

GLENKENS GAZETTE

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

April/May 2020

ISSUE 117

FREE

Supporting Our Communities

How we all cope with the current coronavirus pandemic is doubly tricky as nothing like this has happened before.

What is apparent, however, is the way our communities in the Glenkens have reacted to the crisis – immediately reaching out to friends and neighbours by putting in place strategies to help the vulnerable, and doing so with a minimum of fuss.

Balmaclellan, Dalry and Kells & New Galloway Community Councils and Carsphairn Community Trust have all put together resilience plans. Fliers have gone out to residents with information on who to get in touch with if they require help, such as collecting groceries or prescriptions during self-isolation, or if they just want a chat. In addition, many local businesses are offering order and delivery services for meals such as Love to Eat (01644 420 841), the Smithy (01644 420 269), the Clachan Inn (01644 430 241) and Carsphairn Tearooms (01644 460 568).

All the communities report that many

"What is apparent...is the way our communities in the Glenkens have reacted - immediately reaching out to friends and neighbours..."

more people have since offered to help in any way they can – Glenkens folk do seem to be hardwired to help their neighbours.

At the time of going to press Dumfries and Galloway has one of the lowest number of cases in Scotland but this could change so it is up all of us to remain vigilant and follow the expert advice on social distancing.

An example of a simple measure to help keep us safe comes from the Glenkens Medical Practice who have changed their prescription collection point to the window next to the main door to prevent people mixing inside the surgery.

Continued on p7...



Local children help to distribute community information fliers around Dalry.

Drama Festival First For Glenkens

The 2020 SCDA Stewartry Open Festival was won by CatStrand Players with their production of *Henna Night* by Amy Rosenthal.

This is the first time that the Open Festival has ever been won by a team from the Glenkens.

The play is a two-hander starring Eilidh Thomson and Zoe Kirkpatrick, directed by Brian Edgar and would have been representing Stewartry District at the West of Scotland Final in Greenock at the end of March. However, in light of the current coronavirus restrictions this has unfortunately been cancelled. Eilidh and Zoe have been

staunch members of CatStrand Youth Players since they were 10 years old and have progressed to the Youth Western Finals on several occasions in the past. Their experience in the Youth Festivals over the past 10 years or so has certainly stood them in good

stead as they, in the adjudicator's words, "took the script off the page in a virtually flawless performance".

Continued on p7...



CatStrand Players Director Brian Edgar receiving the award © John Scott Photography.

...STOP PRESS...

Some scheduled events in this issue may now be cancelled or postponed. Please get in touch with organisers for information.

Remember, it's important to keep our distance for everyone's health - but that doesn't mean we can't talk to each other; over garden fences, across the street, over the phone, by email - even just a wave and a smile.

Stay in touch! We're all in this together, and nobody should feel they are facing it alone.

POETRY COMPETITION WINNER

Limericks, with their distinctive rhythm and rhyme, have a way of sticking in your head, and many a one, from many a year back, was recited in Wrights Shop as folk clocked the new Poetry Competition organised by Lyndsay Wright and her shop team.

A good few local people turned their hand to penning their own too, including a 'mystery rhymers' whose lines were discovered lodged between the tinned hotdogs and soup!

All entries were read aloud to get their full effect and the winner was unanimously agreed to be Christine Rae with:



Winner of the February/March competition, Christine Rae, receiving her prize of a £10 Wrights Shop voucher.

*To Eve said old gardener Adam
"We've nothing to show this year
madam.*

*The peas are a sight
The spuds have got blight
And as for the apples – we've
had 'em!"*

Christine wins a £10 voucher to spend at Wrights Shop.

This issue's theme for a poem (any form) is 'ma hame toon', wherever that may be...

Entries to be handed in at Wrights Shop, or emailed to glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk, by Friday 1 May.

Glenkens Community Shop Re-opens After Refurb

The Glenkens Community Shop in Dalry is scheduled to reopen on 13 April, having been closed

since December for refurbishment of the premises.

Look out in the next issue for a longer piece with photos of the new shop!

Where Do You Read Your Gazette...?

Send us in a photo of where you read your Gazette...

Or perhaps you send a copy out to friends or relatives in far-flung places? In which case, maybe they can send us a photo!

"We're from Stranraer and retired, and enjoy taking drives around the countryside. We are fairly regular visitors to the CatStrand, where we look forward to picking up the latest issue of the Glenkens Gazette. It's a brilliant wee paper and we thoroughly enjoy reading it."

Mr Bell, Stranraer

marr financial services

61 VICTORIA STREET, NEWTON STEWART DG8 6NL.

Telephone: 01671 40 30 80 Fax: 01671 40 25 49

E-mail: advice@marrfinancial.co.uk Web: www.marrfinancial.co.uk



WINDY RIG WIND FARM INTRODUCING OURSELVES

Project progress



As announced in the last edition on the Glenkens Gazette, Statkraft, Europe's largest generator of renewable energy, has started construction on the Windy Rigg Wind Farm.

Site set-up was slowed down by the arrival of Storm Ciara and the following week Storm Dennis hit the region. By early March, our site compound and staff welfare facilities were fully established.

Further information is outlined below. The timeline is subject to change due to weather, environmental and other factors out with our control.

Who's who?

Statkraft has appointed Scottish company RJ McLeod to undertake the civil engineering works with Lorcan Hayes (right) leading the team. Phil Morren (left) from Ionic Consulting is supporting Statkraft as owner's engineer during construction.



With construction expected to take around 16 months, the project is due to reach operational stage in 2021.

Doug Wilson will be managing the project communications throughout the construction of the wind farm.

Community

Statkraft will keep the local community informed throughout construction through monthly updates in the Glenkens Gazette, and continued contact with the Community Liaison Group which was established during development. For more information, go to www.statkraft.co.uk/windyrig

The project will deliver a fund of approximately £216,000 per year for community groups and initiatives, and discussions around how this will be managed are taking place with the Community Liaison Group.

Traffic



During construction we will do our best to minimise disruption.

- Constructing additional passing places along the B729.
- Signage to remind drivers of the speed limit on the road and to be courteous to local traffic.
- Traffic alerts by text and email.

For any comments or questions on traffic during construction, please contact Doug Wilson on 07542 754642.

We will continue to update the community through the **Glenkens Gazette**. If you have any questions please get in touch: doug.wilson@statkraft.co.uk

Timeline

FEB MAR 2020	Site office established
MAR APR 2020	Additional passing places on the B729 agreed
MAY 2020	Widening of some parts of the C35 road to improve access
MAY JUN 2020	Turbine foundations completed
JUN 2020	Roadside laydown area construction
EARLY SEP 2020	Turbine delivery trial run
SEP OCT 2020	Turbine deliveries
EARLY 2021	Turbine erection commences
LATE SPRING 2021	Wind farm operational

Glenkens Freecycle sponsored by natural power

If you would like to list something on this page, please get in touch on 07727 127 997 or glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk

FREE

Chest Freezer - free for pick up in Dalry. Contact: 07769 892 137

Large Bag of Cat Litter. Free to collect in New Galloway. Contact: 01644 420 267

FOR SALE

ION Air LP Bluetooth Turntable.

Unwanted gift £45. Contact: 01644 430 373

9" stainless steel chimney cowl.

Brand new, still boxed - bought in

error. Cost £48 will sell for £30.

Contact: Nigel 07774 778872

3-Seater Sofa. Dark brown with flip footrests, very good condition, £50. Contact: 01644 430 062

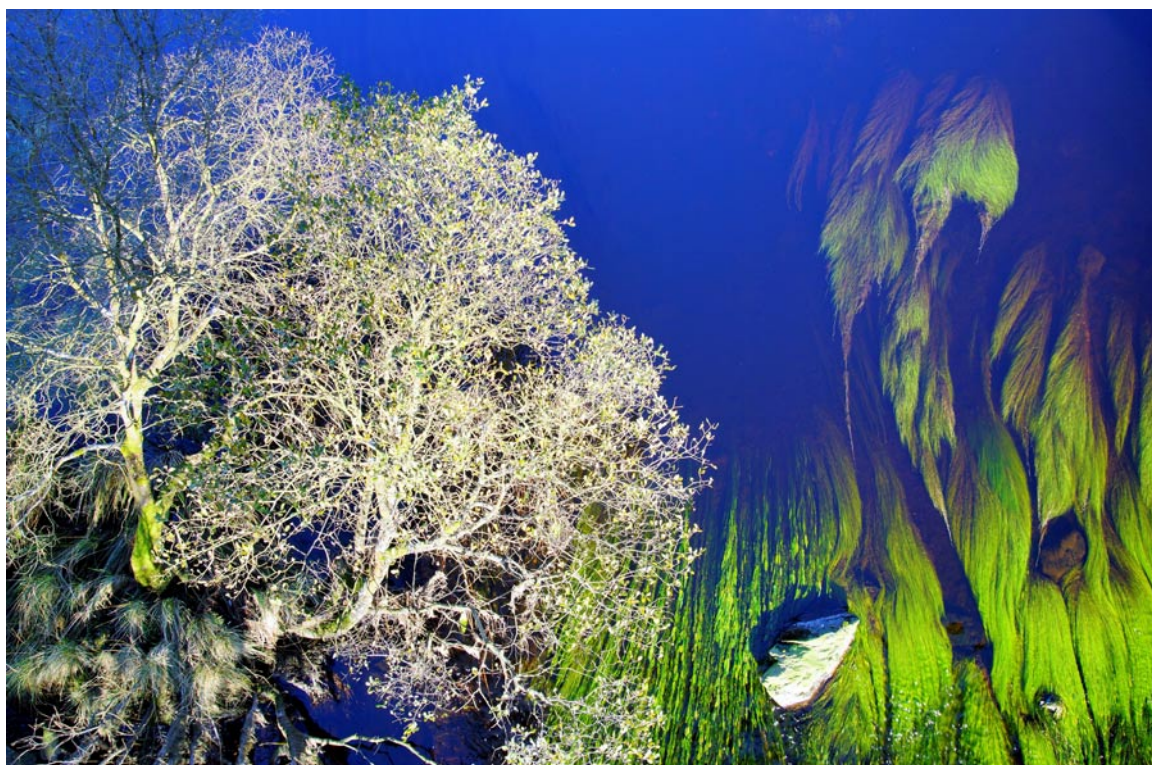
Photo of the Issue Sponsored by the Ken Bridge Hotel

This issue's winner is Christopher Lucas with a beautiful photograph looking down into the water from the viaduct at Loch Stroan.

Christopher wins an evening meal for two up to the value of £30 at the Ken Bridge Hotel. Competition judges Dave and Sue said: "This photo is just stunning. It has a wonderfully abstract quality, and is almost more like a painting than a

photograph. A bit like an optical illusion... And with lovely, vibrant spring colours to lift the spirits."

How to Enter: any photos taken in the Glenkens can be entered - landscapes, wildlife, portraits, action shots... Email them to glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk



If you are a winner the Gazette will send you out a voucher - please call the Ken Bridge to book your meal, and make sure to take your winner's voucher along with you.



New Galloway Golf Club

Founded 1902

www.nggc.co.uk

- 01644 420737 -

Buggies now available for hire

VISITORS AND NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

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St John's Town of Dalry

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07834 321 789

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...special rates for inclusion of tea, cake and friendly banter...

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Eco Feature

sponsored by



Walking the Watson Bird Trails

With financial support from the Blackcraig Community Fund and the National Lottery

Heritage Fund through the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership, Watson Birds will be able to implement fully our two proposed trails.

These are the Donald Watson Art Trail which runs around the Glenkens,

and the Donald Watson Bird Walk around St John's Town of Dalry.

Brochures for these walks can be obtained from The Clachan Inn and the CatStrand, or from www.watsonbirds.org

Dalry's Chris Rollie will be providing a commentary to be made into an app as part of the Galloway Glens programme overall app, and I'm sure that this will be both interesting and informative.

We are asked, as part of the conditions of the wind farm grant, to gather community support for these trails, and we will therefore be contacting community councils for their views to add to the many supportive comments we already have.

The first exhibition at The Smiddy in Balmaclellan has been well received and we are planning a follow-up later this year, working with local groups such as Ken Words.

Roger Crofts

roger.dodin@btinternet.com



Indicative Walk Map

See OS Explorer sheet 320 for details



WATSON BIRDS DONALD WATSON ART TRAIL AROUND THE GLENKENS

Donald Watson was an internationally renowned wildlife artist and author who lived in St John's Town of Dalry from 1951 until he died in 2005. He had many favourite painting locations in The Glenkens. This trail takes visitors to a selection of these to experience the atmosphere that inspired Donald.



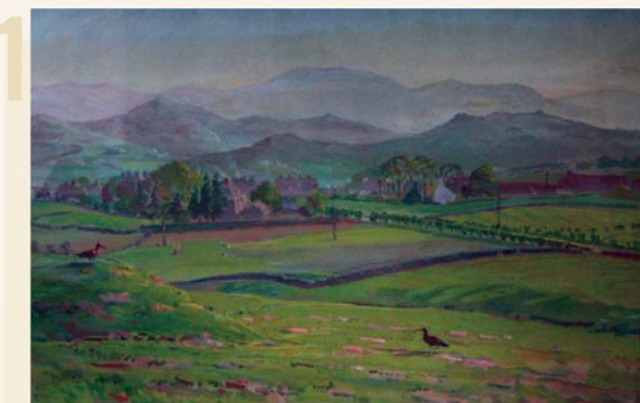
Donald Watson (1918 - 2005)

A key aspect of Donald Watson's method, and indeed of his ultimate appeal as a wildlife artist, was to sketch and paint outdoors. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s he travelled extensively in Dumfries & Galloway, particularly the latter, setting up his easel and often completing watercolour and gouache paintings relatively quickly in the outdoors. This forced him to develop and perfect a very loose and impressionistic style that conveyed the spontaneity of his approach and captured the mood and the light of the moment. His paintings reflect this. Indeed, many of them retain traces of raindrops, which he allowed to stand as a testament to his refreshing emulation of his favourite French masters, such as Monet, Cezanne and Corot. The scenic variety of The Glenkens provided a backcloth to much of Donald's art and, like many artists, he had a number of favourite views that he returned to repeatedly for inspiration and context for his more studied and polished later work of the 1970s-1990s.

The trail is arranged as a loop beginning and ending in Dalry with nine stops at Donald's outdoor painting sites. It is approximately 47 miles long. However, the Raiders Road is closed from October to March and then the trail is reduced to eight points and to about 38 miles. Visitors can, of course, undertake the trail by any route they choose and visit whichever sites they wish.

THE TRAIL

The trail begins at Donald Watson's former home and studio at Barone, 54 Main Street, St John's Town of Dalry. From there travel up the hill on the A702 Moniaive road for about ½ mile and stop in the old quarry on the left hand side.



Moss Roddock (NGR NX632814)

From a lay-by in a little quarry, or more often parked by the old Royal Observers' Corps post atop a knoll at the entrance to Tower Farm, Donald overlooked his home in the Clachan of Dalry, Moss Roddock Loch and west to his beloved Rhinns of Kells. As in so many of his favourite painting places, this provided a combination of inspiring views and the chance of a bird or two. This spot, or nearby, was the scene for a great many paintings, including wildfowl on the loch, wheatears on the dykes and whaups (curlews) on the fields; and all within two minutes of a fresh cup of tea at home! This painting was created in the early summer of 1951, very soon after Donald moved to the village.

Continue along the A702 for 1½ miles and stop in the old quarry on left hand side opposite the path to Holy Linn waterfall.

AS IN SO MANY OF HIS FAVOURITE PAINTING PLACES, THIS PROVIDED A COMBINATION OF INSPIRING VIEWS AND THE CHANCE OF A BIRD OR TWO

Words from the Library Shelves...

The building that is now referred to as the Dalry Customer Service Centre, but has for decades been more familiar to Dalry folk as the William Gourlay Memorial Library, has been quietly delivering books to the Glenkens since the 1940s.

It remains today a lively and treasured hub for the Glenkens, although perhaps it's still something of a mystery to many Glenkens inhabitants! Hopefully, this regular little column will rectify that.

Although we are only open two days a week, the building is also home to a number of groups such as the CatStrand Youth Writers and,



until recently, Dalry's Gaelic class. It's a good warm room for meetings, so feel free to contact us to book! During library hours there is the monthly Bookbug session on the first Tuesday of the month at 10.30am, and on the same day you can drop in for Tech Help from 1-2pm; bring all your techno quibbles and we'll see what we can do!

This month in the children's area we have a display on dinosaurs. Your librarian was a bit dinomad when she was little, so feel free to pick her brains and find out just how much she's forgotten.

Also, after the recent sad news

about the death of thriller author Clive Cussler, we have a display of his books for the grown ups.

If we don't have the book you want, we can always try to order it in from the rest of the region.

Dalry Early Learning Centre have been taking part in the Bookbug library challenge with regular visits for new books. The kids have lots of fun stamping the books and the bookbug challenge cards and are looking forward to getting their challenge certificates. If you know a small reader, you could bring them in to start on a challenge of their own.

The main excitement of the month is the Annual Waste Sacks distribution, which began on Monday 9 March. This is when people who don't have wheelie bins get their allowance for the year of waste sacks. This year the sacks will be purple, although last year's orange sacks are good until 1 May. If you struggle with your wheelie bin, come in and let us know as there are a few solutions available!

*Angela, Librarian,
William Gourlay Memorial Library &
Customer Service Centre*

Balmaclellan Community Library

At long last after much hard work from several volunteers, Balmaclellan Community Trust and the Village Hall Trust are happy to announce that from March 2020 a new Community Library will be opened in Balmaclellan Village Hall.

The library is situated in the newly refurbished Templeton Room, and initially will be open every Wednesday between 10am and 12.30pm and on Saturdays from 10am till 12pm.

The hall is also opened on a Wednesday for the weekly coffee mornings, so this would be an ideal time to pop in for a coffee and cake and spend some time browsing our bookshelves.

Balmaclellan Community Trust would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has donated books for



the community library. Shelving for the library has been funded by the Blackcraig Windfarm Microgrant Fund, with additional shelving generously donated by the Glenkens Community

Shop in Dalry.

We are always grateful for anyone wishing to donate books, and do get in touch if you can spare some time to help and support in any way.

Supporting Our Communities

Continued from front page...

Dr Jones explains: "It is not quite business as usual but prescription requests should be put in in the normal way and we can still see patients if necessary."

Repeat prescriptions can be requested by telephone or in paper form through the letterbox on the old front door. Dr Jones is reassuring about the future availability of medicines: "We do not anticipate any supply problems from our wholesalers so there is no need to over-order or stock up."

The churches in the Glenkens have all been advised to suspend services and meetings which will be particularly challenging for many people.

However, both David Bartholomew, Minister for the Church of Scotland parishes of Carsphairn, Dalry and Kells & Balmaclellan, and Pam Swift, Rector of St Margaret's Episcopal Church in New Galloway, are putting together resources for prayer and reflection. David Bartholomew will have prayers, a selection of hymns and a reflection on a Bible reading available weekly by email and at local shops (call 01644 430 380 to sign up for emails).

At St Margaret's the church will be open on Wednesday and Sunday mornings, at 10.30am for anyone who would like some quiet time for reflection and prayer in a sacred space, and the Rector is also working on a website with daily readings (you can

have managed during this time. Perhaps keep a diary highlighting unusual or interesting aspects of self-isolation – as this is going to be a good time to learn a new skill (bird-watching, painting, gardening, baking...) or perhaps a good time for some self-revelations - please let us know how you're getting on.

It would be particularly good to hear from school pupils on creative ways they're occupying their time away from the classroom. For the adults maybe finishing that patchwork cushion or mending the lawnmower – there must be plenty of tasks we have all been putting off and we'd like to hear about them. It will be interesting and enlightening for us all to find out the most probably diverse ways people found of coping with this scenario once this has all passed.



Facebook page for links to resources. Our Fb page also will give information on the current situation regarding local amenities, events, support structures, etc.

We are living in rapidly changing times and it might be that as things progress we create a shortened information-sheet type Gazette before the next issue is due if we think there is enough new information to be shared with everyone.

Also, many people will be missing the classes and events around the Glenkens. Glenkens Community & Arts Trust are also working on a way to deliver the Connecting in Communities and Youth Arts programmes on a virtual basis.

Sending thoughts of support and strength to all our readers during these unsettled times and, in the words of David Rhodes, let us continue to create "Gentle ripples of care and support. Quiet signals of hope."

The Glenkens Gazette Team

"Gentle ripples of care and support. Quiet signals of hope." David Rhodes

find out more at 01644 420 467).

Looking ahead, in the June edition of the Glenkens Gazette we are hoping to publish stories showing how people

If you're a parent who finds yourself suddenly homeschooling, there are lots of online resources to support this - keep an eye on the Gazette

CatStrand Players Drama Festival Win

Continued from front page...

Director, Brian Edgar said: "I was extremely proud to finally lift this trophy after over 40 years of trying as an actor and director. Zoe and Eilidh are very talented actresses and a delight to work with on stage – most of the credit is due to them and we were looking forward to presenting Henna Night again at CatStrand on 20 March and then at The Beacon in Greenock the following week. It is sad that we won't get the chance to perform the play again at this stage but hopefully we might be able to stage it at CatStrand later in the year."

Crossmichael Drama Club were placed second and 88 Theatre were in third place. The success didn't stop there with CatStrand Youth Players finishing in second place in the Youth Festival with *Selfie* by Bradley Hayward. A very

contemporary play, *Selfie*, was brought to life by the eight cast members as they portrayed many of the issues impacting on teenagers today.

The Youth Festival was won by Kirkcudbright Drama Troupe with their production of *Dead Dad Dog*, Newton Stewart Youth Players were third with *The Secret*.

It is obviously not possible to set a date at the moment but hopefully later in the year we may be able to perform *Selfie*, *Henna Night* and also a third play which we had been working on featuring some of our younger talent, *Ernie's Incredible Illucinations* by Alan Ayckbourn. Watch this space!



Pictured: Cast of Henna Night, Eilidh Thomson and Zoe Kirkpatrick.

Glenkens & District Trust Support

Trustees of the Glenkens & District Trust (GDT) had a telephone conference call on 17 March to discuss the current challenges we are facing due to COVID-19.

We all recognised that we are living in difficult times with no certainty as to how long this will last and how our loved ones, our communities and ourselves will be impacted in the long term. We all have a role to play to support each other during these times and are very grateful for the actions people and organisations across the area are taking to help each other in both big and small ways.

We are a great community, which has achieved great things over the years, and by continuing to work together we are confident these foundations will help us weather the storm. We in GDT are committed to playing our part in this.

After discussion we decided to continue with the application round that is currently underway.

However, the Trustees are aware that we are in rapidly changing times due to COVID-19 and will now bear this in mind as we move through the process. Whilst there was a timetable in place for making decisions by the end of May 2020, this date is now uncertain due to the risk of unavailability of both the GDT Trustees and the Foundation Scotland workforce during the assessment and decision making process.

In parallel we are also considering and exploring the implementation of an emergency funding process whereby organisations can apply for funds to help meet unexpected needs arising as a result of the current circumstances and which are aligned with the charitable purpose of the Fund. Further information regarding this will be published in due course.

During this time we will continue to draw on the invaluable experience which Foundation Scotland have in managing numerous funds across Scotland who are also grappling with similar issues.

Information will be available on the following website www.foundationscotland.org.uk/programmes/blackcraig

Fiona Smith, chair, GDT

Road Safety up the Lorg Glen

Following on from the Pony Express article of Issue 115, featuring Fiona Clubb by the newly installed post box at the turning to the Water o' Ken road, we have another equable equine story this issue.

Here are Ben, Melissa and Flossy the cob by the recently installed salt bin on the Lorg Road up the Water Of Ken.

Melissa said: "It's a load off the minds of local residents, particularly those of us with young children, that we now have a

supply of grit on hand for when the weather turns nasty".

Community Councillor Matt Hickman commented: "I'd like to thank the Council Roads Department for actioning our request for the salt bin and finding the funding from their much diminished budget. It's little victories like this that make it so rewarding to be part of such a proactive community group"

Flossy appeared singularly unimpressed by the new potential

hazard in the landscape but, as this was her very first time pulling the cart, she had rather a lot of other things on her mind already.



Melissa, Ben and Flossy by the newly installed salt bin.

BALMACLELLAN VILLAGE SHOP

We will deliver - please get in touch...

- cash machine - winter fuel (peat, logs) - Flo Gas - Dalmellington Butcher pies/meat - Marchbank Bakers delivery every Friday -

01644 420 321

THE STEWARTRY VETERINARY CENTRE

CASTLE DOUGLAS SURGERY HOURS
Mon-Fri 2.00-2.30 pm & 5-6 pm
Sat 2-2.30 pm

DALBEATTIE SURGERY HOURS
Mon, Wed, Fri 3-3.30 pm
Tues & Thurs 6-6.30 pm

FOR APPOINTMENTS AT BOTH SURGERIES
OR IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

01556 502263

VETERINARY SURGERY
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CASTLE DOUGLAS

T: 01644 460 670 Real Dog Training Scotland

Dog Training & Dog Training Courses at Dalry Town Hall

Eric Broadhurst (NDOA Advanced Instructor)
One of the country's leading dog trainers
Trainer to the TV & film industry

For more information visit our web site
www.realdogtrainingscotland.co.uk

CatStrand Highlights

Coronavirus - what is the impact on our delivery at CatStrand and in the Glenkens?

In light of the current coronavirus outbreak and with the health of our community in mind we have been working hard to keep things running as normal at CatStrand.

However, with recent developments in government guidance on social gathering, we have had to make the difficult decision to postpone all events, classes and activities with immediate effect until 31 May 2020.

This position will be kept under review in the coming weeks and will be amended if necessary. We kept the café and shop open as long as possible but as a result of the directive on 23rd March, CatStrand and The Smiddy are now totally closed until further notice.

Key staff will still be working mainly from home and will endeavour to

respond to any enquiries as soon as possible. You can contact us by email – info@catstrand.com or by phone 01644 420 374; please leave a message if necessary and someone will get back to you.

Our communities in the Glenkens are at the heart of everything we do as the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust.

As many of you will have booked tickets for upcoming events we will

be in touch with you individually, but hope that you would consider holding your ticket should rescheduling be possible, or to consider your ticket as a much needed donation at this very challenging time for our organisation, as with so many others in the arts sector.

We rely heavily on income from

our events to sustain our arts programming and the impact of cancelling an entire season could be devastating to our continued work across all our projects.

Wishing everyone in our communities, our valued audiences, friends and volunteers good health and best wishes as we work through this uncertain time together.

The CatStrand Team



CatStrand Youth Players Selfie cast, double trophy winners at SCDA Youth Festival.

KNOCKENGORROCH
10-13 September
postponed from May
World Ceilidh

Afro Celt Sound System
High Tone -Shooglenifty
Kel Assouf - Lowkey
Mungos Hi Fi Sound System
Plump DJs - The Poozies
Blick Bassy
Leah Song (of Rising Appalachia)
Moishe's Bagel - Don Kipper
Alum Easter - Cut Capers
The...cables - Samson Sounds
John...urst - Twelfth Day
Tinderbox Orchestra - DJ Dolphin Boy
Zoe Bestel, ...le Spree
and many

Line-up may be subject to change.

In the lush mountain of South West Scotland
knockengorrock.org.uk

Wright's Shop & Post Office



Dalry's local convenience store

- licensed grocers •
- newsagents •

stocking a range of local suppliers

- Express Bakery bread •
- Irvings biscuits & cakes •
- Ballards & Dalmellington Country Butchers meat & pies •
- Mitchells fruit & veg •

Shop & Post Office open 7 days

Monday to Friday 7am-6pm

Saturday 8am-6pm Sunday 8.30am-4pm

Tel 01644 430 225

LOCH KEN'S AUTUMN ENDURANCE

Plans are progressing for the Autumn of Endurance events, scheduled to take place in September 2020 in and around Loch Ken.

These will show off the area as one of the jewels of Southern Scotland's landscape, and are designed to raise the profile of the region on the national stage. The events are being overseen by the newly established Loch Ken Trust and supported through Visit Scotland as part of the 2020 Year of Coasts & Waters programme.

The events are:

• **5-6 September – Beltie Triathlon.**

Swim in a slow-moving river; cycle a fast and scenic route followed by a testing run.

• **11-13 September – Loch Ken Wild Swimming weekend.** A weekend of wild swimming in Loch Ken, distances of 500m to 10km.

• **18-20 September – Castle Douglas Bike & Food Festival.** Bringing together a love of food and cycling! Food related activities through the weekend with bike events from 1km to a 90km time trial

• **25-27 September – Loch Ken Paddle Festival.** Dragon boat racing,

kayaking and all things paddle related!

• **4 October – The End Game.** Test yourself against a modern pentathlon! 5km Open Water Swim, 6.5km Kayak, 40km Bike and 10km Trail Run finishing with archery and a well-earned feast.

Recently, the Autumn of Endurance team were exhibiting at the Scottish Cycling, Running and Outdoor Pursuits Show (SCROPS), with lots of interest being shown in the events. They spoke to hundreds of event organisers and potential participants from around the UK.

To show how reachable Loch Ken is from other parts of Scotland and Northern England, the Autumn of Endurance team used a bike and turbo trainer to pedal the distance from Loch Ken to Glasgow and back again over the course of the weekend event.

Barney Fryer, Loch Ken Alive Officer, co-ordinating the Autumn of Endurance season, said: "It was great to have the chance to talk about our Autumn of Endurance programme to all the visitors to the show in Glasgow.

"Endurance athletics and wild sports are becoming more popular all the time, as people realise the range of benefits to both physical and mental health. Loch Ken has some of the best swimming, running and cycling routes in the country. We are all looking forward to welcoming everyone



The Autumn of Endurance Team stand at the Scottish Cycling, Running and Outdoor Pursuits Show.

this autumn for what promises to be an amazing series of events."

Alan Smith, Chairman of the Loch Ken Trust, said: "The level of interest in the events was heartening, and this was a great opportunity for the range of partners involved to start showing off what we are planning. The Autumn of Endurance Events are designed to provide a boost to the area, from accommodation businesses to those running events themselves, at a time of year when visitor levels tend to drop. Keep an eye out for further information as the plans come together."

THE GARDEN SPOT

We gardeners are an optimistic bunch, we have to be.

Imagine planting the tiniest of seeds, trusting it won't just give up, no mini-beast will come to eat it, and it won't get squashed by a misplaced foot. Then, months later it has grown into a delicious carrot, a fine runner bean plant or a sunflower that towers over you. Of course, not all seeds will make it, but most will. Who but an optimist would plant a tree that won't be at its best until long after they have left this world?

Optimism with a hint of ruthlessness perhaps? If a plant dies or is not doing well, have it out! The space it leaves is an opportunity for something new. If I were a philosopher, I might think that social distancing for the virus outbreak provides similar opportunities for something new. If you can't get out to your club or to see friends, don't just sit in with a book or the TV, get out into the garden.

If you haven't tried gardening before, now is the perfect opportunity to have a go. It's even the right time of year for

planting most things. You can buy a reasonable selection of seeds in Tesco or Wilko. If you have the space and fancy having a bash at growing veg for the first time, there are loads to try; tatties, onions, beetroot, salads etc. Carrots - choose an early variety like Nantes as they mature quicker - you can grow these in the ground, or an old bucket full of compost or soil (punch holes in the bottom for drainage). I have even grown carrots in the flower bed of my front garden where they get mistaken for an exotic fern!

The garden is a great place to get

fresh veg if the supermarket shelves are a little bare. But keep in mind that if your garden is visited by rabbits or pigeons, you might have to protect lettuces, cabbage, peas and beans with netting of some sort. You can keep tomatoes and chilli plants growing on your windowsill if you haven't got a greenhouse, then move them outside after the danger of frost has passed (mid May at least). I recommend Sungold tomatoes, orange rather than red, small, sweet and fast growing. No need to follow the instructions on seed packets too literally either. I sometimes plant radish and lettuce seeds together in a row - the radishes are quicker and finished by the time the lettuces need the space.

If you have children off school, it's a great learning opportunity for them to see how life works. And, if you don't know enough to teach them, learn together. Kids love stuff that grows quickly or tall, so try rocket and sunflowers.

Remember that social distancing is NOT social isolation. A chat with a neighbour over the garden fence (two metres apart of course) will do wonders for the spirit and it's a good way to pick up gardening tips as well. Fingers crossed for a great season...

The Intrepid Gardener



Spring flowers.

Walking with Waterside Ways

A newly formed, informal group have been coming together monthly to enjoy the wonders of Waterside Hill, Dalry.

Waterside Ways is for anyone who loves Waterside Hill, whether it's your daily walk, an occasional wander or an iconic view you enjoy from your house or workplace. It's a landscape feature that holds great importance to many in our community with several notable bird species, cultural histories, and archaeological features, as well as being the inspiration for Robert Burns' Tam O' Shanter.

Waterside Hill is part of the Southern Upland Way, and one of the most popular walks straight from the village, with fantastic views of Dalry village and the Glenkens in one direction, and the Rhinns of Kells and Cairnsmore of Carsphairn in the other.

Waterside Ways have started a monthly walk and talk up the hill, followed by optional food or drinks at the Clachen Inn. To enable as many folk as possible the opportunity to join us, the walks are at different times and on different

days. Our first outing up the hill proved very popular; 12 people enjoyed a slow paced amble, whilst sharing their stories of connectedness to this hillside. At the summit cairn, there was some chat about glacial activity and how it has shaped our landscape. It was a blustery day, but dressed for the weather, we stayed mostly dry and warm and had fantastic views of the snowy Galloway hills followed by a stimulating gathering at the pub afterwards with lots of ideas for future events.

Very soon we plan have a full programme of speakers and activities on a monthly basis through the summer, which will take place during the walks. We also invite people to come forward with their ideas for activities, be it art, performance, poetry, educational talks, singing on the hillside, storytelling etc. And if you would like to take one of the unfilled slots below please drop us a line. All ideas are welcome!



We've set up a Facebook page, Waterside Ways, which is open for anyone to join. It's an excellent forum for sharing stories, pictures, memories and more.

Next gatherings are: Sunday 26 April - 11am with Listening and Sound Gathering, Helmut Lemke (get in touch to confirm); May - date and activity TBC

Monday 29 June - 6pm speaker/activity TBC; Saturday 25 July - 2pm speaker/activity TBC; Friday 21 August - 4pm speaker/activity TBC; Sunday 27 September 3pm speaker/activity TBC.

For more information please contact Kerry Morrison on 07801 709 721 or dr.kerry.morrison@gmail.com



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Crossing Words



Kindly sponsored by Glenkens Community Shop

Deugh – Ken – Dee



Photos: Jane McBeth

The above images show the bridge over the Ken at Allangibbon. Thanks to our contributors for these responses...

staying by Allangibbon

by evening I'd forgotten
the three deer I startled there
in my rush out the door—
the way winter draws us
closer

Jane McBeth

Allangibbon Bridge is the second crossing I make on my weekend walk. I call it the bridge of sighs, due to the fact that my owner always stops midway over, leans on the bridge and sighs saying how beautiful the view is. No matter what the weather, in each season she sees a beauty from the bridge.

In the summer she watches the sun glint through the green leaves of the trees and bounce off the calm waters below, and sometimes we go underneath its arches and I have a wee paddle in the cool water. All the autumnal colours fascinate her when the leaves turn to reds, yellows and all shades in between. Sometimes a red kite delights her with an acrobatic display. Even the cold winter doesn't faze her as she especially loves the patterns the frost and ice make on the grass and water down below.

Eventually we resume our walk and cross back into the parish of Dalry, then it's my turn to sigh because I know it won't be long till I get home for breakfast, and to a wee Galloway dog called Buddie some things are important!

Buddie the dog

NEXT ISSUE – THE VIADUCT AT LOCH STROAN

I visited this crossing point for the first time especially for this issue. We parked in the car park at Mossdale and walked about a mile along what was once 'The Port Road' railway line but is now a pathway carpeted with rocks and shingle. Loch Stroan unfolded before my eyes as we emerged from the tree-lined track onto the viaduct. It was a dreich day when we visited, but the photos still give a sense of the beauty of the place (and made my soggy knees worthwhile!) The viaduct can also be reached directly from the Raiders Road which winds around to a parking area with a wooden table or two. The Raiders Road will have reopened for the summer season by the time this issue appears and I look forward to revisiting on a sunny day with a picnic.



If the viaduct at Loch Stroan inspires you to put pen to paper, please send your writing (max. 250 words) to me, Laura, by email: laura.kenwords@gmail.com or post c/o CatStrand by Fri 24 April. A selection of responses will be printed in the next issue and all submissions will be kept for possible future publication.

Ken Words has at its heart imaginative engagement with sense of place, particularly within the landscape of the Galloway Glens. It seeks to encourage anyone interested in writing to develop their enjoyment, confidence and ability through friendly, supportive writing activities and events. Our programme can be found in the CatStrand brochure or please feel welcome to contact Jane at jane.kenwords@gmail.com

The Children from Belarus

I recently wrote a piece in response to a request from Nicola Black of the CatStrand Singers for ideas for a song.

The CatStrand Singers have been awarded a grant by the Galloway Glens, which enables them to pay Nicola properly and keep on singing. A condition of the grant is that the group should do some public performances and include songs local to the region, some of which should be new.

This article has been made available to the writers who attend The Writers' Cafe, inviting any interested person to write some lyrics.

The Chernobyl Disaster and the Response in Galloway

'Perestroika' (restructuring) and 'glasnost' (openness) in the 1980s lead to the collapse of the Soviet union and allowed other countries to step in and help after the No 4 nuclear reactor at Chernobyl went into meltdown and spewed radioactive debris and dust into the atmosphere.

The disaster happened on 26 April 1986, a few days before the important May Day celebrations. The people living at Chernobyl were evacuated soon after the event, but other local populations were not informed about the danger and were encouraged to turn out in the warm sunshine to celebrate.

On April 28, Swedish monitoring stations reported abnormally high levels of wind-transported radioactivity and pressed for an explanation. The Soviet government admitted there had been an accident at Chernobyl.

In the meantime, the plume of radiation had been swirled round the nearby countryside and then carried by high winds in a north-easterly direction. It so happened that heavily-polluted rain fell on SW Scotland, Wales and Cumbria, blew out to sea and then returned, thus delivering a double dose of radiation to the Glenkens, among other places.

For years local farmers were subject to restrictions on the sale of sheep (in particular). Twenty years later, 10 farms in Scotland were still affected and it was not until 2012 that the majority of such restrictions were removed from most remaining farms.

So the people of the Glenkens knew quite a lot about the Chernobyl disaster. In September 1991, I contacted an organisation called Chernobyl Children Lifeline in Surrey and offered to take two children for four weeks' respite care as this would be beneficial to their health. I was told that the children came in groups of 10 or more, with an

interpreter, and we would need to raise £3,500 for their air fares. The children would come from Belarus – because this country had the largest area affected by fallout. They would be aged between nine and 12 years old, and never have travelled out of the country before. They would all have been living in contaminated areas or have been evacuated to a city because their home had received heavy doses of radiation.

Doubtfully, I began sounding out friends and neighbours. I was encouraged by Dr Sheila Neil to put an article in the Galloway News asking interested people to contact me. I was amazed by the response. It was not long before we had five families ready to accept two children each. Others got in touch offering support. The Co-op offered food, a farmer in Dumfries offered eggs; the Red Cross offered to take them out; the Lions in Dalbeattie wanted to help; Rotary offered support; a hotel in Moffat invited them to visit. It was amazing! We formed a proper group with a chairman and a treasurer. We began fundraising, and somehow we raised the required amount and the children came.

Because it was a great success, we couldn't stop after just one year. We continued bringing over at least 10 children every year for eight years, with myself and Sheila MacKay at the helm. As a group we must have entertained well over 100 children over the years.

Well those are the facts but they are not hugely lyrical! So here are some memories and thoughts that may help:

How brave those parents must have been in Belarus to entrust their children to the care of strangers! How desperate and grateful must those parents have been, to send them?

All the children brought presents for their host families. Items such as woven table runners (some taken from precious hoards as they could not afford anything new) or wooden items decorated with

glistening straw – very beautiful. Belarus grows flax, birch trees and cereals. It does not have much mineral wealth but does get amber from the Baltic States, so wooden pictures decorated with amber often came, along with lovely painted spoons and beautifully decorated boxes.

Did anything go wrong? Well of course it did. Some of the visiting children pilfered. Coming from a soviet country, no-one was rich and many were poor. They were overwhelmed at the number of toys and possessions our children and families had. They took silly things that they thought were not valued by their

owners.

Language was of course a barrier, and we found a Russian lady in Kircudbright who was willing to give us lessons. One of our most useful phrases proved to be 'be careful' (ostorozhna!). Fortunately, the Russian word for 'stop' is 'stop'.

Why was 'ostorozhna' so important? For one thing, the children had no road sense at all. For a second, they were not used to hills and, unless restrained, would start running down the steepest of slopes. But those who could ride a bike were the worst – one lad could not be deterred from riding round Balmaclellan on the bike of his hosts' son. Locals had to learn to avoid him on the wrong side of the road.

We wanted our children to call us by our first names. Shock, horror! This seemed too disrespectful for our guests, and a lovely compromise was reached and we were known as Mrs Rhoda and Mr Dennis.

The girls all seemed to love to sing. When we took them out in a car, we would get serenaded.

Local people were so welcoming and supportive. The children had a ball. Living in a landlocked country, none of them had ever seen the sea before. Our lovely egg farmer had a huge catamaran and he took all of our children plus any of the host family children who wanted to come, on a trip to Heston Island and back. Bliss for all concerned.

At that time Laurieston Hall had a resident circus performer and he arranged for all the children to visit the hall, eat wonderful food and try circus skills. The highlight one year was when a fire juggler entertained us more than usual by setting his hair on fire! No harm done; just some frizzled top hair.

Were they ill? Not noticeably, although some of them were very pale and a few had had their thyroid glands removed. Thyroid cancer is the one cancer form that can be directly blamed on radioactive iodine in the explosion

as it has a short half-life and makes straight for the thyroid gland.

Where the thyroid gland is already saturated with stable iodine the gland is

protected. Sadly the Belarussian diet is deficient in natural iodine. Most of the children or their families would keep in touch for a year or two after going home. One of the girls that had had her thyroid gland removed did not do so. We do not know if this is significant. All the children went home looking more rested and glowing from enjoying such a holiday. For me, that is enough. I do not need to know if their health was permanently improved. They had had a wonderful holiday they will never forget.

by Rhoda Rugg

Local people were so welcoming and supportive.



GALLOWAY GLENS
Landscape Partnership

Galloway Glens Projects 2020

As the Galloway Glens nears completion of its second year, we thought it might be interesting to see how our projects are mapping out – quite literally!

Have a look at the amazing range of projects we are supporting. Many thanks are due as ever to our partner organisations and their staff and volunteers, without whom none of these would be possible.

For more details about any project on this map, go to www.gallowayglens.org/Themes.

If you'd like more information about our projects, do sign up for our monthly newsletter on www.gallowayglens.org - [Sign up for our Newsletter](#) > we won't use your information for anything else!

REGION WIDE PROJECTS

- Business Academy 2020
- Galloway Rural Skills
- Can You Dig It community archaeology project
- Historic Mapping Project
- Place Names of the Galloway Glens
- Oral History Project
- Galloway Glens Experience
- Love our Fruit and Nuts *
- Moths and Mammals at Home*
- Walking the Galloway Glens*
- Singing the Galloway Glens*



GALLOWAY GLENS PROJECTS

-  GALLOWAY GLENS PROJECTS
-  NEW OR IMPROVED BUILDINGS
-  ACTIVITY AREA
-  NEW OR IMPROVED WALKING PATHS
-  SMALL GRANT PROJECTS



NEW OR IMPROVED BUILDINGS



*

[illegible]

Support for Veterans

Over the last two years local man Robin Hood has raised funds through his memorable campaigns of pulling a wooden statue across the country by foot.

The money raised through his charity, SWS RnR, has gone towards re-skilling

60 local Army Veterans by supporting them in achieving their HGV licences, therefore helping them get back into full time work.

Robin says: "This year, between them they will contribute £228,000 in income tax instead of claiming benefits, as well as delivering the nation's goods. And, most importantly, they have a sense of feeling valued as well as earning a living."

Pictured: Robin with the two statues he has pulled for miles to raise funds.



New Galloway's VE Day 75th Anniversary Celebrations Postponed

NG Community Events Committee regret that due to the current coronavirus outbreak we have made the decision to cancel this event.

We were planning a day of celebrations for the 75th Anniversary of VE Day, working with the Community Council, CatStrand, Kells School Parent Council and the Cubs & Beavers to

remember the special day when the guns fell silent at the end of the war in Europe.

It was to be an opportunity for us all to remember the enormous sacrifices that were made at home and abroad and to joyously celebrate as people did 75 years ago, the arrival of peace in Europe.

It was to have been a truly community event for the New Galloway & Kells Parish. We were planning celebrations in New Galloway Park with food, music, games and concluding

with a short ecumenical service at the war memorial.

At this time when the spirit of the war is often being remembered, let us all try to think of others in our community and look forward with hope to the end of the crisis.

Depending upon the length of the restrictions, **perhaps it will be possible to re-schedule later in the year, maybe even in August** when Japan surrendered and World War II finally finished.

Joan Walker

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YOUTH TRANSPORT PILOT FEEDBACK

Between December and February, CatStrand Youth piloted a youth transport project, Get On It, running free buses for young people aged 12-25 on Sunday afternoons linking rural Glenkens villages with Castle Douglas and Kirkcudbright.

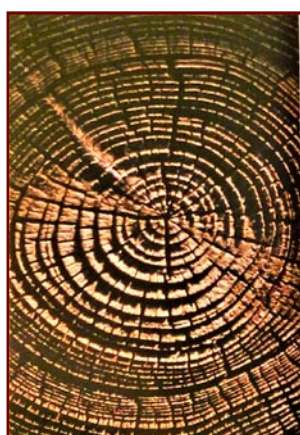
Everyone who used the bus provided positive feedback and we're keen to go ahead with our second and last pilot.

We are currently looking for feedback from young people about what routes, times and days they would be most likely to use the bus. If you'd like to help by providing this, please fill in our online survey at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/99ZHJLJ or use the QR code to the right.

We're still looking for adults who can be on board to check registrations and be on hand in case of an emergency. This is a paid position and we can provide PVG registration if needed. Please get in

touch with katy@catstrand.com ASAP if you think you can help with this.

*Katy Billington,
CatStrand Youth Arts Coordinator
07891374516, katy@catstrand.com*



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GLENKENS ROUTE

Thursdays:

12noon-1pm – Crossmichael
1-2pm – Parton/Loch Ken Holiday Park
2-4pm – Balmaclellan area
4-5.30pm – The Hidden Road

Fridays:

8-10.30am – Dalry
10.30-11am – Glenlee Area
11am – New Galloway
12noon – New Galloway Shop
2pm – Mossdale area
3-4pm – Laurieston to Gatehouse
Please note that all times are approximate.

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Schools Food & Farming Days

Glenkens primary school children, along with others from across the Stewartry, visited Walleys Marts in Castle Douglas for an educational 'Food & Farming' day.

These events were arranged by the Royal Highland Educational Trust, in partnership with the Galloway Glens scheme, and sought to introduce young people to the farming sector and show off the range of professions available in this industry.

Activities on the day included Tom Kirkpatrick from Kirkpatrick's Kitchen and Quality Meat Scotland demonstrating the importance of higher welfare meat; Scottish Natural Heritage and Millbank Parkland Venison handling deer and venison; Mary Smith discussing how to make good food choices; Glen Urr, Roan's Dairy and Arla highlighting the story behind milk; demonstrations about cereal production and use; sheep

management and farming; and creative, heritage skills with the Dumfries & Galloway Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers.

There were also live animals, milking trucks and plenty of taster foods at lunchtime. It was all rounded off with an auction of pygmy goats, courtesy of Walleys Marts staff.

Fiona Jamieson, RHET Project Co-Ordinator, who led the events, said: "We were delighted to partner with the Galloway Glens to offer these superb Food and Farming learning experiences. Along with our funding from the Scottish Government, partnerships like this allow us to offer more opportunities to local

school children to really understand what the food and farming industry represents as well as learn about the career choices it presents. We are grateful to Walleys Marts for hosting the event, along with our numerous supporters and volunteers who helped make it happen again this year."

Helen Keron, Galloway Glens Education & Community Engagement Officer, added:

"These have been a fantastic couple of days, good fun and really informative...It was fantastic to see so many children (and teachers) enjoying themselves but also learning so much. It was also great to see the passion amongst the food and

farming community for passing their traditions on to the next generation – the volunteer effort involved in these days is incredible.

"Thanks to all who came along and to all the supporters, especially Walleys Marts who hosted us so well. A key aim of the Galloway Glens Scheme is to let our young folk see their future can be here in Galloway. The 'Food & Farming' days sought to spark their imagination to the opportunities available in the industry."



A young person tries her hand at auctioneering.

Indoors and Outdoors at Kells Primary

World Book Day

Kells Primary celebrated World Book Day this year with some familiar activities, and a new one too.

We began by thinking about the main theme for World Book Day this year, which was Sharing Stories. We talked about our favourite ways to share stories and the types of stories we enjoyed sharing the most.

Each child brought an unopened food can or empty plastic bottle and the book containing their favourite character to help them with the next activity. Over the following hour, each child attempted to recreate the character, using the tin or

bottle as a base. You can see from the photos, some excellent characters were created using a variety of craft and everyday materials, such as coloured paper, paint, lollipop sticks and even bolts and stones! Once the characters were finished the children worked in pairs to try to match the correct book with its can, or bottle character! There were many detailed and well thought out creations. Both Hannah (P5) and Ella's (P3) characters were judged to be the two that most resembled their book character and each girl won a prize of a book for their hard work.

The activities finished with children from both classes sharing the stories they had brought to school. This time was spent with the children enjoying listening to their friends read to them and discussing the stories together.

Outdoor Learning

Children at Kells Primary have enjoyed spending some Wednesday afternoons out and about in their community. A couple of weeks ago we made our third visit to the Walled Garden on the Garroch Estate. This time groups of children helped some of the volunteers gardeners with moving and spreading wood chips and using maths knowledge and skills they had learned in the classroom to choose and use appropriate measuring equipment to measure some other the things they had



found in the garden.

The following week the children were lucky enough to be led by LING volunteers, along the trails in the woods beside the New Galloway Golf Club. Whilst doing this the children were given tips about markers and instructions they could use and incorporate into maps. This was so they could make leaflets for visitors to use to follow the trails and enjoy the beautiful scenery surrounding the village. Once the maps have been created and given the final test and with help from LING and Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme the children hope to have them published and available to the public in the village shop!

Pictured: Left - World Book Day characters being created. Above - walk along New Galloway Golf Club trails.



Galloway Music Festival Success

Dalry Secondary's S3 Vocal Group has been celebrating its success in the recent Galloway Music Festival.

The S3 group from Dalry won their class, as well as bagging the Wigtownshire Music Festival Trophy, with their performance of *Party Favor* by Billy Eilish.

The Music Festival went well and the children enjoyed the experience. The group ended up with 85 points, and were commended for their performance, with encouraging words from the adjudicator to perhaps stick together and keep singing.

A good evening was had by all including the parents who made it along to the show.

Pictured: Dalry Secondary's S3 group winners Sophie, Jessica, Kaelan and Molly.



CATSTRAND YOUTH GETS BUSY

CatStrand Youth has had a fun and busy few months.

Alongside our regular clubs for young people, we've also been rehearsing for multiple performances and running new projects and workshops.

In February, our Youth Volunteers enjoyed a trip to Wigtown Book Festival's *Hooked* event where they attended a workshop on lyric writing and stayed to watch the open mic night featuring spoken word and songs. In February we also held our very first sewing and upcycling workshop. Young people came up with some incredible ideas and over the course of the afternoon embellished bags and old clothes giving them a new spark of life. There was also a glove and a bag created from scratch!

Also in February, CatStrand Youth held a community performance called *Our Kind: Once Upon a Planet*. During the show, various performance pieces from shadow puppetry, to dance, to song were woven together to create a narrative on climate change and raise awareness of our impact on the planet. This was followed by a youth-led discussion. Lots of preparation went into this show and many groups and individuals worked hard – both on stage and behind the scenes – to make it a success, so we'd like to say a massive thank you and well done to everyone who got involved! We received some very complimentary feedback about the show and are already thinking of how we can take it forwards.

Our Film On Track project started over the February half-term. This project is all about adventure filmmaking. We took a group of young people – all with different experiences of biking – to Kirroghtree for a day on the trails. Accompanied by videographer Drew Johnstone, they learned how to use go pro action cameras and test out different angles, shots and narratives. The following day was spent learning how to edit all the footage and add special effects and soundtracks. The result was two amazing adventure films about biking featuring

winding trails, cool jumps, silly crashes and even some biking lingo! We are keen to run more Film On Track biking and editing days so if you know of a young person who might be interested, get in touch and be sure to follow us on social media @catstrandyouth

CatStrand Youth Notice:

In light of the current Coronavirus outbreak, all regular youth arts groups are currently cancelled until 31 May 2020.

We will plan to hold youth volunteer meetings via Facetime or Zoom, as well as any other groups that can keep working virtually.

Katy and Aidan will be thinking of ideas to continue social activity online in conversation with our young people; if you have any ideas or questions do get in touch on 01644 420 374 or email katy@catstrand.com or aidan@catstrand.com

We hope everyone stays safe and well during this time.

*Katy Livingston,
CatStrand Youth Arts
Coordinator*



Top Right: Film on Track project.
Above: On Track project team.

David Tallontire CHIMNEY SWEEP

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TECHNOLOGY EXPLAINED: RADIO

Radio has been around for a long time - sometimes referred to as 'wireless' back in the day, because you used to need a license for the reception of 'wireless telegraphy'.

All radio used to be AM (Amplitude Modulation) and was short, medium or long wave. About the only thing you are likely to get on AM nowadays is BBC Radio Scotland on medium wave. I should have mentioned that this article is restricted to entertainment radio, so other uses (police, mountain rescue, air traffic and amateur [ham]

radio, etc, is excluded).

FM (Frequency Modulation) radio was the gold standard for many years but this will be phased out sometime in the future. Reception of FM in the Glenkens is patchy to say the least.

DAB (Digital Audio Broadcasting) is a more recent way to receive radio but it's still patchy in the Glenkens; many DAB radio sets can also receive FM.

People listen to radio on their TV sets (via their Sky box) or on their smartphone, computer or tablet (using broadband). Some of the older smartphones even have an FM radio built in, although my new Samsung does not. If you are out and about, you can listen to radio on your smartphone via the internet but that could be costly in use of data if you are not connected to wifi. A good smartphone app is TuneIn.

My favourite way to listen to radio is on an internet radio, plugged into the mains and connected to wifi. The sound quality is good and I can listen to any one of around 100,000 stations worldwide, although you may prefer to use one of the modern smart speakers which do much the same thing.

If you have an overwhelming urge to listen to a local radio

station in Christchurch, New Zealand (for example) you can do it easily on your phone, computer, smart speaker or internet radio, as long as you have an internet connection.

A word now about streaming services - there is Spotify, YouTube Music, Deezer and Soundcloud amongst others and, of course, Podcasts (try the HappyFish app and the BBC Sounds app). Nowadays you can listen to the music of your choice or the Archers when it is convenient for you and not just when it is officially 'aired' as used to be the case.

Long gone are the days when you had to retune the 'cat's whisker' on the crystal and lose the BBC Light programme because dad wanted to listen to the cricket on the BBC Home Service using the only radio in the house. Listening to the radio, or watching TV for that matter, used to be a family event. Now everyone seems to listen privately. Is that a good thing? I only do technology; you will need to ask a social philosopher about that!

Finally, a teenager said to me the other day (ironically, I think) "what's radio"? I replied, "it's like a podcast, but live"!

Paul Goodwin



Internet radio.

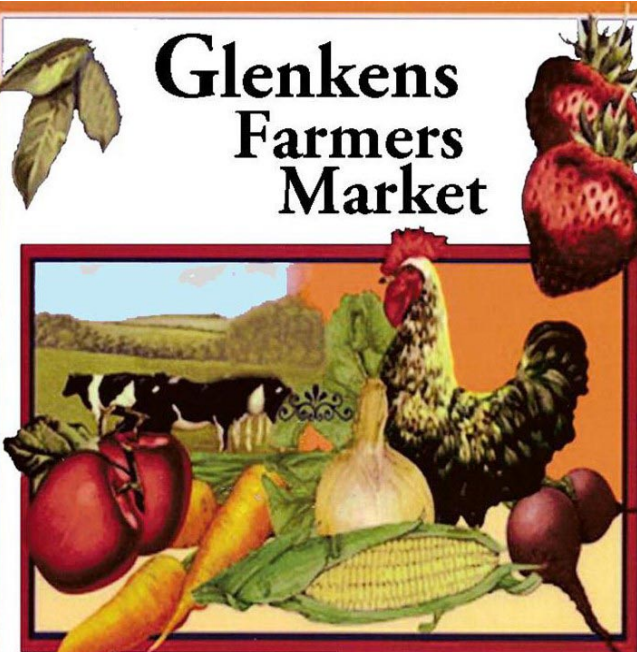
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Visit the Ospreys at Loch Doon

We are so very lucky to be living in such a beautiful place during these testing times, with so much open space to be able to enjoy whilst complying with the government's social exclusion directive.

It's the time of year when the days are getting longer and the weather is getting warmer, and spring is in the air. Time to get out and about and soak up some vitamin D.

Facilities such as cafes, restaurants and pubs are currently being asked to close their doors to slow the spread of the Covid-19 virus. However, food is able to be purchased at present on a takeaway basis from various retail outlets. Loch Doon's Roundhouse Cafe is the perfect place to grab a bite to eat or a coffee whilst enjoying the great outdoors.

Roundhouse proprietor, Brian Meechan, says: "We are happy to say that we will be open throughout the summer season for takeaway food and drinks. We continue to put the wellbeing of our staff and customers first, and therefore we are sorry to say that our new osprey lounge seating area will be closed until further notice."

Although the government guidelines state that we should avoid social gatherings and public places, getting out of the house to go for a walk and get some fresh air is something we can do whilst still abiding by the recommendations for social exclusion, and some fresh air and exercise will benefit everyone's health.

"Loch Doon is a wonderful place for walking," says

Brian. "With approximately 200 square miles of the Galloway Forest Park surrounding loch meaning it should not be difficult to find an area to distance yourself from other walkers, making it safe to enjoy this outside area. Just remember to stay at least 2 metres apart from others."

There are gentle strolls along the loch from the Roundhouse car park, or along the river is the local beauty spot Ness Glen, a gorgeous river walk featuring the spectacular

Dalcairney Falls.

The Roundhouse Takeaway will be serving tea, coffee, hot chocolate and their full snack menu will also be available. Please be aware only one customer a time will be allowed into the premises, so Brian asks if people could queue outside to allow staff to provide their services in a safe and secure manner.



NATIONAL TRUST OPEN SPACES

The National Trust have taken the difficult decision to close all their gated properties (historic buildings, visitor centres, visitor facilities, cafés, shops and toilets) and suspend all events across Scotland with effect from Friday 20 March 2020.

For Galloway this means closure of Threave Garden & Estate in Castle Douglas, Broughton House & Garden in Kirkcudbright, and Thomas Carlyle's Birthplace in Ecclefechan.

The Trust's Chief Executive, Simon

Skinner, said: "We know that this will be a big let-down for the many people who were looking forward to celebrating the arrival of spring at our properties after a long, hard winter."

"The flipside of that is that we're keeping many of our parklands, gardens and beautiful landscapes open to offer a green, clean and fresh respite from all the troubles we're seeing at the moment."

Sam Gallacher, Operations Manager for the National Trust for Scotland in Dumfries & Galloway said: "Should the situation allow, we're still really looking forward to our big event for 2020, Threave Gardening Show on 12-14 June."

In the meantime... while our built properties remain closed, the National Trust for Scotland's natural heritage properties at Rockcliffe, Venniehill in Gatehouse of Fleet and Threave Nature Reserve in Castle Douglas remain open to the public. James Hutchinson, Visitor Services Supervisor for Countryside Access & Education in Dumfries & Galloway said: "We have some wonderful natural heritage properties in Dumfries & Galloway. Our famous ospreys will soon be returning to Threave Nature Reserve, where we are hoping to host two breeding pairs for the first time following the construction of a new nest."

"Rockcliffe is a real hidden gem, with beautiful coastal walks with stunning viewpoints from the Mote of Mark and Muckle Hill. Please remember to wash your hands before and after your visit and keep a safe distance from other visitors at this time."



**NATIONAL
TRUST for
SCOTLAND**

KICKBACK MARTIAL ARTS CLUB

Brian Hilton who runs Kickback Martial Arts (KMA) club, along with his wife Nancy, tells us a bit about how the club began:

It all started about 18 years ago. I was working for the County Courts at the time and teaching martial arts every night of the week and Saturday mornings, with five clubs running.

My wife's parents getting older and in need of support lived 200 miles away and my father who had support about the same distance in the opposite direction. My wife being pregnant as well, we decided it was time to move.

We decided to move to be there for Nancy's parents and start fresh.

We initially thought Clubs in large towns would be the way forward, like Dumfries, Ayr, Kilmarnock. However, just by chance we heard someone talking about the last thing they wanted to do after work was drive 30 miles to Dumfries to go to the gym then drive home again. It must be the same for karate for a lot of people. So, we decided to look locally for village halls in smaller locations.

We started with Thornhill and Dalry (which was on twice a week at one point), followed by Kelloholm and Muirkirk, both since closed. We also had clubs in Moniaive and Penpont at one point.

We now have clubs in Patna on a Mondays, Netherthird

on Tuesdays and Saturdays, Dalry on a Thursday, and we are at present looking for a club for a Friday.

Kickback Martial Arts Club, Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry: Thursday evenings at 6-7pm for younger members, 7-9pm for older members. Parents can train at either time with their children if they wish.



The Mystery of Huntingdon 290

Old iron mileplates in Dumfries and Castle Douglas (pictured) name Huntingdon as a main destination in the south.

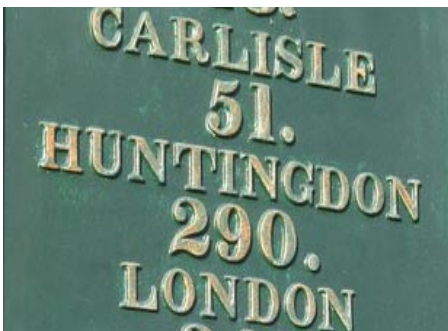
Why was Huntingdon so important to this part of the world? While living near Huntingdon and frequently visiting south-west Scotland I was intrigued by the old iron plate fixed to the MidSteeple in Dumfries showing the distance to key destinations: Edinburgh 72, Glasgow 74, London 330... Huntingdon 272. A similar plate - Huntingdon 290 - is set into the wall of the Douglas Arms in Castle Douglas.

Why Huntingdon, of all places? The plates appear to have been cast in 1827, so pre-rail.

Browsing the internet revealed a connection from medieval times. And an old plastic tea tray commemorating Bannockburn showed a link between the medieval kings of Scotland and the earls of Huntingdon which began when a Saxon hothead, Waltheof, was beheaded in 1076 for his part in the Rebellion of the Earls against William the Conqueror.

Waltheof was the son of Earl Siward of Northumbria. In those days Northumbria extended a long way south and he should have inherited the earldom in 1065, but as he was only 10 years old he was made earl of just the Middle Anglia part - Huntingdon and Northampton. And being a mere lad he was too young for call-up to the Battle of Hastings the following year, which may explain why he escaped the ethnic cleansing by victorious Norman warlords as they rampaged across the country.

Instead he became a resistance leader along with Hereward the Wake but was finally forced to surrender. For good behaviour he was rewarded in 1072 with the whole of Northumbria, although this turnaround in his fortunes was also due to his marriage to the Conqueror's niece



Judith. Then came the rebellion. Some say Judith betrayed him, others insist it was a royal conspiracy to eliminate the last of the Anglo-Saxon nobility. With Waltheof gone control of the earldom fell to Judith.

In due course their daughter Maud married one of the Conqueror's henchmen, Simon de Senlis, son of Ranulf the Rich. When Simon died on crusade in 1111 his widow, the Countess Maud of Huntingdon, although 36 and a single mum, was a very fine catch indeed. In a match arranged by the then King of England, Henry I, she married King David I of Scotland. Their union, in 1113, brought David the earldom of Huntingdon.

David at that time shared the throne of Scotland with his elder brother Alexander 'the Fierce', but claiming his inheritance - the southern half of Scotland - was something of a problem. The brothers were close friends with Henry, who had married their sister Edith (later known by her Norman name Matilda), so young David busied himself at the English court learning Norman ways.

He became a travelling justice in Henry's administration, and his retinue included a group of Norman knights who acted as his enforcers. In 1113, with Henry's backing, David finally made his claim in Scotland stick but to avoid trouble he continued to spend most of his time in England until brother Alexander died in 1124.

As the new ruler of a united Scotland, plus Cumbria, David took his enforcers north with him. They included de Brus (Bruce)

and others whose family names would become well-known. With the earldoms of Northumbria, Northampton and Huntingdon also under his belt he remained immensely influential in England.

When Henry I died in 1135 David backed Henry's daughter Matilda in the civil war against Stephen. She was, after all, his niece. Family ties however put David on the losing side and he was defeated at the Battle of the Standard in 1138. But with his army still intact he remained in control of Carlisle where, in 1149, he knighted his great-nephew, the future Henry II of England. In return Henry acknowledged Scotland's continued control over the northern counties of England.

King David, nicknamed "the Saint", died in 1153 at Carlisle aged 72, a keen gardener to the end. He outlived Maud but together they had created an extraordinary family. One of their boys, Henry of Huntingdon, produced 10 offspring including two future kings of Scotland, Malcolm IV and William I 'the Lion'.

Another of Henry of Huntingdon's sons was David, 3rd Earl of Huntingdon, a younger brother to Malcolm IV and William I. He was also Earl of Northumbria, Carlisle, Doncaster and Cambridge. He and his wife Matilda de Kevelioc produced a prodigious number of children. The eldest of these, Robert Huntingdon, was mysteriously airbrushed from official history and "died young", giving rise to speculation by some historians that this was the disinherited outlaw Robin Hood. Folk tales often refer to Robin as the Earl of Huntingdon. Could he have been?

If Robin led the resistance against Prince John during Richard the Lionheart's absence on crusade - 1190 to 1194 - he must have been born no later than c1170. Earl David was 26 in 1170 so the timeline allows for Robin to have been his son though not a product of the marriage bed. He didn't wed Matilda until 1190.

Continued next issue...

Stuart Littlewood

New Era for Carsphairn Heritage

Plans are moving forward at a considerable pace for Carsphairn Heritage Centre and the coming year will be as busy as any in its 30-year history.

The Carsphairn Heritage Group was formed to collect and preserve local family history records, photographs, slides and significant artifacts. Constructed in 1992, the Centre has housed these collections, providing space for yearly exhibitions and creating a focus point for visitors carrying out family research.

In February the group – under the new title of Carsphairn Heritage Initiative – became a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) to enable it to build on this legacy and to continue with several key projects which will secure the future of the Centre.

The Carsphairn Heritage Initiative (CHI) is continuing the work started by the Heritage Group to digitise their collection and is working to take ownership of the Centre from Dumfries & Galloway Council via the Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS).

Since 2017, volunteers have been digitising the collection of artefacts, documents and photos donated and

collected over the past 30 years to:

- make them accessible to people wherever they are in the world; make previously inaccessible material available to visitors and researchers; preserve the collection and the local heritage it contains; better interpret the archive and present it in an engaging manner to enhance the visitor experience.

CHI is grateful to the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership (GGLP) for additional funding towards the second phase of the digitisation project.

Ownership of the Centre will enable CHI to improve the educational experience for visitors through the continued preservation of its vast collection of historical memorabilia. It is planned to make the premises more comfortable, environmentally friendly and cost-effective to run by insulating and draught-proofing.

The Centre can also be used by other community groups when not needed by CHI and developed to attract a wider variety of users such as local crafts people for hosting workshops, exhibitions and educational sessions.

"As part of our CATS application to the council, we have to put together a comprehensive business case to show how ownership of the Centre will benefit the community," explained CHI interim trustee Karen Hall who used to chair the Heritage Group.

"We have to demonstrate how we will make the project sustainable in future years through, for example, funding improvements and running costs."

The interim trustees of CHI were planning to convene the first general meeting of CHI in May, but in light of Government guidance on social distancing to prevent the spread of Coronavirus, it has been postponed.

"I have huge hopes for the future of Carsphairn Heritage Initiative and for the Heritage Centre in Carsphairn," added Karen. "I hope that you will continue to support us, and we can look forward to celebrating at least another 30 years of heritage in this very special part of the world."

• *As Carsphairn Heritage Group will no longer exist after mid-May, all existing members who wish to continue supporting the new charity are being requested to transfer their membership to CHI, which is a legal requirement. They will be able to join the new group for free for the first year, and will receive a special application form with their Spring newsletter which is due for distribution any day now.*

Anyone else wishing to support the CHI in its new venture can sign up to become a member by visiting the Carsphairn website (Carsphairn.org/HeritageGroup) where they can download a membership form.



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A LOOK AT CLASSIC FEMALE DETECTIVE FICTION AUTHORS

Today the books of such female authors as Donna Leon, Rebecca Tope, Carola Dunn and Patricia Cornwall are read by thousands.

However it may be worthwhile to visit [or revisit] some of the excellent detective fiction produced by probably the five finest writers. The books of Margery Allingham, Agatha Christie, Ngaio Marsh, Gladys Mitchell, Dorothy Sayers and Patricia Wentworth can still be found reasonably priced, in print, in charity- and second hand bookshops and on Amazon.

The first four authors have had many of their books televised and, for many, this familiarity adds to the pleasure of reading them. In addition, many can be obtained in audiobook form.

Agatha Christie is probably the most well known by far. Her detective fiction provided us with 14 Miss Marple books [as well as cementing the status of Joan Hickson in our affections], 39 Poirot books and 25 other mysteries with such central characters as Mr Parker Pyne and Tommy and Tuppence Beresford.

Margery Allingham wrote 21 books about her most famous creation, Albert Campion. A few have appeared as television programmes with Peter Davison as understated aristocratic detective and solver of mysteries. *The Crime at Black Dudley*, *Mystery Mile* and *The Fashion in the Shrouds* are excellent examples of her art.



Ngaio Marsh wrote over 30 detective novels, many of them centred around the theatre. This was a lifelong passion of the author, however the theatrical background rarely overshadows the excellence of the mystery and the solution. Her central character, the gentleman Roderick Alleyn, rises through Scotland Yard. He is

one of the few fictional detectives without idiosyncrasies to make them memorable. Patrick Malahide [Sgt Chisholm in *Minder*] played Alleyn in a number of television adaptations. *Death in a White Tie* and *The Nursing Home Murder* are two examples of the books.

Gladys Mitchell wrote over 60 books and introduced Mrs Bradley as the distinguished and ferociously intelligent heroine who thrived on puzzles and mysteries. A small number of the books were televised with Diana Rigg portraying her wonderfully. People will like some of her books more than others, however, an early one, *Speedy Death*, will allow the reader to test the waters for her rather fast moving plots and characters.

Dorothy L Sayers, author of Lord Peter Wimsey, requires little introduction here beyond this inclusion.

Patricia Wentworth has been vastly underrated in my view. Her main creation, Maud Silver, is quite wonderful as a retired governess who sets herself up as a detective. There are over 30 beautifully written books such as *The Chinese Shawl* and *The Girl in the Cellar*. If Miss Marple was to your taste, then Miss Silver will also enchant.

I do hope that you will find much to interest.
Bruce Smith

James Clerk Maxwell Science Festival Success

Parton has hosted its first ever James Clerk Maxwell Family Science Festival.

The event, aiming to celebrate the discoveries of a man cited as Einstein's inspiration, was led by Threave Partnership on behalf of Parton Community Council and saw 500 people of all ages attend events in the village.

Parton was home to James Clerk Maxwell, and he is buried in the Parton Kirkyard.

In the village hall, participants enjoyed many hands-on experiments; firing rockets, mixing slime, making sherbet, balancing butterflies and learning about the light spectrum. Millie Julian and Charlotte Toon won glider trips in the Light Catcher photographic competition.

Meanwhile in the Kirk, Professor Pumpernickel thrilled and educated with explosions, jokes and facts.

Although a complete contrast, the tranquil planetarium was no less popular. The Saturday Family day followed Friday's village hall talks on *The Theory of Colour* by Ben Craven PHD and *The Aesthetics of Light* by photographer Kim Ayers. Ben showed how light is composed and how we see it. Kim demonstrated some of the professional light techniques.

These events mark the start of journey to create a permanent James Clerk Maxwell centre in Parton.

150 years ago, James Clerk Maxwell made breakthroughs that continue to shape the world today. Science insiders know him as one of the greats. This



Professor Pumpernickel's science show wows audience members.

project will bring appropriate public recognition and use the legacy of his achievements to inspire the next generation.

The project was sponsored by Dumfries & Galloway Science Festival and Falgunzeon Glider Club, and funded by a grant through the Galloway Glens 'Our Heritage' Small Grants Scheme.

Having a Blast at the Glenkens Men's Shed

The founding of a Men's Shed in the Glenkens has been one of the best success stories in recent years.

The Men's Shed, located behind the recently refurbished Smiddy in Balmaclellan, has established itself as a popular and well-used place for a whole range of group and solo trades and activities.

The completion of the newly-installed cold metal workshop allows

traditional metalworking skills and heritage agricultural practices to be used, with potential for training up a new generation in these skills. The installation of the new workshop has helped to attract more interest and the Men's Shed now have a record 39 members, including a greater proportion of women members.

The Glenkens Men's Shed Metalwork Project, which saw the purchase of the new metal working equipment, including a blasting cabinet, metal working benches, and a rolling and bending kit, has been supported by a grant of £5,000 through the Galloway Glens 'Our Heritage' Small Grants Scheme. Much of the equipment purchased was ex-display, getting the best value for money from the grant.

The newly installed blasting cabinet has been an unexpected success, with interest from artist communities looking at carrying out glass etching. Additionally, the proximity to The Smiddy in Balmaclellan has increased opportunities for showcasing heritage and traditional skills. Both through events and practical



application, such as hosting a local blacksmith and an aluminium smelting demo, as well as providing options for furthering sustainability through the sale of goods and services.

Chris Jowsey, treasurer at the Glenkens Men's Shed, said: "This new equipment will help people and communities in the area to reconnect to the heritage skills prevalent in rural and agricultural communities, such as the Glenkens. Offering opportunities to maintain, develop and pass on these traditional skills through a range of metal working activities. Visitors to the shed have been amazed at the range of facilities available and were especially impressed with the Galloway Glens supported Metal Workshop".

Jude Crooks, Galloway Glens Administrator and lead contact for the Small Grants Scheme, said: "This equipment forms the centrepiece of the new metalworking room, allowing local metalworking skills and heritage agricultural practices to be used in the Men's Shed, training up a new generation in these skills."



Left to right: Some of the Glenkens 'Shedders' - Stuart Rhodes, Tam Craig, Andi Holmes, Ali Stewart © Galloway Glens.


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GLENKENS PLACE NAMES: PART III

Place-names can provide evidence of many different facets of life in past times, including the Glenkens folks' attitude to superstition and supernatural beliefs generally.

In this article I will have a look to see what evidence for such superstitions from the past might be found still chiselled into the map in the form of our local place-names.

Small hills, mounds, cairns and so on were frequently held to be inhabited by the fairy folk or other otherworldly beings. Towards the head of the beautiful Garroch Glen lies the farm of Knocksheen, Gaelic Cnoc Sìthein meaning fairy mound. I'm not sure which particular mound the fairies were supposed to inhabit there but it would be interesting to find out!

Near Carsphairn and just off the old pack road stands Carnavel neolithic long cairn. The reasons for this cairn being built in that spot had long been forgotten by the time it was named by our Gaelic speaking predecessors so perhaps they allowed their own set of beliefs and superstitions to guide them. There is a hill near Drummore on the Rhinns of Galloway called Knockaine, possibly named after Aine the daughter of the fairy king Cuilenn and the lover of Fionn mac Cumhail (Finn MacCool of Giant's Causeway fame). It is possible that this Aine was originally a goddess figure. Ireland has many goddesses who appear in folklore as fairy queens, another was Aoibheall who was associated with East Co. Clare at Tobereevul (Aoibheall's well). Her name means 'beautiful' or 'the lovely one' in an ironic sense perhaps as she was the queen of a couple of dozen bean-sidhe or banshees who appeared predicting death. Was this the being that Carnavel

is named after, ie Càrn Aoibheill? The Galloway Glens place-names project doesn't think so, preferring a derivation from Gaelic abhall, apple and suggesting that the first element is not Gaelic càrn, a heap of stones, but corran or còrn (a sickle or hook). I don't think we will ever be certain about this place-name so you chose!

It is interesting that prehistoric cairns seem to feature along the old pack road, note that just over the watershed into Ayrshire near Eriff (An Airbhe, the border) stands another named cairn, Cairnennock, Càrn nan cnoc, cairn of the hills, close again to the pack road and commanding magnificent views down Loch Doon (Loch Dùin, Fort loch or Loch a' Bhealaich, Loch of the pass).

...the hill range now known as Blackcraig comes into view, resplendent with its crown of wind-turbines. But in the past it was not the turbines' upstretched blades appealing to the wind god that would have been seen but human worship...

There is a legend that three kings were supposed to have been buried there and the Ordnance Survey Name-Book records that when it was excavated for dyking material a great quantity of human bones were found within.

Strange things seem to be commemorated in other place-names in the Glenkens. On the high road between Dalry and Kendoon there is a curious collection of names in more or less the same boggy piece of land beside the road that heads up towards Glenshimmeroch. First there is Drummuddioch for Druim nam buideach, the ridge of the wizard. Right beside this ridge is the Minister's Moss and also close by is Chapelyard. Close to the road again is Knockrosh or Cnoc Croise, cross hill. One can only speculate why this place has attracted

these names, maybe it is just a coincidence?

On the road between Balmaclellan and Troquhain there is a small hill on the righthand side going by the name of Barmorrow, possibly Bàrr Mairbh, the hilltop of the dead. This hill has given its name to the nearby Barmurrie farm. Although not recorded on the first

OS map in the mid nineteenth century again is it a coincidence that the cottage on the approach to Bàrr Mairbh is today called Bogleknowe, a kind of translation (bogle meaning ghost in Scots)?

Continuing along the A712 soon the hill range now known as Blackcraig comes into view, resplendent with its crown of wind-turbines. But in the past it was not the turbines' upstretched blades appealing to the wind god that would have been seen but human worship in this unlikely place. At least going from the evidence of place-names. The old name for the hill itself was Beinn Naoimh, sacred mountain. This can be seen from the place-name Benniff on the Blaeu Atlas, the survey for which was done around

1600. Supporting this is the fact that a subsidiary top on the hill is called Cairn Molly today, a rendering of the Gaelic Càrn Molaidh, eulogising or praising cairn. If more evidence of the hill's 'holy' nature were needed the discovery of the bronze casting of a Celtic handbell was found in 1892 near Monybuie (Monadh Buidhe, yellow moor) on the slopes of the hill.

Speaking of cairns on hilltops one cannot ignore Carlin's Cairn which with its near Rhinns of Kells neighbouring peak Corserine (Crois Rinne, athwart ridge) dominates the glen from many angles. It is unclear what the purpose building this cairn at 2,600' above sea level served, some say as a memorial to Robert the Bruce which seems to be taking devotion a bit far. Carline is Scots for an old woman, a crone and it may well be that this is a translation of Gaelic Càrn na Cailliche of the same meaning, this being the only main Rhinns peak without a Gaelic name. In Gaelic mythology the Cailleach was a divine hag, a creator, weather or ancestor deity or even the Queen of Winter. She is named as being present on many Scottish mountains including Ben Nevis, Ben Wyvis, Ben Breac, Ben Cruachan, the Paps of Jura, Schiehallion and Lochnagar while there is a Beinn na Cailliche in Knoydart and another in Skye. So does she perhaps still keep watch on us from her mysterious cairn on top of the Rhinns?

Michael Ansell, New Galloway



Carlin's Cairn

LOCAL HISTORY with TED COWAN

Rivers of Time...

"The great River flows from the mountains to the sea. I am the River and the River is me."

Almost three years ago New Zealand passed a bill recognising that the Whanganui River on North Island holds the same legal rights, responsibilities and liabilities as a human being. The campaign to have the river as the mother of the tribe began 140 years earlier. It is the *awa tupua* of the Whanganui tribal collective.

As one commentator explains, the Whanganui chiefs "would have considered the river a treasure beyond price. It was their food basket, their medicine cabinet, their highway, and their defensive moat. It was their healer, their priest, and their parent. It was the source of their prestige and the core of their being. It was, as the Whanganui Tribunal explained, 'the central bloodline of their one heart'."

I came across this article when looking for something else and found it inspiring in the midst of the present gloom descending on our planet. Had earlier peoples of the Glenkens, I wondered, harboured similar views of our rivers? Has the Maori experience touched a nerve that for all of us has resonated since time immemorial. It turns out

that similar campaigns have been taking place elsewhere in the world, for example legal rights have been sought for the Ganges and Yamuna in India as well as, remarkably, Lake Erie.

William Wordsworth believed the River Derwent was his mother. As it happens our oldest placenames are attached to rivers. A good example is Dee of which there are two in Scotland, one each in England, North Wales and Ireland. There are also two Dee names in Spain. Dee is, of course, the river goddess. Adomnan, the biographer of St Columba, wrote about 'the important reference' he made to 'the stream which in Latin may be called *Nigra Dea* – the Black Goddess'. Professor W J Watson, who wrote what might be described as the bible of Celtic Placenames

The river of knowledge is unstoppable.

of Scotland (1926), made the point that the river is the goddess. The upper part of the river is 'the Black Water of Dee' on the Ordnance Survey maps but he could not be sure whether or not the black goddess was an echo of Adomnan or a more modern epithet. If the former it can be placed alongside the Whanganui as a sacred maternal river. The 'black' element may help to explain another puzzle which has

troubled me for some time.

Simply this – why did the Ken change its name? Normally the larger river takes over its lesser tributaries, but in this case it looks as if the smaller swallows the greater. Could this be a long-remembered respect for the goddess? The male form – god – is preserved in Doon, river and loch. We are particularly fortunate that an unprecedented amount of research on the placenames of the Glenkens and Galloway in general is currently underway. My friend Michael Ansell now has a welcome column in this publication. Thanks to the Galloway Glens project an excellent team, based at Glasgow University, headed by Thomas Clancy, Professor of Gaelic, and Dr Gilbert Marcus, are

producing excellent material on this area for the first time in its history. In addition, there are some pockets of researchers working away on their own

investigations. It is planned to display some of the material from the Balmaghie Hoard in Edinburgh this summer once the threat of the current virus is understood and controlled, as it will be. The river of knowledge is unstoppable.

For more information and excellent photographs put Whanganui River into your search engine.

Ted Cowan

The First People in Galloway

The Glenkens' annual one-day history conference this year features the inhabitants of Greater Galloway over some ten thousand years, from the retreat of the glaciers to the end of the first Christian millennium in 1000AD.

The Early Peoples of Galloway conference will be held on Saturday 5 September in the CatStrand. The event brings together eight expert speakers covering topics ranging from the hunter-gatherer-fishers who arrived as the Ice Age ended, through the Romans and their allied and enemy tribes and on to the influence of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, the incursions of the Norse and the complex processes by which Christianity arrived and became established.

Setting the scene for this diverse patchwork of immigration will be Richard Tipping of Stirling University who will describe the landscape

which successive peoples occupied and altered, and which determined their lives and legacies. He will describe how the varied landscapes of Galloway, far from being a mere 'background' to human activities, can be seen to have shaped what people can do. In turn, people have shaped their landscapes, particularly in the last 6000 years, the era of agriculture. His talk will also review the evidence from scientific and archaeological investigations into Galloway's changing environments and climates since the last Ice Age and their impacts.

Full details are available on www.catstrand.com



CORSOCK & KIRKPATRICK DURHAM

Temporis Capital, the owners of Blackcraig Windfarm, make an annual payment of £2,000 to the neighbouring Community Councils to support good causes.

This week, Corsock & KPD Community Council made their second round of awards through the Micro Grant Scheme, awarding £860 to three more projects in the community council area.

The awards made in this round were: Kirkpatrick Durham Recreation Bothy Gardeners - £150 contribution to the purchase of a lawnmower; Knockvennie Community Hall - £325 towards insulation and lighting costs in the hall; Kirkpatrick Durham Village Hall - £385 towards a large dishwasher for the hall.

Joe Seed, chairman of the Corsock & KPD Community Council, said: "Many thanks to all that applied for money and to Temporis Capital for the funding. We have now awarded all of this year's annual £2,000 payment to 8 great and deserving projects that will provide a direct benefit to the residents of the area. Keep an eye on the community website www.corsock.wixsite.com for news of events and activities around Corsock & Kirkpatrick Durham, and for future funding rounds.

Crossmichael Village Hall

Congratulations to Crossmichael Memorial Parish Hall on their finished hall floor project.

The group was awarded £12,476.80 last year by the Blackcraig Community Fund to replace and reline the hall floor. Below is a before and after picture - what a difference!



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If You Go Down to the Woods Today...

This wild boar was spotted by one of our readers in the forest near Muirdrochwood.

The reader cautioned that if you are planning to go walking in that area, be aware that wild boar have been seen very close to a house and apparently unworried by the sound of dogs barking nearby.



CAKES & PLANT SALE

The annual Cake and Plant Sale at St Margaret's, New Galloway, will be on Saturday 2 May from 10am-12noon.

This year all the profits from the sale will go to Mary's Meals, a no-frills Scottish charity that provides life-changing meals to some of the world's poorest children every school day. Their idea is simple and works: by providing one good meal in a place of

learning, children are drawn into the classroom where they can receive an education that could one day free them from poverty.

All the baking is homemade by members of the congregation and friends, and the plants include vegetable and flower annuals, perennials, shrubs and houseplants - all from local gardens. Good opportunity to add colour to your garden - and to support a great charity. Teas and coffees will also be available.

Scout Jumble Sale

The Glenkens Scout Group are holding their Annual Jumble Sale in the Scout Hall, New Galloway on Saturday 16 May from 2-4pm, and on Sunday 17 May from 1.30-3pm.

We are collecting for the sale in the three villages on Tuesday 1 May.

The Group is small, so we are appealing for anyone who can help out either, Wed, Thurs, Fri before the sale from 6.45pm onwards or on the sale weekend. Thank you.

All leftover items will be recycled. Any baking would be appreciated.

If you have any query, please phone Heather on 01644 420375.

Support the Lifeboats

The Glenkens fundraising committee of the RNLI will be holding their annual fundraising Coffee Evening on Thursday 28 May at Dalry Town Hall, 7pm.

As well as coffees and teas there will be a tombola stall, home baking, plants, books and RNLI souvenirs. And the usual wonderful array of raffle prizes. The RNLI receives no government support, despite being our valuable 4th emergency service, and is reliant on the generosity of supporters.



Galloway Community Transport

(formerly Glenkens Transport Initiative)

www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org

email gct@catstrand.com phone 01644 420374 mobile 07841 512449

APRIL-MAY 2020

COVID-19/ CORONAVIRUS

From 16 March 2020 only the Wednesday evening GK2 service from the Glenkens to Castle Douglas (Tesco) will operate (until further notice).

In compliance with Government guidelines all other GCT services have been suspended until further notice, including all weekly and monthly services, GCT excursions, member hires and MiDAS training.

Please see www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org for updates.

Out	GK2 Glenkens to Castle Douglas (Tesco) - Wednesday evenings	Return
1900	Dalry (Underhill)	2115
1905	New Galloway	2110
1915	Mossdale	2100
1925	Lauriston	2050
1930	Townhead of Greenlaw	2047
1937	Castle Douglas (Market St)	2037
1940	Castle Douglas (Tesco)	2035

APRIL & MAY

Currently any organised events during April and May are likely to have been postponed due to the current government advice during the coronavirus outbreak - please see individual entries for contact numbers for information.

Glenkens Community Centre

Things are starting to get busier in the Glenkens Community Centre.

Already we have had two community coffee mornings which have been a great success.

We have had fantastic support from both volunteers and locals who have not only taken the time to come along, but also to make some amazing cakes and help out. Thanks again to everyone! The coffee mornings will continue every three weeks, or maybe more, if there is enough interest. We are also continuing with our community consultation to gather more information and ideas for the future direction of the community centre. Please get in touch or fill in the forms which are always available at the coffee mornings.

Our new signage has also arrived and

we hope to have this up and in place soon. Dalry Communities Properties Trust have had the fire alarm system upgraded and we are always working with them to look at any other improvements we can do to make the centre better for everyone.

Sadly, Bright Stars nursery will no longer be open after July and vacating the centre. They have been providing child care for families in the Glenkens for many years and are to be thanked for their hard work. This now means that we will have a space available to let for any other businesses or groups who are looking for premises. For anyone interested please contact the management committee for more information.

Meanwhile we continue to host our usual activities: Brownies and Guides, Martial Arts, Yoga and Badminton/ table tennis. Contact details can be found on our

activities poster.

Regular activities are postponed at present due to the current coronavirus situation - please see posters, etc, or get in touch to find out further information.

*Carylann Williamson, Chairperson,
williamsoncarylann@gmail.com*



Dalry Community Centre Team

LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS

Glenkens Community Shop: Contact Shirley McNaught on 07955 743 022 or drop by the charity shop on Main Street, Dalry

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING): Contact Ros Hill on ros.hill@rathanhouse.co.uk

Dalry Communities Properties Trust (DCPT): Contact Andi Holmes on andiholmes@hotmail.com or 07729 292 126

Dalry Town Hall: Contact Jim Reid on 01644 430231 or jamescreid@hotmail.co.uk

New Galloway Community Enterprises (NGCE): Contact Sam Rushton on 07741 656601 or samCEW@newgallowaycommunity.shop or pop into New Galloway Community Shop

Balmaclellan Community Trust: Contact Julia Higgins

on julia.higgins55@outlook.com

CatStrand: Contact Chris Jowsey at chris@catstrand.com 01644 420 374 or pop in to the CatStrand

Schools: Pop into the school office or call Dalry Primary on 01644 430 105 (for Nursery/ELC too), Dalry Secondary on 01644 430 259 or Kells on 01644 420 340

Carsphairn Heritage Group: carsphairnheritagegroup@gmail.com

Bright Stars - Glenkens Community Nursery: Contact glenkenscommunitynursery@gmail.com

Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership (GGLP): Contact McNabb Laurie on mcnabb.laurie@dumgal.gov.uk

If you would like to add your community organisation to this list please get in touch with the Gazette - contact details are on the back page.

DEE & GLENKENS WARD

Councillor Dougie Campbell

is available for consultation on any Council/Public Service matter.

Please phone 07388 956558 or email dougie.campbell@dumgal.gov.uk for an appointment.

www.dumgal.gov.uk



DEE & GLENKENS WARD

Councillor Pauline Drysdale

is available for consultation on any Council/Public Service matter.

Please phone 07825 633153 or email pauline.drysdale@dumgal.gov.uk for an appointment

www.dumgal.gov.uk



DEE & GLENKENS WARD

Councillor Jane Maitland

is available for consultation on any Council or Public Service matter.

Please phone 07825 633155 or email jane.maitland@dumgal.gov.uk for an appointment.

www.dumgal.gov.uk



REGULAR EVENTS

CatStrand, New Galloway:

Film Makers' Club, Mon 7-8.30pm
Exercise to Music: Mon 9.30-10.30am
MMM Adult Colours & Dance: 2.30pm-3.30pm
MMM Health, Play & Creative Movement: 3-7yrs, Mon (term-time) 3.45-4.30pm
MMM Children's Grades & Youth Dance: 8-16yrs, Mon (term-time) 4.30-5.30pm
Youth Volunteer Meet-up, 1st Tues of the month, 6-8pm, FREE PIZZA
Choreographic Skills Lab, Mon (term-time) 7-8.30pm, ages 12-18
Animation Club, Tues 4-6pm (starts 12 Feb then fortnightly)
Gentle Tai Chi: Wed 10.30am
Wendletrap Tai Chi, Wed 2-3.30pm
Game Tech, last Wed each month, 6-8pm
Writers' Cafe, 2nd Thurs each month 7-9pm
Sing it Out, Thurs 11am -12pm
CatStrand Ukes, 1st & 3rd Thurs each month, 1-3.30pm
Yoga, Tues 6.30-7.30pm & Thurs 9.15-10.45am
Zumba Gold, Fri (term-time) 9.30- Family Film Club, 10.30am, CatStrand, 16+
Family Film Club, sensory friendly film screenings, 4pm, last Friday of the month
Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry:
Badminton, Mon 4-9pm & Sat 9am-12noon, for info contact Kath on 07811 957 576
Bright Stars Nursery, Tues, Wed & Thurs 9am-3pm
Brownies & Guides, Tues, Brownies

6-7.30pm & Guides 6-8.15pm
Yoga, Wed 5.50-6.45pm, for info call Carylann on 07817 400 287
Brownies, Thurs 6-7.30pm
Kickback Martial Arts, Thurs 6-7pm for children, 7-9pm for adults

New Galloway Town Hall:

Glenkens Art Workshop, Mon 2-4pm during term-time
LING Eleveses & Lunches, Tues 11am-2pm
Fast Broadband Access, Tues 11am-2pm
Help is at Hand, Tues 2-4.30pm, drop-in session for IT support with benefit/job applications, etc
The World is at Your Fingertips, Tues 4.30-6.30pm, build confidence with laptop, tablet or phone - all ages - drop-in or book a half-hour session (07895 457923).
Extra IT Sessions, 4.30-6.30pm through Jan & Feb
Table Tennis & Carpet Bowls, Tues 7-9pm
Circuits, Tues 5.30-6.30pm
Zumba, Wed 7.30-8.30pm, 11+
Circuits, Sat 8-9am
Various Locations:
Hatha Yoga, Mon 10-11.15am, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn
Carsphairn Post Office, Wed 1.15-3pm, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn
Dalry WI, 3rd Tues each month 2pm, Dalry Town Hall (except Jun, Jul & Aug)
Beavers, Tues 6-7.15pm, New Galloway Scout Hut
Dog Training, Tues & Thurs 7pm, Dalry Town Hall. Contact: Eric 460 670
Mossdale Painters, Wed 9.30am, Mossdale Village Hall
Chat, Cuppa & a Cake, Wed 10am-

2.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall
Community Choir, Wed 3.30-4.30pm, music room, Dalry Secondary School
Cub Scouts, Wed 6.45-8pm, New Galloway Scout Hut
Gentle Dru Yoga, Wed 7.30-9pm & Thu 12.30-2pm, Laurieston Village Hall, contact 450269
Youth Writing, 1st Thurs each month (during term time) 3.30-5pm, ages 10-15, Dalry Library
Kettlebells, Balmaclellan Village Hall, Thurs 6-7pm
Carsphairn SWI, 3rd Thurs of the month, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn, for further info call Christine on 01644 460 577
Coffee & Craft, Fri 9am-12noon, Lagwyne Hall
Folk Music Session, 4th Fri each month 7.30/8pm till closing, Ken Bridge Hotel
Gentle Tai Chi, Fri 10-11am, Dalry Town Hall
Golf Junior Coaching, Sat 10-11:30am, New Galloway Golf Course, see p8
Restoring Footpaths, Sat 10am-1pm, phone 420 632 to confirm
Junior Golf & Come-and-Try for all ages, New Galloway Golf Course, Sat 10am
Yoga and Meditation Evening, every 3rd Sunday of the month, 7p-9pm, Drumwhill, Mossdale. Contact Rachael 01644 450269 to book.
Men's Shed, Old Smiddy, Balmaclellan. Opening times: Mon 9.30am-4pm & 6.30-8.30pm; Wed 9.30am-1pm & woodcarving from 2-4pm; Fri 9.30am-12noon.
Clatteringshaws Lochside Cafe, 11am-3pm, 7 days a week

Glenkens Community Councils

Balmaclellan Community Council Meetings: Last 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:

Services are cancelled during this time.

The minister will provide resources by email each week to anyone who would like them in the form of prayers, hymns, and a reflection on a bible reading.

You can email David at dbartholomew@churchofscotland.org.uk or call 01644

430 380 for further information or even if you would just like to have a chat during these difficult times.

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

St Margaret's, New Galloway: Open for quiet reflection & prayer, 10.30am every Sun & Wed (for info contact 01644 420 467).

Dalry Library & Customer Service Centre

Tuesdays 10.30am-2pm
Fridays 11am-4.30pm

For further information contact Castle Douglas library on 01556 502 643

USEFUL NUMBERS:

- Pot-hole Hotline: 0845 276 0000
- Police, non-emergency: 101
- Doctor: 01644 420 234
- NHS 24: 08454 24 24 24
- D&G Council: 030 33 33 3000

Knockengorroch Festival Confirmed for September

Knockengorroch Festival, Scotland's longest-running greenfield festival, has unveiled the theme for this year as Celestial Beings – celebrating the event's unrivalled place under the star-dotted skies of Galloway.

Festival organisers say: "We hope that you are all safe and well at this uncertain time. We would like to confirm that Knockengorroch festival is postponed from May until 10-13 September, and tickets are now sale for this event.

"We have our venue, licence, core crew and have secured many of our headliners, and expect a bill as close as possible to our intended May lineup. And there's plenty of time to knock up a truly magnificent outfit with this year's theme of Celestial Beings!"

Organisers also want to confirm that any tickets already purchased will be valid for this September festival. In addition, if you cannot make September, your ticket/s can later be transferred to Knockengorroch Festival 27-30 May 2021.

As the full programme for this year's festival materialises, organisers are honouring the festival site's secluded, heavenly location, which is one of the best places in the world to see the stars and part of the region's UNESCO

dark sky reserve.

As well as enjoying an exciting array of traditional, electronic and world music acts, festival goers are encouraged to help bring the cosmic theme to life and take inspiration for their festival wardrobe from the heavens above, from stars and aliens to a winged God or Goddess – the sky's the limit.

Knockengorroch Festival organiser, Liz Holmes, said: "The secluded location and colourful, liberating atmosphere at Knockengorroch always gives the festival an 'other worldly' feel. It is a place where people can escape and enjoy the music, culture, craft and surrounding nature under a magnificent sky of stars, so it felt very fitting to base this year's event around celestial beings and to celebrate that."

The Knockengorroch festival site is unique in every way, with its natural amphitheatre sat on a riverside meadow and set against a beautiful mountain backdrop in the Southern Uplands of Scotland.

There are no shops, ATMs, petrol stations or urban 'civilisation' for 10 miles and, year-on-year, thousands of loyal festival goers make their way to this unique location for a weekend like no other.

Since its inception, the Knockengorroch Festival has established progressive links between sounds indigenous to its natural venue



and the now far-flung Celtic diaspora.

Across the festival weekend, multi-cultural forms and musical genres will be showcased with music from all continents being presented alongside the best in Scottish talent in both traditional and contemporary fields.

Some of this year's acts will be Afro Celt Sound System, Kel Assouf, Shooglenifty, The Poozies, Moishe's Bagel, Cut Capers, The Inexplicables and Mungo's Hi Fi as well as British-Iraqi hip-hop artist Lowkey, Galloway's own Zoe Bestel, and renowned Cameroonian singer-songwriter Blick Bassy's plus many more.

The festival also features comedy and theatre shows, arts, crafts, nature and heritage workshops and activities.

It is open to all ages with a dedicated family camping area, children's tent and procession plus real ales, good food and a healing area.

Tickets are available at www.knockengorroch.org.uk as well as further information on this year's festival.

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