

GLENKENS GAZETTE

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

October/November 2015

ISSUE 90

FREE

PYLON EYESORE THREAT

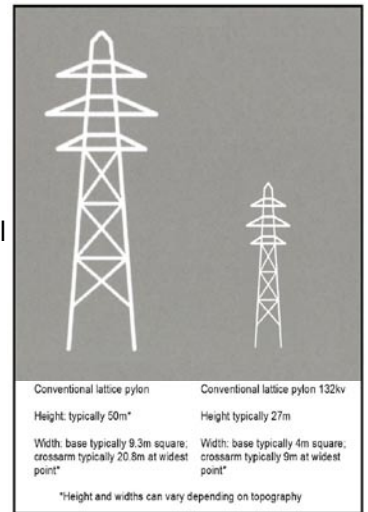
The electricity pylon system in Dumfries & Galloway is going to be upgraded. And Dalry is set to be in the middle of the new electricity super-highway.

SP Energy Networks (SPEN), formerly Scottish Power, state on their website that they are: "...making a significant investment in the Dumfries & Galloway area with the proposed modernisation and extension of the electricity transmission system. The existing 132kV system has not changed since it was built in the 1930s. Although it has served communities well for over 70 years, significant developments have taken place since then and needs of its different users have changed...It is estimated that the project will be completed in 2023."

Alan Jones is an expert in the field of electricity. As a chartered electrical engineer with a wealth of

hands-on employment experience with high voltage systems as well as working on his PhD in energy efficient business practices for rural businesses, Alan does not feel that SPENs plans will benefit our region, least of all the Glenkens. He says; "The potential impacts can be described as the biggest thing to affect the region in the last century. The area will be blighted as the visual amenity value, that attracts so many tourists (over 2m last year), will be destroyed with 170km of up to 50m high pylons every 300m apart straddling the region."

Continued on p12...



Is the Eurasian Lynx Set to Return to our Galloway Forests?

The Galloway Forest Park is being considered as a potential site for a trial project to re-introduce the Eurasian lynx to the UK.

These animals were last seen on our island 1,300 years ago, but soon we may see them roaming our forests, hills and glens once more.

Having recently conducted a public survey of over 9,000 people, over half of whom are from rural areas, Lynx UK Trust feel confident that the public is supportive of this move with a staggering 91% of participants in favour of the re-introduction.

Various locations across the UK are being considered as test sites, but the Forest Park seems like a favourite with Lynx UK Trust stating that Dumfries and Galloway was "wonderfully placed" to benefit from the reintroduction of the Eurasian Lynx, and going on to highlight that it could be worth millions of pounds to the local economy.

Steve Piper of Lynx UK Trust said; "Galloway is an area we were always looking at because it has a lot going for it in terms of reintroducing an animal like lynx; lots of remote forestry and plenty

of deer. We're currently looking at a number of sites in the area which we hope can act as trial reintroduction sites for a small number of lynx. Approximately four to six animals would be released to start with and closely monitored over several years to see how they fit in."

Continued on p9...



Eurasian Lynx © Erwin Van Maanen.

Sad News for Watson Birds

As announced some time ago, the Glenkens Community and Arts Trust (GCAT) and the Pamela Young Trust (PYT) purchased 'Barone' in Main Street, Dalry.

The house was bought from the Watson family as a basis for the Watson Bird Centre to be run by GCAT and social housing to be provided by the PYT. Sadly, it has proved to be impossible

to find the necessary funding to enable the proposed bird centre project to proceed in the form envisaged. Therefore, with great regret, GCAT trustees, with the support of the Watson Birds director and the PYT, have decided to place Barone on the market. We have undertaken lots of number-crunching to test the financial viability of every conceivable option but have had to conclude that we cannot make the proposition of half of the house as the Watson Bird Centre viable. However, all is not

lost as we will retain a sizeable strip of land on the up-street side with the possibility of a nature garden and trails and at a later date a small bird centre. In the meantime, we will ensure that the archive on long-term loan from the Watson family is properly stored. In addition, and as part of the developing ideas for the CatStrand, there is the possibility of new development which would include a gallery and archive areas for the Watson project.

Roger Crofts

Chair with a View

It is a particularly busy time just now for members of Dalry Community Council, and must also be for other such councillors across the region.

For those who are not aware, at the time of the Gazette going to press nominations are being made for Community Councillor elections in October. Luckily for Dalry, whilst we will be losing one member, several new ones are stepping forward to join us and share the ever-increasing workload. This will hopefully bring us up to full strength with twelve councillors. For some other Stewartry CC's it's sadly a period of struggle to meet their minimum numbers or face dissolution. It is work that is neither paid nor glamorous, but vitally important in representing your community not only in local matters but to Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Scottish Government.

To add to this stress, the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland is proposing to make radical changes to our existing Ward boundaries which would mean losing Castle Douglas and gaining Kirkcudbright just to try and balance the population density figures! It makes you wonder if they have nothing better to do with their day than upset applegarts?

The 'Strategic Reinforcement Project' (read: huge pylons and new sub-stations) currently proposed by Scottish Power Energy

Networks (SPEN) will be the biggest development to affect our region since the hydro scheme of the 1930s. The news that the hub of this operation will sit just outside Dalry is a major cause for concern as to how it will impact on our rural community. The initial consultation has now closed and we nervously await the findings.

As a 'side line', the local wind farm connector for Loch Urr is also in the consultation stage which will add an additional 'wooden pole' link across our region. Whilst relatively discreet compared to steel lattice pylons, it will only add to the feeling that we are living in the middle of a spiders-web of power lines.

Dalry CC recently completed a Community Survey to gauge local opinion on some important current issues. We would have liked to have asked a lot more questions but felt people might have been put off by a thick booklet!

The full results are displayed on our CC notice board, and some highlights are shown below.

People who said they would use 'superfast' broadband was a large majority; hopefully it soon will be a reality - the new green cabinets are already installed by the exchange in Dalry and are now just awaiting connection.

Support for Dalry village becoming a 20mph zone in part or full was about 2:1 in favour. This is something that will take some time to achieve as there are many hoops to jump through. We will hold further public consultations on this issue before the final decision is made.

The villages approval for obtaining the former Council Depot behind the Town Hall and having a Community Recycling Facility there was approved by about 9:1 in favour. We will progress this as quickly as we can; again there are several hoops to jump through first.

Housing of our Community Defibrillator on the outside of Dalry Library was virtually unanimous and D & G Council have now given approval for this to go ahead.

Library use was better than we expected at nearly 60%. Suggestions of ways to encourage more use were mixed, but using volunteers to increase opening hours is an avenue we plan to explore further with the Library Service.

Public Transport use was the most disappointing, but there was 2:1 support for the Glenkens to run its own bus service. D & G Council are currently looking into new ways of delivering a reliable rural transport network, so I think all possibilities are open to discussion.

Awareness of Dalry CC and its activities was pretty positive at over 2:1 - however, we need to do more to make it nearer 100%. We represent the start of the democratic process; not exactly ripping stuff, but the more who get involved in what goes on locally, the more we can achieve.

The Glenkens Clubs and Societies Fair in September was well-attended. An accompanying high-quality *Directory* was also given out free and some copies of this invaluable guide are still available.

Some think that a rural life is a quiet one; certainly not from where I'm sitting! *Andi Holmes, Chair Dalry Community Council*

Glenkens Community Centre

The plans to purchase the Glenkens Community Centre in Dalry for the community are continuing well, with a significant milestone recently passed.

The business plan was submitted to Dumfries and Galloway Council Officers in spring 2015 and then a report was submitted to the Stewartry Area Committee in late July. They recommended that the building should be sold to the Centre Management Committee for the nominal sum of £1. The sale was then agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee in late September and it is hoped that it will take place before the end of the year. Very positive feedback was received from the Stewartry Area Committee about the quality of the business plan and the work done by the Management Committee in getting to this stage, which was excellent to hear.

The Glenkens Community Centre will be purchased by the Dalry Community

Properties Trust (DCPT), a new SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) which is currently in the process of being ratified by OSCR. When this is complete, the first step will be to recruit more Trustees, so if you live in Dalry and would like to be involved in this exciting new phase of community ownership, do get in touch.

The Glenkens Community Centre is being spruced-up in anticipation of the handover – DGC has replaced rotting windows and painted all of the exterior paintwork, which is very much appreciated. The Management Committee has had the curtains cleaned and re-hung and are planning to replace some of the carpets shortly. With a grant from the Glenkens Community Shop, we will buy a floor polisher to bring the main hall floor back up to standard.

All in all, it's exciting times at the Centre, and the Management Committee would like to thank everyone involved for giving so generously of their time and expertise.

*Helen Keron, Chair,
Glenkens Community Centre
Management Committee*

NEW GALLOWAY TOWN HALL

A programme of activities and events suggested at last year's Open Days is being put together.

These include badminton, table tennis, indoor boules, sports for youngsters, a lunch club for the elderly, local history and gardening groups as well as regular discos and ceilidhs.

These will be open to all residents of New Galloway, the Glenkens and further afield as

well as visitors to the area.

Following the successful makeover of the Lower Hall last year, a working party of volunteers is planning, with Council approval, to do the same upstairs.

A business plan for New Galloway Town Hall has been submitted to Dumfries & Galloway Council. This has been requested from the Council to show that transfer to the local community can be sustainable.

*Ros Hill, 01644 420632
ros.hill@rathanhouse.me.uk*

What happens when a community takes over?

The South West Association of Nature Conservation (SWANC) winter season of talks and discussion opens with 'Land Reform in Assynt - some impacts of our community buyouts'.

Bill Ritchie and Mandy Haggith will talk about how the community buy-outs have changed things in Assynt. What happens when a community takes over land and other resources? Can community ownership and organisation help develop a sustainable, regenerated landscape while supporting its human population?

Bill helped initiate the crofters' buy-out in 1992 and the Assynt Foundation buy-out in 2005 and Bill and Mandy have both been involved in other community acquisitions. They will discuss some of the challenges and opportunities presented over the last 23 years. Has the landscape changed? Has life in Assynt changed?

**Thursday 22
October, 7.30pm, at
the Ken Bridge Hotel,
New Galloway.
Open to all.**

Glenkens Freecycle

sponsored by natural power



EVERYTHING listed in the Glenkens Freecycle section is FREE - you just need to contact the owner and go and pick it up! If you would like to list something on this page, please get in touch with Sarah on 07727 127 997 or email glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk

VARIOUS

Vick's CleanAir air purifier, virtually unused. Contact: 430 380

2 single mattresses, smoke and pet free home, very good condition but were cheap to start with; good for kids first mattress; not so comfy for grown-ups! Contact: 420 656

Single bed and mattress with truckle bed/mattress underneath. Contact: 430 218.

White veneered fibreboard chest of drawers. Contact: 430 218

300W uplighter - gold finish. Contact: Gerry on 420852

Instant Abbs exercise machine. Contact: Gerry on 420852

Printer - Epsom Stylus CX6600, working order with 3 new colour cartridges and instruction book. Contact: Joan on 07769 730 553

Family history: five lever arch files, volumes 1 to 5 of BBC *Who Do You Think You Are* publications and three lever arch files of *Your Family History* magazines. Contact: Ann on 420 445 before 6.30pm

Large grey/brown velour-covered armchair. Contact: 450 552

Mahogany display cabinet, glass-fronted, 51" high, 15" deep, 48" wide, good condition. Contact: 07880 728528

Bathroom washbasin complete with taps. Contact: 450 552

Dark wood sideboard. Decorated carvings/pillars and shaped top bit. 4'9" tall, 1'9" side, 4' deep. Contact: 07727 127 997

GARDEN

Wood chip, ideal for garden paths etc. Bring own bag to fill. Contact: 430 218

Compost tumbler looking for a new home. Contact: Annikki on 460 640

Strawberry plants; surplus one and two-year-old plants which produce lots of fruit and runners for bringing on new plants (Dalry). Contact: Sue on 07563 718 011

Large builder's style wheelbarrow - good clean condition but tyre needs repair. Contact: 450 552

Do you need rotted horse manure

for your garden? Come and collect with bags or trailer (New Galloway). Contact: Sue on 07563 718 011

WANTED

Any excess/past-it garden fruit & veg. Too many apples/windfalls? Cabbages/lettuces gone to seed? Too many courgettes and the slugs have been at them? Then they would be perfect for our piggies! Please contact: Sarah on 07727 127 997

Wood burning stove. Contact: Simon on 07426 124 982

Wendy House, preferably wooden. For granddaughter's visits. Contact: marieonou@btinternet.com

Strong plastic beer crate for standing on. Contact: Sue on 07563 718 011

FOR SALE

'Celebrity' recliner chair - large size. This has only been used for eight weeks and is as new. Dual motor lift and tilt covered in a neutral fabric. Cost over £1,000. Offers invited. Contact: 07769 730 553

NEW GALLOWAY COMMUNITY SHOP PLANS PROGRESS TO THE NEXT STAGE

New Galloway Community Enterprises Ltd (NGCE) has successfully passed the first stage of its application to the Big Lottery *Growing Community Assets* for grant funding.

NGCE is a Community Benefit co-operative company and was formed in June this year with a mandate to create a community shop, self-catering tourist accommodation and low-rent office or workshop space in New Galloway. If successful,

the grant will be used to buy Hopkins Shop and the attached house and storerooms to achieve this aim.

The company was informed in mid September that their Stage One application had been successful and that the next stage therefore was to apply for development funding. This would then allow them to create a comprehensive business plan and Stage Two application for the full amount of funding.

As the Gazette goes to press, these further application forms have not yet been received, so the definitive timeline is not yet clear. However, the decision turnaround time for development funding is weeks

rather than months so, if successful, the company should be well on with the business case by the end of this year. At the same time, the company will be working up a Share Offer, to allow interested people to buy shares and show material support for the project. More details on this in due course.

The volunteers who are running this project would like to thank the community of New Galloway for its support so far, including especially Jim and Margaret Hopkins and the members of NGCE. If anyone would like to join the team, get in touch with Helen Keron on keronh@me.com - it is open to all New Galloway residents and all are welcome.

Eco Feature

sponsored by natural power



REUSE MATTERS

Below are just a few of the many positive reactions of visitors to the clothes swap event organised by *Reuse Matters* in Dalry this September.

"Fantastic - tank you. Loads of new things to wear!"

"Haven't enjoyed myself so much for ages - keep up the good work."

"Absolutely fantastic 'feel-good' factor. Met lovely, lovely people - got some fantastic clothes. Thank you with all my heart."

"Brilliant fun, got lots of lovely materials and was able to get completely carried away!"

"Fabulous - love it every time. Fantastic way to pass on clothes and also a great social afternoon with some lovely women. Thank you."

"Excellent idea, great FUN - thank you."

At the clothes swap, people were invited to donate their gently used, unwanted clothes and exchange them with others, free of charge. These clothes swaps (also known as 'swishing' parties or 'swap shops') first appeared in the 90s and are becoming more and more popular as a means to acquire good quality clothes for free in a fun atmosphere.

During the afternoon in Dalry 51

people came through the door, bringing in an impressive 162kg of good-quality clothes and accessories. At the end, after 2 1/2 hours of 'shopping', we were left with just 82kg - which means that 80kg of lovely clothes were taken home by their happy new owners.

As an extra treat, there was an up-cycling demonstration at the event, run by one of the project's excellent workshop leaders, Denise, who showed people how old clothes can be turned into something new and fun.

The project *Reuse Matters* aims to reduce textile waste ending up in landfill by re-using and up-cycling unwanted clothes and household textiles - an excellent way of saving energy and conserving the environment. (Up-cycling is the action of taking something that would normally be thrown away or recycled and turning it into something beautiful and useful.)

"The project idea was borne from the evidence of poor recycling rates in Scotland combined with Creetown Initiative's extensive experience in environmental/carbon reduction projects. Every year in Scotland, potentially re-usable textiles are sent straight to landfill. For

example 2,300 tonnes of jumpers and 1,600 tonnes of t-shirts," explains Kevin

Dodd, senior project officer at Creetown Initiative Ltd, from which the *Reuse Matters* project is run. The project hopes to collect five tonnes of textile in the area that covers DG6, 7 and 8 before March 2016. The left-over textile will be up-cycled and reused or donated to charity.

Over the course of the project there will also be up-cycling workshops, drop-in sessions for clothing repair and embellishment, basic sewing lessons and specialist textile techniques workshops in the mid-Dumfries & Galloway region - all for free. The workshops are run by experienced textile artists and are accessible for all ages and levels of sewing-experience. *Jolanda Bastein*

For details please check our facebook page (*Reuse Matters Creetown*) or contact us on jolanda.creetown@gmail.com or kevin.creetown@yahoo.co.uk or phone 01671 820654.

BE SMART WITH YOUR TEXTILES

REuse MatTERS

PLEASE DONATE YOUR UNWANTED AND UNUSED CLOTHES AND HOUSEHOLD TEXTILES TO BE UPCYCLED. (PLEASE MAKE SURE THEY ARE CLEAN!)

UPCYCLING IS THE ACTION OF TAKING SOMETHING THAT WOULD NORMALLY BE THROWN AWAY OR RECYCLED AND TURNING IT INTO SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL AND USEFUL

ACTIVITIES:

- FREE HOME COLLECTION OF TEXTILES: PLEASE PHONE TO ARRANGE A PICK-UP OF YOUR UNWANTED TEXTILES
- DROP-IN SESSIONS FOR CLOTHING REPAIRS AND EMBELLISHMENTS: SHARE TIPS AND SKILLS
- FREE UPCYCLING WORKSHOPS THROUGHOUT THE REGION: LEARNING TO MAKE SOMETHING ELSE OUT OF YOUR OLD T-SHIRT OR JEANS, MAKING CUSHIONS, BAGS ETC.

PLEASE CONTACT:
 KEVIN: KEVIN_CREETOWN@YAHOO.CO.UK
 JOLANDA: JOLANDA.CREETOWN@GMAIL.COM
 CREETOWN INITIATIVE, 54 ST JOHN STREET,
 CREETOWN, DG8 7JF
 01671 820654

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A LOCAL PROFILE: KATCH HOLMES TALKS ABOUT THE DROVING PROJECT

A multimedia exhibition celebrating the cattle droving history of the Glenkens is going on show at the Gracefield Arts Centre in Dumfries.

The creative producer of The Droving Project is Katch Holmes who also runs the Knockengoroch World Caeilidh Festival which is held on her parents' farm outside Carsphairn.

Katch explains: "The Droving Project started because I heard about the drovers, probably from my dad, and the routes that lie around Knockengoroch. I became fascinated about the fact that they made this long journey from Scotland to London with thousands of cattle and I thought what an amazing journey it would have

been and would still be. I was also interested in how different our relationship to animals was then - cows especially were Scotland's wealth and much of people's survival in the uplands depended upon their cattle."

Katch continues; "I realised that a journey to London with cows on foot was nigh on impossible and so pitched for a shorter walk in Dumfries and Galloway. We walked from Knockengoroch to Bellsbank with three cows, Alice Myers an award winning photographer, filmmaker Stevie Whiteford, Sound designer Pete Smith, fiddler Nick Jenkins, botanist Liam Kelly, writer Catrina Davies, a vet and two drovers.

The resulting work

made from the drove can be seen as part of an exhibition at Gracefield Arts Centre in Dumfries until 24 October 2015.

There will also be a day of curated talks about issues that the project raises on 3 October at Gracefield Arts Centre. The talks are free to attend but you need to book in advance by calling Gracefield Arts Centre on 01387 262 084. To find out more visit

www.thedrovingproject.org



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Kirkcudbright and Dumfries*

Support for CatStrand

St Margaret's Church Ladies Guild recently donated £500 to the CatStrand Flood Appeal following their successful tombola stall at the Alternative Games in August.

The photo below shows, from left to right, Jenny Repath, Christine Rankin and Jean Marsden from St Margaret's with Simon Davidson and Brian Edgar from the CatStrand.



CatStrand Update

The staff and volunteers of the CatStrand and GCAT are all most excited to be re-opening the doors of the CatStrand imminently.

It's been a long haul since the flood in January, but the GCAT team, together with the wider community, have really worked together to get the building repaired and open again, and it's now perhaps even better than before. Keep an eye out for the opening date in early October and come in to see the new look!

To mark this major milestone, the CatStrand is hosting a week-long festival to say 'Welcome Back' and 'Thank You' to all our friends and supporters - old and new. It's the *Home and Dry Festival* and it begins on Friday 23 October with *Launch Party for Friends & Patrons*. It then continues across that weekend with Canadian Ben Rogers & Edinburgh's The Jellyman's Daughter on Saturday night and Norfolk trio The Templewood Ensemble on the Sunday. There's plenty on in the week too with Rapture Theatre's *The Last Yankee* and the documentary movie *Amy*, and then it culminates on Sunday 1 Nov with Ricky Ross (Deacon Blue). And don't forget our Halloween party on Sat 31 October - plenty of scary fun for all the family, so get those costumes on and join us for face painting and a lantern parade from 6pm. For older children and those with a strong disposition there is the world premiere of the latest Halloween film *Aggy & the Fishbones*, produced by the award-winning CatStrand Young Film Makers. All the regular GCAT groups will be moving back to the CatStrand very soon, and we would like to thank all the many venues that have allowed them to continue throughout this year - New Galloway Town Hall,

Kells School, Dalry Town Hall, Glenkens Community Centre and Balmaclellan Village Hall to name a few. We have very much appreciated your community support over this difficult time. We would also like to thank Maybelle and Derek Thomson for their very generous loan of Rosebank Cottage throughout this period, which has allowed the CatStrand to carry on in spirit if not in the building! And lastly, we would like to thank all of the many people who have gone over and above in support of the CatStrand - without their efforts, we may never even have got to this stage.

On a more technical note, you may know that the board of directors of GCAT commissioned a flood risk assessment and topographical survey back in January in order to get a technical basis for any remedial works to minimise the risk of the flooding happening again. The results of these have

been shared with Dumfries & Galloway Council and the outcome is a shared project between GCAT and DGC to try and ensure that any future heavy rain stays in the existing waterways instead of building up and bursting in. In practical terms, this means that DGC has constructed a new headwall, trash screen and overflow across the CatStrand burn further upstream from the CatStrand building. A reinforced boundary wall will be built to the side of the

building and the S-shaped culvert that takes the CatStrand water under the building will be taken out and replaced with a straight culvert, in order to reduce back pressure. The CatStrand burn will continue on its original path under the building, exiting in to the park as before.

In addition, the CatStrand building now has portable flood defences that will be erected at every door in the event of a heavy rain forecast, and the door that burst open last time has been replaced with a glass wall. It is very much hoped and expected that the combination of these measures will keep the water within its planned confines, while making preparation for any overflow that may occur.

So thanks again to everyone who has helped, in so many ways, and welcome back to all who have missed us - we're home and dry at last!

The CatStrand Team



CatStrand
Cultural hub of the Glenkens
www.catstrand.com

VOLUNTEER AT CATSTRAND

Could you spare a bit of time to volunteer with us?

We are looking for enthusiastic people to join our fantastic team of volunteers. There are lots of ways to get involved. You could help out with:

- Stewarding at events
- Front of house
- Café
- Bar
- Shop
- Minibus driving
- Gardening



Contact Wendy for a chat:

Email: wendy@catstrand.com

Tel: 01644 420 374

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS WHO IN 2014 CONTRIBUTED OVER 3000 HOURS!

Photo of the Issue:

Sponsored by the Ken Bridge Hotel

Competition judges Dave and Sue, from the Ken Bridge Hotel, chose *Digger with a View* by Steve McCallie this issue with an unusual perspective looking out over the Rhinns of Kells. Sue said: "The entries were just all so lovely, it makes you realise what a beautiful area we live in." Steve wins a meal for two at the Ken Bridge Hotel's renowned Sunday Carvery.

PHOTO COMPETITION RULES: Entries must be taken in the Glenkens and can be of any subject - landscape, portrait, action-shot, pets, wildlife, nature, etc - so get snapping and send in your photos!



Glenkens Transport Initiative

Wednesday Evening Bus Service

Dalry to Castle Douglas and back (registered route)

	Outward Journey
1900	Depart Dalry (Underhill)
1905	New Galloway
1915	Mossdale
1925	Lauriston
1930	Townhead of Greenlaw
1937	Castle Douglas (Market Street)
1940	Castle Douglas (Tesco)
	Return Journey
2035	Depart Castle Douglas (Tesco)
2037	Castle Douglas (Market Street)
2047	Townhead of Greenlaw
2050	Lauriston
2100	Mossdale
2110	New Galloway
2115	Dalry

GTI has 8 and 16 seat minibuses for hire. Hirers must be registered GTI user groups. For more information or to book call 01644 420374.



GTI Excursions October 2015

Phone the CatStrand (01644 420374) or see GTI page on the CatStrand website for more details and to book.

Hetland Garden Centre & Carlisle Shopping

Monday 12 October



Hetland Garden Centre and Carlisle are great places to shop. Pickups: New Galloway (CatStrand) 0930; Dalry (Bank) 0940, Crossmichael (Shop) 1000, Castle Douglas (Montgomery's Corner) 1010 Fare £7. Concessions £6.

Hobbycraft Exhibition Glasgow

Saturday 24 October



Pickups: New Galloway (CatStrand) 0930, Dalry (Bank) 0940, Carsphairn (Shop) 1000 Fare £7. Concessions £6.

Glenkens to Ayr and Back

Saturday 31 October; Saturday 28 November

Pickups: New Galloway (CatStrand) 0930, Dalry (Bank) 0940, Carsphairn (Shop) 1000 Leaving Ayr 1500 Fare £3.50, Concessions £3.00 each way.

If there's somewhere you'd like to go and you think others would too, email Glen on gti@catstrand.com or phone 07841 5124494.

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Golf Club Update

With the summer drawing to a close New Galloway Golf Club can reflect on some terrific scoring on the course by the members during the season.

The club has also been very busy with visitors who have all commented on the excellent condition of the course.

During the summer the club has

held weekly coaching courses for local youngsters. These have been well-attended and it is terrific to see the progress the children are making.

At the end of September the club's greenkeeper, Brian Porteous, is retiring. Brian has been the face of the club for 28 years and is well-known locally. The members of the club would like to thank him for all his hard work over the years and wish him well in his retirement.

Ian Brown

SPALDING BOWLING CLUB

After a very successful year at Spalding Bowling Club the season has come to end with the green re-opening in April (date to follow).

This year's Ladies Champion is Ann Hamilton and Gents Champion is John McBeth (pictured).

Valerie Russell



ENJOY WALKING?

Would you like to explore the hidden pathways in the Glenkens?

Then why not meet the Glenkens Walking Group; we are an informal group of mostly retired people who meet next to the Bank in Dalry at 1.30pm on Mondays and Wednesdays to share cars, if needed, to the start of the walk. We do not take dogs because we often

encounter farm animals. Some of our walks are accessible to powered wheelchair users and we always finish with a cup of tea/coffee and biscuits.

For those who may doubt their ability or are slowing down a bit the Wednesday walks are a maximum of three miles at an easy pace.

To get in touch call Isobel or John on 430539, Gerry on 420852 or Elizabeth on 430581.

Lynx Re-introduction

Continued from front page...

Steve Piper continued; "The primary driver of whether all this can happen is public and stakeholder opinion, and Scottish Natural Heritage who would have to licence such a reintroduction. We're in the process of submitting formal applications at present."

The general public may be in favour of seeing these big cats released in our woodlands, but not everyone is quite so supportive; the National Sheep Association (NSA) have branded the project as having potentially devastating consequences for our upland sheep.

Lynx UK Trust chief scientific advisor to the project, Dr Paul O'Donoghue, said; "Lynx have proven themselves across Europe to be absolutely harmless to humans and of very little threat to livestock, whilst bringing huge benefit to rural economies and the natural ecology... It's wonderful that the general public want to see lynx given the chance to do the same here."

What are your thoughts about having the Eurasian lynx roaming our forests in the Glenkens?

A full public consultation is due to be launched in Scotland before Christmas to give everyone the chance to learn more and have their say.

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How would you feel if you had trouble reading this?

Maybe you do...

Dalry School involves the community to help children with their reading development - and we need volunteers.

Teachers are very aware of how a person's ability to read and understand competently, as well as to enjoy literature, can greatly affect every aspect of life at home, school or work.

Dalry School is fortunate to have literacy support from members of the community in the form

of a Volunteer Reader Scheme (VRS). With them, pupils from Primary 1 (P1) to Secondary 4 (S4) are given the chance to improve their reading skills, one-on-one, and to share and enjoy a book during the school day.

A volunteer spends about 20 minutes listening to a pupil reading and then discusses the story and helps the pupil hone their skills and boost their confidence. Both pupils and volunteers gain a great deal of satisfaction and enjoyment from

this scheme. Pupils are also able to increase their achievement in all subjects because literacy is the key to understanding.

The electronic age places additional strains on a pupil's reading development and good old-fashioned 'reading a book' provides a much needed balance!

If you would like to know more about becoming a Volunteer Reader, please contact Dalry School Office (430 259) and mention VRS.

LINKING PAST & PRESENT

Carsphairn Parish Church celebrated its bicentenary over the summer.

Staff and students at Dalry School were proud to be involved in the production of the commemorative communion tokens.

Communion tokens were issued in Scotland in the turbulent times of the 17th and 18th centuries

as a way of indicating that the recipients had undertaken a period of instruction prior to receiving communion in the Presbyterian church. Each kirk or minister would issue their own tokens to individuals in their congregation as they completed preparation and became communicant members.

Mr Murray used his research skills to combine historic designs with modern metalwork in

producing tokens that were significantly less toxic than the lead-based tokens of the past. The production of the individual Perspex-lidded boxes was the handiwork of the students. The labour was a gift and the church covered the cost of the materials.

There are some tokens on display in the Carsphairn Heritage centre. There are also a few still available for purchase - if you wish to have a commemorative token, please speak to David Bartholomew.

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STEWARTY BIRDWATCHERS

Interested in birds and other branches of natural history?

If 'yes' why not come along to the Stewarty Birdwatchers' meetings this winter? Since 1976 members and friends have held their monthly meetings in Kells School, New Galloway, from September to April.

Throughout the year the more active go on excursions to interesting locations on the coast as well as inland. Places such as Caerlaverock and Mersehead for wintering Barnacle Geese and many species of ducks, the Menzies Pass for the elusive Ring Ouzel, across to Loch Ryan for Brent Geese and numerous species of waders, or to woodlands for small birds such as migrant warblers in the summer.

This winter's session got off to a flying start when Mark Pollitt, manager of the Dumfries & Galloway Environmental Resources Centre based in Kirkcubbin, gave his talk *Gardening for Wildlife*. On 8 October Chris Waltho, who has studied the Common Eider in the Clyde for over forty years, will give a talk on *The Spectacled Eider Duck*. On 12 November Glen Chilton will describe his globe-trotting adventures while searching for birds that were formally declared extinct. Swifts are the subject of the talk on 10 December by husband and wife team Edmund and Tanya Hoare.

All welcome - see Diary on p22 for a full list of talks.

Emma's Wild Eats

We've been out in all weathers scouring the woodlands for free things we can eat.

As my grubby, sodden daughters will tell you we make time most days to crawl around outside (often in my work clothes in full view of colleagues, trousers tucked into socks for fear of ticks).

We find more to bring home as we swat up on what is not going to put us on the loo for days. Our world of wild food is expanding and we'd like to share our learning experiences. However, please don't think for a second I really know what I'm talking about, or am in any way qualified.

This year we've eaten various seafood, shore food, forest, and field food. We've savoured the most luxurious ceps and chanterelles, the most surprising sea rocket, samphire, sea radish seed pods and hog weed seeds, and the most unusual orange peel fungus and jew's ears.

What have we been finding

recently? Mushrooms! The photo below demonstrates a pretty good example of a typical haul from a short September hunt. A tip; once you learn how to identify a russula mushroom, you would struggle to come home empty-handed - they are fairly easy to learn to identify and lots are good to eat.

It's been a great year for chanterelles, although by the time you read this the frost may have moved us on to other foragers delights such as sloes, crab apples, haws, hazelnuts and elderberries, as well as various other types fungi.

There are some great websites and books to help with plant and fungi identification; I recommend *Galloway Wild Foods* which is brimming with fact and humour.

So stick on your wellies and autumn socks, and be 'wild' and 'free'!

Emma

Local foraging enthusiast Emma Gibson will be sharing some of her wild food experiences with us over the next few issues. Foraging is a wonderful, fun and healthy way to explore our countryside, but please make sure to do your own research before eating things you find!

Check out Emma's new blog to read more on her foraging adventures at <http://emmaswild.my-free.website/> and www.emmaswild.co.uk



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PYLON UPGRADE

Continued from front page...

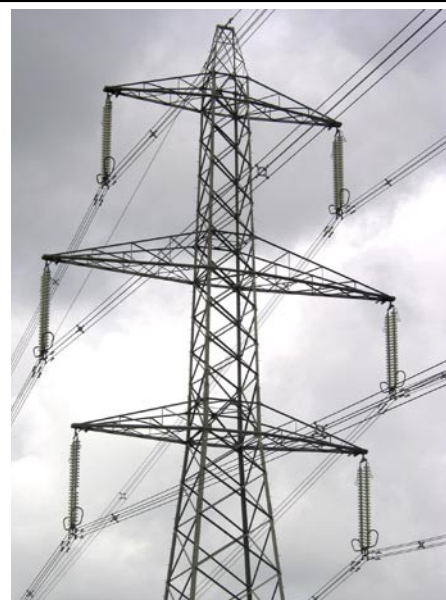
"The upgrade is due in the main to the rapid expansion of renewable generation in the region and as demand for electricity in Dumfries & Galloway is falling the excess needs to be exported to load centres in England and Wales".

Alan continues; "Dalry is the chosen location for a large substation that will connect the new, upgraded 132kV network to a new 400kV super-grid network. Many people in the region have not objected simply because they claim to be unaware of the project."

This new system has the potential to have huge knock-on effects for Glenkens communities. Members of the Galloway and

Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Partnership met recently with representatives from Scottish Power Energy Networks to discuss concerns over the proposed developments. Joan Mitchell, chair of the Biosphere Partnership Board, expressed the Biospheres concerns:

"The Biosphere is not against appropriate development and recognises the need for upgrading transmission networks to create a locally smart network that is able to benefit local residents and businesses. However, we need to ensure that the impacts locally are outweighed by the benefits the region receives and the initial proposals put forward do not provide that reassurance at this stage."



And these concerns may only be only scratching the surface. The article below, Power to the People, reflects more on the impact of these proposals on the Glenkens.

Power to the People?

I sincerely hope that everybody living in the Glenkens, indeed Dumfries and Galloway, is by now very much aware of the huge upgrade to the national grid in this region proposed by Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN).

Make no mistake about it, this programme of replacing the existing pylons with ones double their size and adding new substations the area of three football pitches will make the biggest impact on our rural lives since the hydro scheme of the 1930s. Dumfries & Galloway will not look the same afterwards for generations to come.

At the most basic level, the reality is that the existing network, built over 70 years ago, is in need of replacement - no argument there. Additionally, we are told that the lines are now at capacity, and need to be upgraded to cope with a growing demand, which seems logical

enough? However what is being proposed is not just one step up, but two, way beyond the likelihood of our usage.

This isn't just about meeting current or future regional needs, but of upgrading the National Grid's transmission of power between Ireland, Scotland and England with one of the hubs, linking five of the largest type of pylon lines, sitting just outside of St John's Town of Dalry. If it helps to try and understand this in terms of the roads it is like proposing to upgrade the A713 and A712 to motorways, with new service stations at Dalry and Newton Stewart, when all we actually need are the dodgy bends taken out and some overtaking lanes.

What it all comes down to is that running the new power lines above ground through Dumfries and Galloway is seen as an easier and cheaper option than underwater or underground cables. Damage to the environment, tourism or quality of life does not enter the financial equation here - but in my opinion it should. If it was about building two new motorways through the

Glenkens there'd be a riot - and justifiably so!

There is no doubt that we have become a 'power hungry' society, where 'manual' has been replaced by 'electric'. However, there is change afoot; LED lighting, 'AAA' rated appliances and wind-up radios are increasingly popular, as are solar panels and small wind turbines. Is the real demand for power increasing or are we starting to manage with less? In our household we are now using slightly less power than in the past, and certainly could consume less if we made an effort. If everyone could manage to do that then where is this growing demand coming from? Yes, there are more houses in the Glenkens now compared with the 1930s, and more electrical equipment, but it's getting to be more efficient; I think we've already peaked in demand and arguably don't need to be encouraged to use more. If England and Ireland have power issues, they need to re-examine how to resolve it for themselves without running motorways through the middle of the Glenkens!

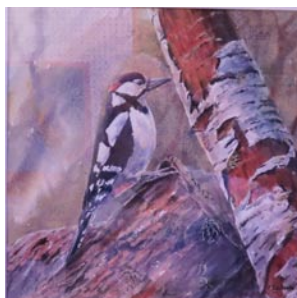
Andi Holmes, Dalry

GLENKENS ART EXHIBITION 2015

The annual Glenkens Art Exhibition was held at Dalry Town Hall this year in an attempt to increase the number of visitors.

Over 200 people took advantage of the weather and the venue to view the 70 exhibits, plus all the beautiful artwork from the schools' Art Competition. This was nearly double the number from 2014 when the exhibition was held in its usual location at the Glenkens Community Centre. The local artists did themselves proud once more with work of a high standard and varied content. Despite the relatively low number of entries it was a pleasure to see several new artists contributing to the show this year. The

number of sales of work was up to an encouraging six this year. Our thanks go to the Town Hall Management Committee for and all the volunteers who helped and without whose assistance it could not be held. We are also indebted to the Dalry Charity Shop for their grant towards the cost of holding the exhibition. The exhibition was very well received by visitors from as far afield as Shropshire, Ayr, Edinburgh, London, North Uist, Oxford, Kent and Powys.



New members to the Art Group are always welcome. Please come along on Monday 2-4pm and Wednesday 7-9pm at the Glenkens Community Centre, or contact Christine Rhodes on 430 070 or Tom Leach 420 386.



Great Spotted Woodpecker by Susan Bielinski and Sea Eagle by Bill Wiseman.

Apollo5 Returns to Dalry

Apollo5 made a welcome third visit to the Glenkens and clocked up a full-house at Dalry Town Hall.

They presented a thrilling, varied and enthralling programme of music to suit all tastes. Composers such as Finzi, Brahms, Holst and Vaughan sat comfortably with Duke Ellington, Sondheim and Bob Dylan to create a memorable, relaxed evening's entertainment.

One of the highlights of the evening appealing particularly to the Scottish audience was an arrangement by Clare of the traditional song *Will ye go to Flanders*.

Another favourite was a haunting rendition of Alexander L'Estrange's arrangement of Purcell's *Dido's Lament*.

On a much happier note were the title song of their new album recently released, *With a Song in my Heart* and the Andrews Sisters' *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy*, both arranged by Matt Greenwood for Apollo5.

The group is part of the

charitable foundation Voces Cantabiles Music and is involved in its innovative education programme aiming to inspire creativity through music. The programme, led by VOCES8, reaches 20,000 young people annually, working in over 200 schools in the UK, France, Germany, Sweden, the USA and Asia.

Charlotte, Clare, Alex, Ciaran and Greg are very grateful to the wonderful audience who turned out to hear them on a beautiful summer evening enabling them to continue to contribute to the work of VCM and to be able to give a small donation to Dalry Town Hall funds. *Sheila Adams*




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LOCAL HISTORY TAKES TO THE HILLS

The lost settlements of the Blackwater of Dee and the ruins of the Carsphairn lead mines were the destinations of the first two history visits organised by *The Glenkens Story* project.

Place-names enthusiast Michael Ansell led a party up the Blackwater of Dee in July, explaining the origin and meaning of the farmstead names and outlining their varied histories. While some were abandoned in the 'little ice age' of the 1690s, others survived for longer, some being occupied in living memory. From the mid 20th century most were overplanted by forest, now being cleared.

Unravelling the meanings of names can be complicated with Brythonic, Gaelic, Scots, Irish and English all featuring, often with misleading results. At Nether Gairloch for instance there is no loch: the name is a corruption of the Gaelic 'Gearr Learg' - a short slope.

The second trip, in August, was led by Anna Campbell of the Carsphairn Heritage Group, and headed out to the remains of the Woodhead lead mine. The mine was active from 1838 to 1873 and at one time more than 300 people lived at Woodhead. As

well as the ruins of their houses and the school, the remains of the smelting plant, flues and chimneys can be clearly seen as well as a network of mill lades and reservoirs and even the lazy-bed gardens of the workers.

Anna explained that although the mine entrance is now sealed, there are local people with childhood memories of exploring the disused tunnels and galleries. Traces of the ventilation shafts remain, one surrounded by a substantial stone dyke and a ring of rowan trees planted, it is said, to ward off evil spirits.

The Glenkens Story would like to thank Anna Campbell, Michael Ansell and minibus driver Jon Nimmo. Details of upcoming spring trips will appear in the next edition of the Gazette. If you would like to suggest a destination for a history trip, contact Mike Brown 420 267 or mbrown99@dircon.co.uk



Start of the lead mine tour, near the site of the smelter. The smelterers lived in the row of houses in the background.

Glenkens Story: Upcoming Events

The Lowland Clearances remembered

Everyone has heard of the Highland Clearances but little is said of the Lowland Clearances, yet they changed the face of places such as Galloway and we live with the consequences today.

On Sunday 22 November at 2.30pm at the CatStrand

Peter Aitchison and Andrew Cassell, authors of the book and radio series on the Lowland Clearances, will relate the story of Scotland's 'Silent Revolution' and discuss the implications for Galloway.

This event is organised by *The Glenkens Story* history project and is part of Book Week Scotland 2015.

Tickets £5, including light refreshments, available from the CatStrand.

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LOCAL HISTORY with TED COWAN

THE LANGUAGE OF GLENKENS



Many of us are interested in the puzzle of why and when Gaelic disappeared as the spoken language of Galloway.

It may have survived into the early 16th century but then very quickly vanished except in place-names. Gaelic is gone and, however much it may be regretted, it will never return. Meanwhile another language is disappearing before our ears and our eyes, while nobody seems to be paying attention to, or caring very much about, what is happening. I refer to the Scots leid and the Glenkens dialect thereof, which can still be daily heard from the mouths of many of our residents. Sad to say, with the passing of the older generation, Scots as a living language will follow Gaelic into oblivion. Gaelic already receives much more financial support than Scots, as well as a dedicated TV channel; in comparison Scots is a poor relation.

It was not always thus. Around the turn of 19th and 20th centuries several local writers championed the use of our native tongue. Malcolm Harper published many local poems in Scots in his book *The Bards of Galloway*, the best of whom was the itinerant William Nicholson of Borgue whose wanderings doubtless led him to the Glenkens. SRCrockett promised in 1906 to write "a real Galloway book, in the full dialect, to be understood only by those to the manner born" but he was not spared to do so. He wrote the introduction to a remarkable and absorbingly eccentric volume by Dr Robert De Bruce Trotter of the Glenkens medical dynasty, *Galloway Gossip* or *The Southern Albanich* 80 years ago. The book is written entirely in the Galloway vernacular and since his

family had close ties with this area he sheds much light on the language of our glen. He recalls that in his day Dalry and Polmaddy were pronounced without the letter 'l' as Da'ry and Powmaddy. The locals called Castle Douglas 'Castle Dirt'. He laments that Clachanpluck has "turn't genteel, an they ca't Laurieston noo—only they dinna say Lowryston—that's ower Scotch—they say Larry'stown; that's suppost tae be English ye ken". He relates that folk bought a 'long-tail blue' to get married, the garment then becoming known as the 'Sunday Coat'; "amang the puir folk this waddin coat haes tae last them a' their days for gaun tae ye kirk, for kirsנים an burials an ither gran

"Did ye ever see a lass at the fit o' the cless? A'm sure ye didna...If it wusna for their sisters learning them at hame, the lads wud be a at the fit thegither in a cludder".

occasions. There's a wheen o' them noo-a-days disna fash the kirk much". Many of the young ones on the farms go 'spluntin' (courting) at night. Trotter reveals his feminist credentials by asking; "Did ye ever see a lass at the fit o' the cless? A'm sure ye didna. They'r ey at the ither en, fowr or five o them afore ye come tae the lads; deed! If it wusna for their sisters learning them at hame, the lads wud be a at the fit thegither in a cludder". The trouble with Trotter's information is that he admits that many folk, himself included, just make up what they do not know and so are guilty of 'whuds'(lies). They haver or blether as well as talking sense.

Trotter realizes that as the language dies so too do culture and identity. Words become redundant as the means of subsistence changes while other words are invented over time (think of computer-speak!). How many folk today would know what it means when a sheep turns 'avel'

(on its back) or goes through a 'lunkie' (specially constructed gap in a dyke)? Equally obscure might be a shepherd's 'clicky' (crook). Language is a very important part of identity and even though, as Trotter points out, some people "consider Scotch origin to be the lowest possible depths of degradation", Scots is a language in its own right, a development from Northern English. In the 19th century it was fashionable to argue that Scots was closer to the original Anglo-Saxon than the latter was to modern English. One Scottish wit, puzzled by all the talk about Anglophones and Francophones, dubbed himself an Anglo-saxophone!

Kelso Kelly published a glossary to

SRCrockett's novels which are a mine of information on the Glenkens dialect. The glen has also produced many poets who have written in Scots and

the tradition survives from James Trotter's 'Clachan Fair' to Tommy Edgar's 'Clachan Capers'. To quote Trotter once more, "A suppose ye ken yt Gallowa's hotchin wi poets; a wasp's-bike's nothin like till't! gude-for little doyllocks, maist o them, fond o anything but wark. Some o them haes nae objection tae drink though". He meant no ill for he was mocking himself, as well as others.

Might it be an idea to invite what might be the last generation who have a lifetime's knowledge of the doric to compile a glossary of the Glenkens dialect? In such a project the spoken word would be even more valuable than the written. Dictionaries are full of definitions but speakers better understand the nuanced meanings. We will return to this theme in future articles but meantime if any one is interested (all words welcome) please contact me through the Glenkens Gazette. *Ted Cowan*

A SAD AND LONELY MOOR

The Story Of Old Mortality: Part I

The whaup rose lazily on brown speckled wings, its long curved beak opened; an eerie cry echoed over the lonely moor.

The cry could have been the first two syllables of a wail of anguish, uttered by a newly widowed bride, as she found her laddy, ruthlessly shot by 'Bloody Lagg', a hundred years before. Could the DNA of a moorland bird carry a folk memory of that soulful scream for fifty generations?

The scene had changed little in the century past; it had changed little in the previous ten thousand years, since the great ice retreated. Glacial moraine had softened imperceptibly each season with the growth and decay, of heather, blaeberry and bog cotton, washed by the rains of ten millennia.

The whaup had risen from the wet moor alerted by a bark, the sound of a roe buck challenging an intruder. Alerted, a fox following a sheep path winding its way among the heather, halted its stealthy progress to scan the slope of the hillside below, its dark ears cocked and keen eyes focused. A small movement behind a heather clad knowe was enough. The vixen turned tail and stole away unseen, looking back momentarily after a hundred yards to confirm her suspicions before trotting on out of sight.

Robert Paterson saw neither the roe nor the fox, though he glanced at the curlew as it soared above. Head down, he led his faithful white horse, laden with a pannier on either side, each basket cradling a carved freestone slab.

The year was 1786, the only change in the scene before him in a century, was a Galloway dyke recently erected by gnarled hands and back-breaking toil. This dry-stane dyke, like many others was built to enclose the previously open moor, delineating a new laird's ownership.

The dykes, like the froth on a calm sea, informed the knowledgeable

eye of the presence of rock below the smooth surface.

Built by Irish peasants, generously allowed to break their backs doing this unrelenting toil, in lieu of rents which could not be paid from rotting crops and famine at home.

These dykes would be a long lasting feature on the rolling Galloway hills.

A gang of labourers would drag the stone from the surrounding area, on horse drawn sledges. Smaller stones would form the base, built double faced, - this was the doublin'. Once two or three feet high a horizontal layer of 'throughbans' was laid to hold the two faces together, and above that larger single stones were set, before finally, carefully picked copes or tapstones were laid and pinned in place to form a level top.

As Robert led his horse on the

hole. They would take a breather now and again and look down on the Dee Valley below, or glance at the Carsphairn hills to the North, before turning again to face the climb. Approaching a patch of old heather, a grouse exploded into the air and flew off on whirring wings, crying indignantly the characteristic - 'Go back!' 'Go back!' Its flurried departure left the scent of the purple heather flower hanging in the air.

All of a sudden Robert and his mare rounded the shoulder of the rise and they were at the top. Not a peak, but a surprisingly level plateau; not covered in heather or blaeberry, but short cropped grass, as bare as any bowling green. Sheep are shrewd; they know that the top of the hill is where the cooler breezes reach, where

the flies and midges are fewer. This is the place they head for on a warm summer evening and as a result, it is well used, well grazed and with its regular sprinkling of

sultana-like sheep droppings, well fertilised.

Robert headed for the two small ice-rounded boulders near the centre of the grass, and tied his horse to a gnarled thorn tree, as old as time. Perhaps it too, like the whaups, had witnessed the evil deed that happened here? The two glacial erratics, as these stones are correctly termed, had been carried from a near-by knowe to mark the resting place of the two lads.

King Charles II, arrogantly certain of the divine right of kings, had decreed that all his subjects must worship his Episcopalian clerics. Presbyterian ministers were driven from their homes and their congregations hunted down and shot by government dragoons, often without reason, without trial. The two lads who perished here were loyal to the king but knew nothing of theology, or politics and unable to answer Graham of Claverhouse's questions were instantly shot dead. Weeping neighbours buried them where they had died.

John Nelson,
Crossmichael

Could the DNA of a moorland bird carry a folk memory ... for fifty generations?

sheep track which ran alongside the dyke, the mosses had already softened the faces of the whinstone. Silver grey circles of lichen, some coarser, darker, some orange, others brown. Below a solitary old tree, green sphagnum moss had established itself in the moist shady environment. Robert knew the mosses, lichen and algae so well from his regular forays into old churchyards. He smiled as he watched a young weasel pop out from a hole in the wall and nimbly run along the 'causeway' of top-stones five feet above any prey.

He stooped to pick a handful of blaeberrys as he skirted a bog and ate them with relish. Later as he and his mare traversed the slope, he knelt beside the crystal clear burn, lowered his head and drank his fill. His mare took the chance too, and drank deeply from a shallow pool gouged by the water on some wet winter's day. The burn trickled and tinkled its way among the pebbles, down towards the bog below.

Robert urged his horse up the heather clad hill, following one of many sheep tracks, skirting each rocky outcrop and hillside bog-

SCOTTISH ALTERNATIVE GAMES

The typical Scottish summer weather rarely deters Alternative Games competitors.

This was the fifteenth year that the event has been held in New Galloway and a good crowd gathered to step back in time and enjoy the traditional events first held in Parton in 1977.

The competitors included reigning World Gird n' Cleek Champion, John McQueen, from Castle Douglas, and several previous champions and world finalists looking to take the title off John's hands. There was a good international presence too with several regular competitors and lots of new challengers from south of the border together with overseas entrants in several events representing France, Canada, Spain, Russia and The Netherlands.

The strength events also attracted big entries and the men's competitions were largely dominated by three

competitors, Jayde Devlin, Ralph Spornagel and Craig Fergusson claimed Gold, Silver and Bronze respectively in the Tractor Pull and the Hurlin' the Curlin' Stane.

The Classic Car competition has become a great favourite at the Games in recent years and the best turned-out vehicle is voted for by the crowd. This year's clear winner in the count was the MGA 1600 owned by Morton Davidson.

Snail Racing may seem a rather sedate event but the biggest noise of the day is always heard from the Snail Racing Paddock as another race approaches the finish line! Jeremy Sainsbury hosts the paddock as only he knows how, whipping the expectant crowd into a frenzy and bribing the snails into action when necessary.

Stallholders all enjoyed a good trade throughout the afternoon and between the pipe band's appearances in the arena, the 'Four String Pickers' ukulele band

entertained in the Tea Tent.

As always, the Games attracted many returning competitors and audience but also embraced many first time visitors too. The smiling faces and appreciative comments received were testament to the enduring popularity of the unique event with many people pledging a return next year.



John McQueen receiving the Gird n Cleek World Championship trophy for the second year in a row.

Great War Update: The Battle of Loos

The battle of Loos resulted in a great number of deaths in September 1915.

The Glenkens perhaps had more than its share of deaths reported, six in total with five of those coming from Dalry and all during the first two days of the battle.

Lance Corporal George Hamilton of Front Street was reported missing presumed dead at the battle of Loos on 25 September 1915. He was aged 34 and left a widow (Frances) and two children.

Private Robert Hamilton was the son of Robert and Mary Hamilton of Main Street, and was also reported missing at the battle of Loos on 25 September. He was aged 21. Both Robert Hamilton and George Hamilton were serving with 12th Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry.

Private Alexander McCulloch

was the youngest son of Mr and Mrs Walter McCulloch, of Courthill, and was reported missing on 25 September at the age of 31. He had been a prominent and leading golfer and footballer. His parents' Golden Wedding was quietly celebrated just six months after his death.

Andrew McNaught was the son of Robert and Agnes McNaught, of Midtown, and was aged just 19 when he was reported missing, also on 25 September. Both Andrew and Alexander McCulloch had been serving with 7th Battalion the Kings Own Scottish Borderers.

Archie Mair was the only son of William and Elizabeth Mair of Gordiestoun (near Lochinvar and now a ruin) and had been one of the first to enlist in August 1914. He was serving with 6th Battalion the Queens Own Cameron Highlanders when he was reported missing at the battle of Loos on 26 September at the age of 23. Archie's

grandfather (Archibald) had farmed near Drongan in Ayrshire and Archie is also listed on the Ochiltree War memorial.

Sergeant Robert McGaw was serving with 9th Battalion the Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) when he was reported missing on the 25 of September. He was aged 29 and was the son of Charles and Susan McGaw. Robert had been a gamekeeper at Corsock House when he enlisted in September 1914. His brother would be killed later in the war. Robert is also listed on the Corsock war memorial.

These would be the only Glenkens men killed in August and September 1915 but in just two days, the Glenkens had lost six men and not one of their bodies was ever found. They are all commemorated on the Loos memorial along with over twenty thousand other British and Commonwealth soldiers from the battle of Loos who have no known grave.

Paul Goodwin

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

OCTOBER

Sat 3, McMath the Silent Page, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Thu 8, Stewartry Bird Watchers talk - Chris Waltho Spectacled Eider Ducks in Europe, 7.30pm, Kells School, New Galloway, see p10

Wed 21, Writing in the Woods and on the Water; wildlife writer Mandy Haggith speaking about her poetry and prose, 2pm, CatStrand, New Galloway

Fri 23, Launch Party (Friends & Patrons), CatStrand, New Galloway

Sat 24, Ben Rogers & The Jellyman's Daughter, CatStrand, New Galloway

Sun 25, The Templewood Ensemble, CatStrand, New Galloway

Tue 27, Rapture Theatre: The Last Yankee, CatStrand, New Galloway

Thu 29, Film: Amy (15),

CatStrand, New Galloway

Sat 31, Halloween Party & Film Premiere, CatStrand, New Galloway

Thurs 22, SWANC Talk; What Happens when a Community Takes Over? 7.30pm, Ken Bridge Hotel, New Galloway, see p3

until Sat 24, Droving Project exhibition - part of The Land exhibition, Gracefield Arts Centre, Dumfries, see p6

NOVEMBER

Sun 1, Ricky Ross, CatStrand, New Galloway

Sat 7, Film: Brief Encounter (U) & Romantic Supper, Supper From 6pm, Film 7.30pm, CatStrand, New Galloway

Thu 12, Stewartry Bird Watchers talk - Glen Chilton Rediscovering 'Extinct' Species, 7.30pm, Kells School, New Galloway, see p10

Fri 13, Karine Polwart & Emma Pollock, 7.30pm, CatStrand,

New Galloway

Wed 18, Film: Two By Two (U), 10am, Free (Schools Only), CatStrand, New Galloway

Fri 20, Ragazze Quartet, 7.30pm, CatStrand, New Galloway

Sat 21, Craft Fair, 10am to 3pm, Mossdale Village Hall

Sun 22, Talk by Peter Aitchison & Andrew Cassell on the Lowland Clearances, CatStrand, New Galloway, see p14

Thu 26, Film: The Bridge Rising (12), 7.30pm (Includes Q&a With Film Makers), CatStrand, New Galloway

Sat 28, Christmas Shopping Day, 11am-4pm, Free, Includes Mulled Wine & Mince Pies, CatStrand, New Galloway

DECEMBER

Thu 10, Stewartry Bird Watchers talk - Tanya and Edmund Hoare Our Disappearing Swifts, 7.30pm, Kells School, New Galloway, see p10



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REGULAR EVENTS

CatStrand Activities - currently relocated until CatStrand re-opens (contact 420 374 to confirm details):

Exercise to Music: Mon, 10-11am, New Galloway Town Hall (recommences 24 Aug)

Margaret Morris Movement Adult Dance Class: Mon, 2.30-3.30pm, contact Sara on 01556 612854, New Galloway Town Hall (recommences 24 Aug)

Children's Dance Class: Mon during term time, 3.45-4.45pm age 3-7, 4.30-5.30pm ages 8-15, New Galloway Town Hall (recommences 24 Aug)

Gentle Tai Chi: Wed, 10am, 60+, New Galloway Town Hall

Sing it Out: Thurs, 11am-12pm, Cross Keys Hotel, New Galloway

Pilates: Thurs, 4.15-5.15pm & 5.30-6.30pm, Dalry Community Centre

CatStrand Yukes: Thurs, 1pm - 3.30pm 60+ Cross Keys Hotel, New Galloway

Saturday Art Club: 2nd Sat each month, 10am-12noon, New Galloway Town Hall (recommences 12 Sept)

Zumbatomic: last Sat each month, 10-10.45am

Catstrand Youth Players: Sun during term time, 2pm

Glenkens Acoustic Sessions: last Sun of the month, 2-4pm, The Clachan Inn,

Dalry

Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry, (contact Kath on 430 281):

Glenkens Children's Club: Mon & Fri, 10am-12noon

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

Ballroom & Latin Dance Class: Mon, 7.15pm, for more info call Sam Rushton on 420 672

GCC Playgroup: Tues, Wed & Thurs, 9.10-11.40am, contact Sue on 07709 929 482

Good Neighbours' Club: Tues, 2pm

Kickback Martial Arts: Thurs, 7-9pm

Thursday Craft Group: Thurs, 2-4pm

Brownies: Wed, 5.30-6.45pm

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

Various Locations:

Ukelele Group: Mon, 11.15am, 60+, New Galloway Town Hall

Glenkens Walking Group, Mon & Wed, 1.30pm, contact Gerry on 420 852

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

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

Dog Training: Tues & Wed, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall. Contact: Eric 460 670

Bowling for Beginners: Wed, 7pm, Spalding Bowling Club, Dalry (opposite The Garage)

Wednesday Quiz Night: Wed, 8.30pm, Cross Keys Hotel, New Galloway

Stewartry Camera Club: Wed, 7.30pm, Ringford Village Hall, runs Wed 11 Sept till end Mar

Zumba: Wed, 7.30-8.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall, £4

Mossdale Painters: Wed, 9.30am, Mossdale Village Hall

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

Carsphairn Post Office: Tues, 1-3pm, Lagwyne Hall

Coffee & Craft Morning: Thurs, 9am-12noon, Lagwyne Hall

D&G Hard of Hearing Group Drop-in: 1st Friday each month, 10am-12noon, New Galloway Town Hall.

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

To hire the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) behind Dalry School call Sonja Tranter on 430 244 or Nicolette Wise on 430 218.

Dalry Library

Temporary Hours

Tue: 12noon - 3.30pm

Fri: 10am - 12noon & 1pm - 4.30pm

There are 23 mobile library stops - to find out where and when please phone 430 234.

Glenkens Community Councils

Balmaclellan Community Council Meetings: 3rd Monday each month, 7.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall.

Carsphairn Community Council Meetings: Last Monday each month, 7pm, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn.

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

Dalry Community Council Meetings: 1st Monday each month, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall.

New Galloway & Kells Community Council Meetings: 2nd Monday each month, 7.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall.

CHURCH TIMES

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Sunday Services - Balmaclellan 12noon: 1st. Carsphairn 10.30am: 1st 2nd, 3rd 4th. Dalry 12noon: 1st 2nd(Nov) 3rd 4th. Dalry 10.30am: 2nd (Oct), 5th (Nov). Kells 10.30am: 3rd 4th. *Special Services/Events:* 4th October, 10.30am: Harvest Thanksgiving, Carsphairn Church. 12th October, 10.30am: United Family Service for Dalry and B & K Church in Dalry Church. 17th October, 10-12: Abbas Rest Coffee Morning, Dalry Town Hall. 6th Nov, 7.30pm: Quiz Night in Balmaclellan

Village Hall. 8th Nov, 11am: Ceremonies at New Galloway and Balmaclellan War Memorials, followed by Remembrance Service in St Margaret's Church. 27th Nov, 7.30pm: Scottish Night, Dalry Town Hall. 29th Nov, 10.30am: United Service with the Choir in Dalry Church. *Communion Service:* 25th Oct, 12noon, Dalry Church. 1st Nov, 12 noon, Balmaclellan Church. 15th Nov, 10.15am, Carsphairn Church. **SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH:** St Margaret's, New Galloway: Holy Communion, 10.30am every Sun & Wed. **CATHOLIC CHURCH SERVICES:** Kirkcudbright: Sun Mass, 9.30am. Dalbeattie: Sat Mass, 5pm

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- **D&G Council:** 030 33 33 3000

Glenkens Clubs & Societies Fair

The Glenkens Clubs and Societies Fair was judged to be a great success by those who attended.

25 Clubs and Societies from across the Glenkens were represented in person, and over 100 people came along to find out what they could do in the area. Many thanks are due to the volunteers who came out to represent their clubs and societies and did a great job of advertising the wide variety of things to do.

In particular, the sports representatives in the school hall were very much appreciated, as were the ukulele band, who never fail to bring a bit of joy to an event.

People were also delighted with the free Directory that they received which lists over 80 clubs and societies, as well as a host



of useful information at the back about other community facilities and services. Thanks are due to Helen Keron who did the data gathering and Martha Schofield (www.mschofielddesign.co.uk) who converted the information into a thing of beauty. If you didn't get a Directory and would like one there are still a few left at various shops, or contact Nicolette Wise on 430 218.

Thanks are also due to our many sponsors who allowed us to stage the event and issue the Directory for free. They are the Glenkens Community Shop in Dalry, the Ross Family Fund through Foundation

Scotland, The Galloway Association of Glasgow, Dalry Community Council and New Galloway & Kells Community Council. The idea for the initiative came from Dalry Community Council.

As Alex Fergusson, MSP, said in the introduction to the Directory; "Volunteers are the life-blood of rural communities and without them, the wealth of groups and recreational activities that are available simply would not happen. How lucky we are in the Glenkens to have so many people putting in their time and energy for the benefit of the community as a whole." Thank you all!

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Christmas Shopping Event



The CatStrand
Saturday 28th November
11am-4pm



Join us for a relaxing afternoon of Christmas shopping, and buy all your presents locally at the CatStrand.

Shop for a seasonal selection of handmade and quality gifts to fill all the eagerly awaited Christmas stockings!

With a range of stalls presenting local craft and produce, this is an ideal opportunity to find unique and special gifts for family and friends.

Enjoy a glass of mulled wine while you browse.

If you would like to have a stall at the Christmas Shopping Day, please get in touch with Wendy at the CatStrand.



High Street, New Galloway, DG7 3RN
01644 420374
info@catstrand.com
www.catstrand.com

The CatStrand is an operating name of the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust Ltd, a registered Scottish Charity, No. SC032050

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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

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