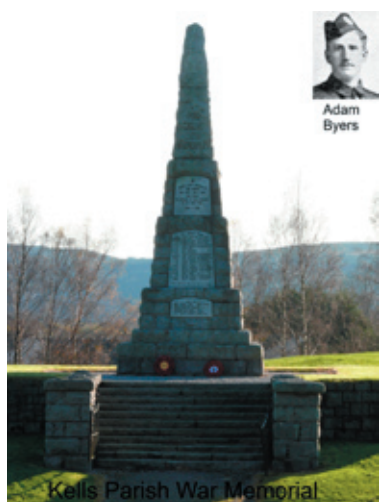
Kells Parish War Memorial

There are twenty four war memorials in the Glenkens but the memorial to the men of Kells Parish in the burgh of New Galloway, at a height of twenty five feet, is certainly the largest.

The site in the Showfield was gifted by the tutors of John Seaforth Maitland Gordon of Kenmure (his father had died previously and he was only twelve years old himself). The monument is made of granite from the Burnfoot quarries on the Kenmure Estate and the symbol at the top of the memorial is a Chi Rho, one of the earliest Christian symbols which was brought to Galloway by Saint Ninian.

The memorial was built by Messrs Murray and McCubbing of New Galloway from an original design by Captain J W Dods VD. It was unveiled by Vice Admiral Sir A J Henniker-Heughan Bart CB RN of Airds on Sunday 23 April 1922, and custody was accepted by Provost Cowan on behalf of the Town and Parish councils.

The memorial is a well known local landmark and is still used for the service of Remembrance every November. It is also a familiar backdrop for the annual Alternative Games.



If you know about someone who is listed on a memorial then it helps to understand the importance of it so I would like to tell you about one of those listed on this memorial.

Lance Sergeant Adam Byers was the son of a shepherd, born in Kells parish, and was the oldest son of William and Sarah Byers. Although they had originally lived in Glenshimmeroch near Lochinvar, they had moved

to Craigenbay near Clatteringshaws by the time war broke out. His father had already died so he left behind a widowed mother, younger brother and two sisters when he enlisted just six weeks after the start of the war. He left behind his job as a gamekeeper at Dunveoch farm in the Garroch Glen.

We actually know much more about Adam from his service records; he had blue eyes, two vaccination marks on his left arm and he was once reprimanded for appearing for guard duty without having shaved. One day in September 1915 at the battle of Loos, over five hundred men of the Battalion were killed wounded or missing in a single day (over half the men). Adam Byers survived. By April 1916 he was in the trenches near the Hohenzollern Redoubt and an extract from the Battalion war diary of this period relates:

"...the rain came down in torrents and continued incessantly for forty hours. It is very difficult to imagine the misery and discomfort which the men suffered. The so-called trenches were full of water up to the men's knees. It was almost impossible for the ration or water parties to get up or down. During the second afternoon of this downpour, the German artillery hit our front line."

Adam Byers survived all this, so it was ironic, therefore, that on 28 May 1916 he was the only man from his Battalion who was killed whilst on a wiring patrol, when he was hit by a trench mortar. Like many others, his body was never found so he has no grave, but his name is inscribed on the wall of the memorial at Loos.

That is how a tragedy can affect one family and if we look at the four men named McCheyne, they were all brothers – what the rest of their family must have suffered is virtually unknown in modern times.

If you would like to know more about this memorial or any other memorials in Dumfries & Galloway, please check out the Scottish War Memorial project at <http://tinyurl.com/39u8g8>. If you have information that you would like to share about anyone listed on this memorial or you have any photographs of those listed, please contact Paul Goodwin on 07973 174342 or memorials@paulgoodwin.me.uk. And the next time you pass a war memorial, please stop and read a name...and pause for thought.

Paul Goodwin

LOCAL HISTORY with TED COWAN

The Glenkens Railway



Today a newspaper headline proclaiming ‘Glenkens Derailment’ is much more likely to be associated with some snag in local planning permission rather than the great age of railways.

The Portpatrick Railway first ran through Glenkens in March 1861, generating an almost unprecedented spirit of optimism concerning future economic benefits and the end of Galloway’s isolation. It was killed off in June 1965 due to a combination of public apathy and the lethal lack of foresight displayed by the Tory government acting on the recommendations of ‘Butcher’ Beeching, chairman of the British Railways Board.

The railway followed the construction of the Dumfries-Castle Douglas line, inspiring a number of landowners and business interests in Wigtownshire to campaign for an extension to Portpatrick and thus Ireland. As a result most of the finance for western expansion was raised through local efforts, a source of great Galloway pride.

The rails entered Glenkens at Crossmichael running up the lochside to Parton, crossing the Loch Ken Viaduct (pictured) to Mossdale or New Galloway station, where navvies erected their huts during construction, and then headed into the hills by way of Stroan Viaduct and the roadless country around lonely Loch Skerrow. Between there and Gatehouse station, according to C H Dick, the savagery of scenery caused some travellers to ‘shudder at the recollection’!

Malcolm Harper had a poem in which an auld wife ‘saw a train come cross the Dee,/ Oh! What a woners thing said she’. The Loch Ken Viaduct, at the ferry crossing of Boat of Rhone, built at a cost of £12,288 and 13 shillings (around £600,000 today) was regarded then, as now, as one of the finest features on the entire railway. A proposal to provide a road alongside the rails was rejected. The three 130 foot spans are supported by two piers consisting of stone-clad iron cylinders sunk in 36 feet of water. However not all locals were impressed. In December 1861 a £20 reward was offered

for information about a large block of wood, which the Parton-bound train struck on the viaduct. A fish train from Stranraer derailed at Mossdale in 1913, and at 5am on 30 December 1935 the nightly ‘Paddy’, emerging from the west side of the bridge, lost seven of its coaches down the right-hand embankment. In the midst of the wreckage were very dazed postal sorters but no one was seriously hurt.

When the railway opened Mr Wellwood Maxwell of Glenlee hosted a public dinner in New Galloway; the burgh’s punchbowl was filled with toddy and the enterprise’s success toasted. Maxwell advocated the extension of the track to Dalry. A man of true vision he also proposed a line to Sanquhar as the most effective link to Edinburgh and Glasgow. In 1898 a light railway from New Galloway station to Dalmellington was discussed, to be briefly revived in 1918, but to no avail.



Loch Ken Viaduct looking west- © Padeapix

There can be no doubt that the railway, for a time, improved Galloway’s links with England and Ireland but it only marginally enhanced those with central Scotland. On the other hand the trains brought unprecedented numbers of visitors to Glenkens. Shooters and fishermen made for Loch Skerrow. Landowners were convinced trains transported additional poachers. On 12 August railway staff allegedly did well by contriving to have the earliest grouse, victims of overhead wires and possibly the trains too, on London tables. Children from Dromore and Skerrow took the train to school at Mossdale. Skerrow residents received remoteness payments and were allowed six tons a year of free coal. Additionally they were given weekly ‘market tickets’ for shopping in Castle Douglas. There was also a Wednesday-only service

between Castle Douglas

and New Galloway. Mail services certainly improved locally. Station-masters at Mossdale and Crossmichael were permitted to open post offices. Overall trains opened up additional markets for local agricultural produce and game.

Tourists were the major acquisition, inspired from the 1890s by the works of S R Crockett, among others. An Edinburgh hotelier took a lease of the hotel at Ken Bridge in anticipation of guests exploring an unknown part of Scotland, travelling on some of the three trains each way daily except Sunday. Carriers of goods and passengers also experienced considerable increase in business. The first motor charabanc was in service between Dalmellington and Dalry in 1912, later extended to New Galloway, but at 3 shillings and sixpence, one way, it was expensive. In the 1890s slower horse-drawn public conveyance was widely available, leaving from the Kenmure Arms and Cross Keys Hotel at 9am and 2.45pm, from the station at 10.01am and 3.29pm (note the precise timings!) Transport was also available for Dalry and Carsphairn. On Monday and Saturday there was a service from Balmacellan (via Ironmacannie) to Parton at 8.30am.

H D Thorne in his thorough study *Rails to Portpatrick* (2nd ed. 2005) laments the description of the Loch Ken Viaduct as ‘a very rickety old bridge’. Now in private ownership it is reportedly not so decrepit as to be impassable to Land Rovers during the shooting season but the most iconic structure of Glenkens’ modest railway era is not improving with age. While fully aware of the difficulties involved, might it be suggested that, somewhat restored, it would make a wonderful walking and cycle route, as well as a monument to past local aspirations. The failure to develop the Glenkens railway northwards was every bit as disastrous as its closure. The partial re-opening of the viaduct would indeed be a ‘wonders thing’. For some excellent photographs of the surviving railway architecture of the whole line see Martin Allen’s recent, *To Stranraer and Beyond the old railway from Dumfries to Portpatrick*.

Ted Cowan

GLENKENS DIARY...

FEBRUARY

Sun 5, Janice Galloway, 4pm, £7/5, CatStrand

Mon 6, Dalry Community Council Meeting, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall

Tue 8, Talk: Understanding Osteoporosis, 1-3pm, free, CatStrand

runs to Fri 10, Exhibition: Dalry School, CatStrand

Mon 12, New Galloway & Kells Community Council Meeting, 7.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall

Wed 15 Feb – Wed 28 March, Exhibition: Andrew Adair & Gwen Adair, CatStrand

Thurs 16, Open Stage, 7pm, £3/2, CatStrand

Tue 21, Pancake Lunch, New Galloway Town Hall

Thurs 23, Film: We Need To Talk About Kevin, 7.30pm, £5/4, CatStrand

Sat 25, Lorna Reid's Jazz Cafe, 7.30pm, £10/8, CatStrand

Sun 26, Glenkens Acoustic Sessions, 2-4pm, CatStrand

Mon 27, Balmaclellan Community Council Meeting, 7.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Mon 27, Carsphairn Community Council Meeting, 7pm, Lagwyne Hall

MARCH

Fri 2, CatStrand Youth Players, 7.30pm, £5/3, CatStrand

Sat 3, Hitch and Crunch, 7.30pm, £10/8, CatStrand

Thurs 8, Bus Trip - Hobby Craft Exhibition: Glasgow

Wed 14, Balmaclellan & Kells Guild Talk

Thurs 15, Film: My Week With Marilyn, 7.30pm, £5/4, CatStrand

Thurs 15, fishing season starts

Sat 17, Méabh O'Hare, Pauline

Scanlon & Friends, 7.30pm, £10/8, CatStrand

Mon 19, Bus Trip - Scottish National Portrait Gallery: Edinburgh

Thurs 22, Workshop: Facebook, 10-12 noon, FREE, CatStrand

Thurs 22, Workshop: Staying in Touch (Skype), 1.30-3.30pm, £15, CatStrand

Thurs 22, Film: The Space Between, 7.30pm, £5/4, CatStrand

Thurs 29, Rua MacMillan Trio, 7.30pm, £10/8, CatStrand

Fri 30, The Dumb Waiter & The Lover, 7.30pm, £10/8, CatStrand

Sat 31, Colin Prior, 7.30pm, £6, CatStrand

Sat 31 March – Wed 30 May, Exhibition: Galloway Photography Collective, CatStrand

APRIL

Mon 2, Bus Trip - Edinburgh Zoo

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Sundays:

Balmaclellan: 12noon 1st, Carsphairn: 10.30am 1st

2nd 3rd 4th, Dalry: 12noon 1st 2nd 3rd 4th, Kells: 10.30am 2nd, 3rd 4th

Special Services/Events:

24 Feb, 7pm: Beetle Drive, Dalry Town Hall

2 March, 7pm: World Day of Prayer Service, St Margaret's Church, New Galloway

16 March, Church Ceilidh, Dalry Town Hall

Communion

Service: 26 Feb, 10.30am, Kells Church

11 March, 12 noon, Dalry Church

18 March, 10.15 am, Carsphairn Church

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH (C of E):

St Margaret's, New Galloway: Holy Communion - 10.30am every Sun & Wed

CATHOLIC CHURCH SERVICES:

Gatehouse of Fleet: Sat, 6pm. Kirkcudbright: Sun, 9.30am. Dalbeattie: Sun, 11am

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Fri: 11:15am - 1:15pm then 2 - 4.30pm

23 mobile library stops - to find out where and when call **430 234**

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

REGULAR EVENTS:

The CatStrand, New Galloway (01644 420 374):

Exercise to Music: Mon, 10-11am

Play it by Ear: Thurs during term time, 10-11am

Children's Dance Class: Mon during term time, 3.45-4pm, age 3-7

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, 7-8pm, £4, New Galloway Town Hall

Zumba: Wed: 8-9pm, New Galloway Town Hall, £4

Gentle Yoga & Relaxation: Thurs, 10-11.15am

Sing it Out: Thurs, 11.30am-12.30pm

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

Family Film Club: 1st Sat each month, 11am, £20/£10 membership

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

Catstrand Youth Players: Sun during term time, 2pm

Glenkens Community Centre (Dalry):

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

Paint & Art: Mon, 1.30-4.30pm & Wed, 7-9pm

Ballroom & Latin Dance drop-in: 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

Thursday Craft Group: starts again Thurs 20 Oct, 2-4pm

Brownies: Wed, 5.30-6.45pm

Guides: Tue during term-time, 6.15pm, contact: Kath 430 281

Various Locations:

Scouts: Mon, 7-8.30pm,

New Galloway Scout Hut

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

Beavers: Tues, 6-7.15pm, New Galloway Scout Hut

Dog Training: Tue, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall. Not on 27 Dec or 17 Jan. Contact 460 670

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.

Advice Surgeries with Alex Fergusson MSP, 2nd Friday of the month from 5pm, contact: 0800 028 7260

Lions Club monthly quiz: alternating between The CatStrand & Lochinvar Hotel, contact - Andrew Frew, 01644 420 323



FORREST FIREWOOD

01644 430 230

In the Bag for Glenkens Guides

After 50 years, the 1st Glenkens Guides Unit is still going strong.

The unit was first registered in January 1961, which just shows that being a Guide can still offer girls an interesting and up-to-date programme with plenty of challenges.

At the moment our Unit is quite small, but the enthusiasm of the



Guides is shown in what they achieve. In this past year they were proud to have won the Girlguiding Stewartry County Challenge Shield, competed for by many patrols in the County. Their self-chosen programme also included such things as a patrol sleepover, a 'Traditions of Guiding' day which involved outdoor cookery and various outdoor skills, kayaking on Loch Ken whilst working for 'Go-For-It-with-a-Splash', and a longer-term project which resulted in gaining their Music Group badge.

Now, well into 2012, they have an ambitious fund-raising project on the go for which they are appealing for your support.

The project is entitled Bonanza Bags and aims to raise funds for the SSPCC 'Children First' charity, and for their own Unit

activities, through selling bags made from recycled materials.

If you have any old fabrics, suitable items of unwanted clothing, trims, cotton thread, buttons, zips, etc, these can be passed on to any Guide or to Unit Guide Leaders Mrs Kathryn Peace (01644 430281) or Mrs Sarah McAdam (01644 430393).

We hope to be able to sell bags by word of mouth and by having stalls at various venues - but first of all we have to get plenty made! So if you can support 1st Glenkens Guides by donating fabric or buying bags it would be much appreciated.

Mrs Peace and Mrs McAdam would also be delighted to be contacted by anyone who would like more information about joining the Guides, the minimum age for which is 10 years.

FUEL ROUND THE CLOCK

Dalry now has a 24 hour fuel forecourt - but this isn't the first time fuel has been available at all hours from The Garage...

Over 30 years ago, Dalry was one of the first fuel stations in the south of Scotland to have a 24 hour forecourt. In the mid-seventies Willie Bone 'senior' introduced a new concept at the time; a 50-pence coin operated pump. This installation allowed fuel sales around the clock. However, once fuel went over a £1 per gallon, this service became extinct due to a law which stated the minimum sales of motor spirit was half of a gallon!

Another first was when Willie 'senior' introduced lead-free petrol in the late 80's, and Dalry was one of the first forecourts in Dumfries & Galloway retailing the then new unleaded petrol.

Now, following in his father's tradition, William Bone has installed the 21st Century answer to round-the-clock fuel retailing, with the first un-manned forecourt in the Stewartry.

The main aim of the project was to end up with a modern fuel forecourt and also to be one of the top rural sites in Scotland. Hopefully, further 'firsts' will continue to take place in the future - watch this space!

W BONE

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Submit events, activities, news stories, cartoons, reviews, tips & techniques, fiction, photos, ads or ideas... Contact Sarah Ade on 07727 127 997 or glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk

APRIL/MAY COPY DEADLINE: Fri 9 March



Design & co-ordination:

Sarah Ade
sarah_ade@tiscali.co.uk

Printing: Stranraer & Wigtownshire Free Press
www.stranraer-freepress.co.uk