

GLENKENS GAZETTE

News from Balmaclellan, Carsphairn, Corsock, Crossmichael, Kirkpatrick
Durham, Laurieston, Mossdale, New Galloway, Parton and St John's Town of Dalry

June/July 2020

ISSUE 118

FREE

CELEBRATING VE DAY

Friday 8 May 2020
marked 75 years since
Victory in Europe (VE)
Day in 1945.

Across the Glenkens, communities made plans to celebrate this event in creative, thoughtful ways, in light of our current lockdown situation.

New Galloway Community Events Committee, alongside other local organisations, had planned a big celebration on Sunday 10 May with a tea party in the park and including an exhibition of memorabilia, 1940s music, other entertainment and a service at the War Memorial. However, due to the lockdown restrictions and social distancing requirements, they celebrated "in our homes and on our doorsteps" instead. Homes and streets were awash with bunting, poppies and pictures.

At 11am, village folk stood still on their doorsteps and took a moment to remember those who gave their lives, followed by a community sing-along of *We'll Meet Again*. Many commented on how moving and uniting this was, which was intensified due to our current situation.

Afterwards, people lingered outside to catch up with friends and neighbours and enjoyed the social interaction and chat that we have so missed, even if it was at a distance.

At 3pm, the rain stopped, the sunshine broke through and the birds sang as our present day heroes, fire fighter John McGaw and nurse Lynn Grieve, laid a beautiful wreath made by Maybelle Thomson at the War Memorial. Residents out on their daily exercise stood in silence to observe, and others joined by the power of social media.

The day continued with deck chairs appearing on doorsteps, and residents enjoying tea, cake, the odd glass of bubbly, laughter and a loud chat with their nearest neighbours.

Although this event was not as originally planned, the community came together, remembered, celebrated in style and made it a day that we will



John McGaw and Lynn Grieve laying the wreath at New Galloway War Memorial.

remember forever. Thanks to all the volunteers who made it happen, and to everyone who took part, in whatever way.

See inside for more on VE Day celebrations across the Glenkens, as well as some memories from those who remember the 1945 day itself.

The COVID Safety Network

Former Dalry School pupil Adam Winstanley has set up an ambitious social enterprise to enable personal protective equipment (PPE) to be distributed among the most needy organisations in the country.

Through this project Adam and co-founders Hannah Wright and Kris Small have gathered a collective of people in order to work towards addressing the health threats of COVID-19. Adopting an open-source

design process has enabled a much faster response and allows the team to engage directly with communities to offer free protection for front line staff. The Gazette has been speaking to Adam to find out more about the project:

What inspired you to start the COVID Support Network?

After seeing the experience in other countries online I started to think about whether we could learn and prepare for the impact of COVID in my own community. I was energised by the positive response everywhere to act selflessly.

Continued on p10...



The COVID Safety Network team - Adam (right), Hannah (centre) and Kris (left).

Sew Your Own Fabric Face Mask

Having had an enquiry as to whether the Gazette could offer instructions for a home-made face mask, we asked the talented Anne McEwan of Dalry and she very kindly obliged.

Here are the instructions for your own home-made pleated fabric face mask with a pocket for a changeable filter. The mask can be used by tying the ties into a loop on either side which goes around the ears or by using the top and bottom ties to tie behind the head. You can adjust the width of the mask by using a wider piece of fabric at the start.

Materials: Piece of cotton fabric 20"x 10"; 4 x 11" pieces of elastic/ribbon/string for ties.



1) Cut out the material



2) Press and pin both shorter sides (0.5")



3) Sew both hems



4) Cut the elastics/ties



5) Fold and press with the wrong side showing



6) Keep an overlap of about 1"



7) Pin a piece of elastic/tie into each corner



8) Sew the sides closed



9) Cut off the extra bits of the ties



10) Check all seams



11) Turn the mask the right way round



12) Iron in pleats



13) Pin the pleats



14) Sew the pleats in place



15) Check the pocket opens easily



16) The mask is ready to use



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Marking 75 Years Since VE Day

Occasionally we are called on in life to do something unexpected for which we feel ill-prepared.

This happened to me on 8 May when I was honoured to be asked to lay a wreath at the local War Memorial as the start of Dalry's VE 75 celebrations.

On VE day in 1945, people attended services of remembrance at cathedrals, churches and at local memorials in vast numbers prior to getting on to the serious business of celebration.

Of course, I have taken part in remembrance ceremonies and other public events in the past, but only as a contributor or member of a team. I even once helped organise a cathedral service, but that was all about seating plans and timings with me comfortably in the background. With social distancing in force, it would be me, 'front and centre' with a photographer and the odd passer-by as witnesses.

The day before saw me sorting a clean shirt, jacket and regimental tie, polishing my shoes and medals and dusting off my old service glengarry that I last wore when serving as the Paymaster of the Gordon Highlanders.

Then came a second request – "would I consider sitting in the back of a jeep and being paraded around the village, with the wreath, on the way to the memorial?" How could I refuse? I knew that I would find this embarrassing and uncomfortable, but it was not about

me. If I could bring a little cheer during lockdown as I was paraded around the village and if that helped those who saw us pass feel as if they were part of the Remembrance act, then that was the point.

At 10.15am, Gordon Currie collected me in his ex-army Jeep and I climbed into the back clutching the wreath, ready to display to anyone as we drove past. With my hat on straight, we began a slow drive around the town, waving, showing the wreath and even making the odd salute when it seemed appropriate.

On arrival at the War Memorial I fixed the wreath (made by Esme and Murdo Devlin). I had prepared a few words to say aloud, to anyone nearby, but also to the fallen whose names I would read out. I had chosen to read the exhortation of remembrance from Binyon's poem *For the Fallen* and I read the nine names of those who died in service in WW2. A recording of the last post was played and the two minutes silence was observed.

With task completed, I walked back up the hill. Like many, my emotions seem to be running closer to the surface during this lockdown so I was glad that I had not stumbled over the words or



Dalry's VE Day wreath laid by Paul Goodwin at the War Memorial outside the church, with Gordon's Jeep in the background.

choked with a lump in my throat, but it was a close thing.

My thanks to the wreath makers, the driver and those who made the arrangements, especially Jenna Devlin and Angie Bradford.

Paul Goodwin

Community Cupboards

New Galloway Community Enterprises is delighted to have secured funding from the Prince's Countryside Fund (PCF) in order to create Community Cupboards as part of our COVID-19 response.

The PCF grant has been amplified by a donation from Julian Wontner of the Barscobe family, for which we're most grateful.

The Community Cupboards will be stocked with basic food and household supplies and are available for all to take from. You can use them if you've temporarily run out of something and can replace it soon - or if you are short of supplies, take what you need, there is no need to replace them. They will

also contain craft items for children plus books and jigsaws, available to take away for free, so if you see a Community Cupboard pop over and have a look! They're open 24 hours a day, not staffed or locked - we are confident that people won't abuse this new resource.

We're asking for donations to the Community Cupboards if you can, of non-perishable food staples and the other supplies. Just pop them directly into the Cupboards. Of course we would ask that you only donate if your household is symptom-free, and that you wash your hands before donating to or taking from the Community Cupboards.

The Community Cupboards are not intended to replace the excellent work being done by the Stewartry Foodbanks, just to be a local, easily accessible community resource for emergencies. If you need more support, there are three food bank services in the Stewartry: the Stewartry Food Bank in Kirkcudbright which can be accessed

through the D&G Council help line 030 33 33 300, the Helping Hands food bank in Castle Douglas, which can be contacted

directly on 01556 505855, and the new Heart of Galloway food bank in the visitor centre in Castle Douglas, which can be contacted directly on 07730 788335. They can all deliver to the Glenkens if you can't get out.

So look out for the Community Cupboards! One will be in New Galloway, in the small car park opposite the Town Park, next to the phone box. At the time of writing, we're not quite sure where the others will be located, but hopefully you'll see one near you soon!

New Galloway Community Enterprises



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4-drawer metal filing cabinet, 18" wide x 25" deep x 53" high. **Mamia baby snuggle nest** (cloth 'nest' for infant to lie in). Contact: Lorna on 07703 303 805

Bath lift, Mangar Health, lightweight battery-powered, actuator driven. Contact: 01644 430 373

FOR SALE

Bass drum, 22" black Yamaha Power V, £20. Contact: Blue on 07934 361 526

Rangemaster Classic 110 gas cooker, good condition for 10 years old, burgundy and black, £200 ono, buyer to uplift from Castle Douglas. Contact: Andi on 07729 292 126

WANTED

Old lawn mowers/trimmers/ other small machinery. Non-runners/broken welcome. Contact: 07845 562 217

POETRY COMPETITION EXTENSION

We have decided to extend the topic for last issue's poetry competition for another issue as we only received two entries - so get your writing hats on!

The theme is 'Ma Hame Toon', and it doesn't have to be in Scots dialect; just a poem about what home means to you.

You can either drop your entry into Wright's Shop, judges of the competition, or email it over to the Gazette at glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk

Please submit entries by 5 July 2020. The winner will have their poem printed in the August/September edition of the Glenkens Gazette and receive a voucher for £10 for Wright's Shop, Dalry.

Photo of the Issue *Sponsored by the Ken Bridge Hotel*

This issue's winner is Isabel Blyth with this uplifting evening sunset photographed at Blowplain Farm, Balmaclellan.

Isabel wins an evening meal for two up to the value of £30 at the Ken Bridge Hotel.

Competition judges Dave and Sue said: "As always, we had lots of stunning entries and choosing the winner was hard. But Isabel's sunset captures all the elements of a tranquil Glenkens evening, so this is our choice for this issue."

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 check opening times in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic.




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Eco Feature

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HIDDEN VEG

A new venture is growing, tucked away on the Hidden Road, near Balmaclellan.

Hidden Veg is a small market garden, aiming to provide quality produce for local people.

The polytunnel is up and is filling nicely with salads, chard, beans, tomatoes and courgettes – all being grown using ecological methods with organic fertilisers and inputs. In the outdoor beds there will be beetroots, more salads and more beans and peas. Sounds like a beantastic season on the way!

The team behind Hidden Veg are Abi and Bruce. Each has over 20 years of organic veg growing experience, and are passionate advocates of local food. They have recently moved to the area – although they have long-standing Galloway connections – and are very excited to be adding their contribution to the already vibrant local food culture here.

Abi says: "We love growing and producing food – it's a kind of addiction. I'd always rather be gardening than anything else. We also love to connect with other people who have similar goals and ideas. There is an increasing number of market gardeners across the region, and we're looking forward to working with others to bring more flavours to the local

food scene".

Hidden Veg will not just be about growing food. The team are also experienced food educators and love sharing their knowledge with other people. The initiative is based at The Hidden Mill, which

is becoming known locally as a place for learning sustainable skills such as off-grid living and permaculture. New programmes are being developed that will see different courses and workshops being offered in organic growing and other food explorations.

The original plan for Hidden Veg was to connect with cafes, pubs and restaurants to sell their tasty food. However, with lockdown likely to continue for a while yet, Hidden Veg will be supplying local people. They can deliver by bike within a 10-mile radius and will be taking orders soon.

If you're interested in buying their produce, follow them on facebook – they plan to have an online shop open soon <https://www.facebook.com/HiddenVegDG/>. You can also email them at hello.hiddenveg@gmail.com



Renewing an Old Acquaintance

Well I managed to drop a twelve-pound block of concrete on my big toe the day before lockdown began.

The A&E doctor looked at the X-Ray and said "you've smashed it" (I don't think she meant that as a measure of success!). So, my lockdown has been more restricted than it might have been and significant exercise is difficult.

Reading (books and magazines), sorting 'stuff', gardening; I have been through all the usual suspects.

Yesterday I set about cleaning the door of the greenhouse, a window on the summerhouse and windows on the garage. Then, with a bucket of soapy water still in hand, thought "what else can I do?" and remembered a totally neglected bicycle at the back of the garage that hadn't turned a wheel in over five years.

It soon came back why I parked it up; a medical problem, gears didn't work properly and life got in the way. Now it sat there with two flat tyres, covered in a layer of filth. I dragged it into the light and swear it winced. A scrub with soapy water, tyres pumped up and some oil in

aching joints (the bike's, not mine) and it looked much better.

I found that some of the gears worked, so put new batteries in the lights, climbed aboard and wobbled off. Luckily my broken toe didn't complain too much. In its first three-mile outing, the chain came off once but I coaxed it back on. There is still work to be done on the old girl but it's great to be a cyclist again.

I just thought I'd relay this little anecdote in case anyone else has any long-forgotten projects sitting in a corner of the garage or a dark cupboard, just waiting to be unearthed... *Paul Goodwin, Dalry*

Brass Played in Recognition

Carsphairn residents celebrated the 75th anniversary of VE Day with a mini-concert of wartime songs performed by Nigel and Kath Martin.

The socially distanced audience in the village's community garden showed their appreciation of the impromptu performance with long rounds of applause after every piece of music.

Nigel and Kath, who both play cornet with Kilmarnock Concert Brass, entertained the enthralled listeners with a repertoire which included *It's a Long Way to Tipperary*, *Pack up your Troubles*, *If You Were the Only Girl in the World*, *A Nightingale Sang in Berkley Square* and *White Cliffs of Dover*.

Many of the audience sang along during the show which ended with renditions of *We'll Meet Again* and *Land of Hope and Glory*.

Nigel and Kath have also been playing various pieces during the weekly Clap for Carers in Carsphairn. "Kath is a mental health nurse at Ailsa Hospital in Ayr and wanted to play in appreciation of her colleagues who are on the frontline in the battle against Coronavirus," says Nigel.

In March (before the pandemic kicked in) Kilmarnock Concert Brass band qualified for the national brass band championships in Cheltenham in September where it will represent Scotland in the fourth section.



Carsphairn residents celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE day with Kath and Nigel Martin's performance of wartime songs in Carsphairn Community Garden.

Corona Virus Comparisons

Born in Hackney General Hospital in the East End of London in December 1941 I was evacuated to the West Country, along with my mother, around the end of January 1942.

Shortly after this we were relocated to Essex. We lived in a three-bedroom house with my Nan, Grandad, and my two aunts. When the war started, the government issued ration books with tokens for food, clothing, petrol and other items. Water was rationed too - only so many inches of water in each bath, and the whole family used the same water. When finished, the bath water was used to flush the toilet, and the washing-up water and wash-tub water was also recycled in this way.

Each family was allocated so many ounces of everyday food per week, such as bacon, sausages, cuts of meat, sugar, butter if you could get it, margarine/lard and perhaps two and a half eggs per household. We could get powdered milk and egg which was tightly controlled too. Fresh and tinned fruit was very scarce - I didn't know what a banana was until I was six years old

- and sweets, chocolate and other confectionery were also hard to come by.

With no central heating it was very cold at night, especially in winter, so we usually slept with our winter coats over our blankets to keep us warm. We used to wake up and see ice and icicles on the inside of the windows.

Generally three houses shared one bomb shelter and our street had about fifteen houses, so there were five shelters. Many houses had allotments and every allotment had an allotment group who would grow different vegetables and share them out among the community. Teamwork and community spirit were very important throughout the UK.

During my 22 years military service in the army I often had to move out at a moment's notice, packing up all my belongings. There are various types of 'standby' you can be put on; two hour, 12 hour, 24 hour... Usually you were free to make short journeys around the barracks at these times, but it could be more restrictive.

In the army you got yourselves organised for the daily routines - breakfast; first parade and briefing; physical training; drill (marching); maintenance of our equipment; football, basket ball, or hand ball... In the evening we would have quizzes. We were allowed one beer in the evening and could watch TV.

Being in a lockdown situation is

nothing unusual for a soldier; they could be on a covert operation in the field for two or three days at a time. Often there would be only dry/cold food to eat and they would not be allowed to move from their position - which could be in a ditch in the middle of nowhere over-looking a target's (enemy) house.

I was once sent to be medical cover in Northumberland at the RAF Bombing and Rifle Range for six weeks where I was in this single story bungalow with just my bed, a phone (for military use only), a book and some magazines. I was confined to the building for the full six weeks, only allowed out to attend any injured troops in the field if I was called out. My only line of communication was writing letters to my family.

The current lockdown has similarities to all of these situations - evacuation and wartime living; being a soldier on standby, ready to move on any time; and lockdown experiences in the army, 'waiting it out' with no outside contact.

In all of these instances we have to obey rules and regulations, wait for orders. We learn to make our own entertainment and find things to do; we chill out, reminisce, catch up on tasks that need doing, share what we can, help each other wherever possible. Community spirit surfaces and connects us, despite the obstacles.

Barry Bryan-Dixon

EDIBLE PERENNIALS FOR THE LAZY GARDENER

Growing food from seed is a faff.

Some people have the patience and attention to detail to make it appear effortless. However, I find that fiddling around with spacing, watering, potting on and pinching out a bit tedious, all to flourish, peak and perish within the short months of a Scottish season. This labour of compressed food production is still needed to be able to enjoy sweet Mediterranean vegetables, but there are modest perennial heroes thriving in the Scottish climate that can provide lush and abundant food from early march onwards.

Foraging is a gateway drug to edible perennial gardening. By the time March has gone we have feasted on wild garlic and hazelnut pesto and ground elder salads; the first flush of nettles offers up a heavenly spannakopita.

I truly crossed the threshold, however, when a friend gave me a Daubertons variegated perennial kale. With its bright green/white foliage the Daubertons is both decorative and sweet - we affectionately refer to it as salad kale because it is so light and fresh in flavour. It doesn't look out of place in a decorative border and can offer food all year round with gentle harvesting. It should live for about five or so years if you nip off the flower buds, and can

easily be propagated from cuttings.

Once in, there is no end to these joyful plants, edible perennials which can naturalise to form patches of effortless food. We find the Welsh onions unstoppable, producing large fleshy green tops which can be cut for the pot and new growth returns quickly. They cluster up providing bulbs for eating and giving away in the autumn.

The Babbington leek also emerges in early spring ready for harvest: simply cut their slender garlicky stems and they will grow another, leaving a few to form bulbs that appear on their flower heads which can be used to increase the patch. It can take a few years to really establish a patch, but each year the plant under the round grows in size and potential yield.

Alpine strawberries, whilst tiny, grow happily in the shade and produce an intensity of flavour more akin to Haribo than would seem natural.

Trust me, there is a sorrel for every occasion.

Relentlessly productive, bush fruits and orchards can continue to thrive even when abandoned for long

periods. But if you treat them well - pruning in the winter and mulching the base with cardboard and manure - you can expect bigger yields of better fruits.

This type of productive gardening is not new. The potager has been popular in France for centuries, combining decorative gardening with fruit, veg and herbs to great aesthetic effect. Edible forest gardens aim to emulate the natural woodland system but with food growing on all levels, canopy, small tree, climbers



Top: variegated kale, decorative and tasty. Above: Welsh onions begin to grow in early spring. Right: Greek spannakopita, delicious made with nettles.

bushes and ground cover.

Some perennials like asparagus possibly take as much attention as an annual crop, with meticulous weeding and a high nutrient demand. However the pleasure in watching the annual progress towards a stronger, better yielding patch seems more rewarding, like compound interest on your efforts.

Steven Barstow, author of *Around the World in 80 Plants*, advocates the eating of Hostas. Mowed when the spikey shoots first emerge, they will still continue to grow into normal looking hosta foliage. I haven't seen hosta eating recommended anywhere else but I have tried them and can report hosta shoots stir-fried are an extra special seasonal treat. Steven has made a verdant productive edible paradise in his back garden in cold and damp Norway. This gives me hope and encourages me to continue with the experiment.

Further reading: *Fruit & Vegetables for Scotland*; *Plants for a Future Database*; *Around the World in 80 Plants*.

David Tallontire CHIMNEY SWEEP

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Volunteering to Safely Support Our Communities

New Galloway's call-out for volunteers is bringing a heart-warming response from local residents, keen to lend a helping hand during coronavirus.

Many of us are benefitting from their grocery deliveries and cheery smiles. But what is it like being a volunteer, putting aside the concerns of normal life and work, to support others isolated at home?

We asked the team why they want to volunteer, and how it makes them feel. A wide variety of reasons came through in the (mainly anonymous) replies, but common to all is a desire to help others: "I volunteered to help the local community in whatever way I could" and "I like to give what I can when I can".

In a close-knit community where family ties are important, one volunteer says, "Helping is in my DNA. I get it from my mother, and I think my daughter gets it from me". For another, "I have a share in the shop inherited from my mother!"

Caring for the elderly in our communities is of particular concern to volunteers: "I thought I might be able to help those who weren't able to leave their homes". Another volunteer points out "how tricky it is for some elderly/infirm people to get to the shops. Things like milk, juice and tinned foods can be surprisingly heavy – things that other people just take for granted". Within the whole community there is a keen desire to support the New Galloway Community Shop to "continue its good work", as "I see it as important to the community".

"Steep learning curve" is a phrase that crops up frequently, as volunteers adapt their skill-sets to the new normal. Taking grocery orders by phone demands considerable specificity: "Would that be old potatoes or new?", "Which chewy treats does your dog prefer?" And for

volunteer drivers, delivering in the Glenkens can be an adventure, "It felt like a treasure hunt...just where is that house? It's not on the map!" and "I did wish some houses had numbers...I needed a postie's expert knowledge!"

The youngest volunteer is Finlay McGaw, an S5 pupil at Castle Douglas High School. As is happening all over Scotland, Finlay's exams are disrupted and plans for university application put on hold. Not wanting to sit at home, he has been manning the phones and writing down grocery orders for the shop, and he and his sister deliver supplies to the local food bank co-ordinator in Laurieston. Finlay is upbeat about the situation: he enjoys his new 'office' in one of the beautiful self-catering holiday apartments beside the shop, and is impressed by how the staff and volunteers are keeping everything thoroughly clean, and as virus-free as possible. Finlay joins a groundswell throughout the world in hoping we will pay much more attention to the environment, when all this is over.

It can be difficult to take first steps towards volunteering: as one respondent puts it, "I have learned that many people are willing to help but don't always think they have anything to offer, or the confidence to step forward". Another felt "initially quite nervous; it was disconcerting to have to wear gloves and keep an unnatural distance from people". However without exception, all mention how rewarding volunteering is: "I get a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment"; "it feels good to be part of a group and see the community coming together to help one another", and, "...our hearts were warmed by the gratitude of those who were waiting for their supplies. That was really lovely".

Volunteer co-ordination is a joint initiative between New Galloway and Kells Community Council and New Galloway Community Enterprises (NGCE); part of their Community Resilience Plan, formulated to support and get information out into the community. According to



Volunteer Finlay McGaw on telephones at New Galloway Community Shop.

NGCE Community Engagement Worker, Sam Rushton, the project has "grown legs" and will have lasting effects well into the future. In these strange and difficult times, "the joy of people coming together has been a journey, not a chore" - sentiments echoed in the poem Papatūānuku (Mother Earth) being circulated by Jacinda Ardern, prime minister of New Zealand:

We'll stop, we'll cease
We'll slow down and stay home
Time to plant
Time to wait
Time to notice
To whom we belong.

Or, as one volunteer puts it, "I am pleased to have helped in a small way".

If you would like to more information or to volunteer, contact ngcommunityhelpteam@gmail.com or call 07741 656 601.

Patti Lean

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CatStrand Highlights

CatStrand's Exhibitions Go Online

CatStrand's current Washi Umi O Koete exhibition has been taken online in a newly created virtual gallery space which you can visit at www.catstrand.com/virtualgallery

As the lockdown measures meant CatStrand had to close its doors shortly after the exhibition was hung, we hope this online gallery will be a way for people to view the exhibition from the comfort of their homes.

The exhibition is a collaborative project instigated by former Balmaclellan and New Galloway resident Chrissie Heughan between Fife Dunfermline Printmakers Workshop (FDPW) and Mino Art Info, Japan. This exhibition brings together the ancient Japanese tradition of papermaking – washi ('wa' Japanese, 'shi' paper) - and contemporary Scottish printmaking.

The result is a stunning collection of original hand-made prints on five different types of hand-made Japanese paper.

Set up in 1981 as an artist-run co-operative, FDPW provides a wider range of fine art printing facilities. FDPW members contribute work to galleries and exhibitions, both nationally and internationally. Indeed, it was thanks to international connections that the idea for this exhibition came about.

In 2001 FDPW member Chrissie Heughan participated in an exchange visit to the Japanese city of Mino, a papermaking region and UNESCO Cultural Heritage Site. Then in 2016 the papermakers invited Chrissie to collaborate on a project showcasing the skills of both papermakers and printmakers.

Thirteen FDPW members responded, experimenting at length to see how the different papers reacted to various techniques – screen printing, collagraph, etching, linocut and woodblock. Inspiration came from sources as diverse as the Forth Bridges, Aberdour Pier, standing stones, beehives and selkies.

Over a period of three months each artist produced an edition of 10 original prints. Exhibited at Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop earlier this year, the prints were simultaneously exhibited in Mino. An exciting and thought-provoking celebration of a collaboration between Scottish artists and Japanese artisans, 'Washi Umi O Koete' is also a wonderful example of how art can help build bridges between diverse cultures.

Local photographer Ian Biggar was engaged to capture the exhibition at CatStrand for use in the virtual gallery space. On the day of photographing, CatStrand's glass ceiling caused sunny shadows to criss-cross the work - making

this a somewhat lengthy process and waiting game. Luckily CatStrand's coffee machine was still working. Despite challenges Ian captured images to the highest standard for use in the online gallery - and these will then be supplied to the artists at the FDPW to support them to engage with other online gallery spaces and projects.

The gallery also features downloadable exhibition notes for which Chrissie Heughan provided additional content and information as well as several short videos available online about the papermaking process and Mino, the area of Japan where the paper was produced.

Post lockdown this way of capturing and presenting CatStrand's exhibitions will continue as part of the arts programme digital offer. Aidan, GCAT's Arts Manger, hopes this will offer 'a great way to showcase the regional artists which we feature in the gallery space, encourage visitors to venture to CatStrand from further afield (once it's safe to do so) and to support local artists to receive high quality digital assets post exhibiting with us that will help them to thrive'.

Next up for virtual exploring will be CatStrand's Photography Group and their planned exhibit, so watch this online space!

*Aidan Nicol,
Arts, Culture &
Heritage Manager,
CatStrand*



Gallery at CatStrand © Ian Biggar

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Continued from front page...

How did you get people on board?

Generally, most companies and individuals were very willing to help but often due to the lockdown and COVID restrictions it was tricky to get the material to where it needed to be, but not impossible.

Who is participating?

We have a wide range of business, Government, academia and partners in the collective network. Our core team in Glasgow includes the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Kelvinside Academy and volunteer groups, as well as many individual contributors including those with 3D printers, engineers, teachers, artists, architects, friends and family!

What kind of items are you making?

We are making reusable, recyclable visor shields developed with the local Glasgow Hospital. Also, we have created a complete PPE solution boxed for care homes. We have other prototypes being developed continually, including a respirator design based on an international academic collaboration called the Pneumask project

that originated at Stanford University.

How do you know your PPE is going to be up to the standard necessary for NHS, etc?

We directly engage with the people using the products, so we have a feedback mechanism in place informing us of the necessary infection control procedures, which form part of our certification and standard process for medical device compliance. We have independent experts in each field whom we consult to enable our designs to be both functional for the end-user and compliant with NHS regulations. We also cross-refer to international standards such as WHO, EU and CDC.

How do you plan to move forward with COVID Safety Network?

We wish to build on the foundations we have to increase the production of vital equipment, as well as work on innovative projects that help accelerate future product development and enhanced designs for the communities we serve. One of our core principles with the design process is to think about the entire supply

chain with regard to holistic and inclusive ecological mechanisms. We find ways to use recycled materials, focus on reusable designs and avoid damaging waste and unnecessary chemicals and parts.

We want our network to be able to give greater clarity and coordination for a rapid response to this evolving threat.

What can people do to help?

We are always looking for more assistance - technical volunteers for making and to expand the network as well as materials and resources that can assist with manufacturing and delivery. Anyone can get in touch via the website and social media to help. We have funding calls for donations which go directly into the production process to supply more PPE where it is needed.

Who do people get in touch with if they need a support pack or specific PPE items?

It depends on a lot of factors such as logistics, high-risk areas and regional authority. There is a lack of consistent information which is a problem, but we are working hard to support everyone who gets in touch.

We welcome ideas to expand and build a wider network to support those who support us so please get in touch. With all our collective ingenuity, creativity, practicality and generosity we can make the impact needed to save lives.

To find out more visit www.covidsafetynetwork.com or find them on Facebook.

VIRTUAL LUNCHES & MORE

Virtual LING (Local Initiatives in New Galloway) Lunches are still on the table every Tuesday.

As our lockdown continues, remember to join us on Facebook - Local Initiatives in New Galloway. Please remember to 'Like' what you see and feel free to send in your own favourite soup or pudding photo.

Don't forget to keep fit for Carpet Bowls and Table Tennis with the various online exercises with Sam and John, as well as walks in the woods by the golf course, so

well cleared by the Galloway Glens LING Exploring New Galloway group.

Our PEEPs (local baby group) people can join in online with D&G Lifelong Learning Facebook. This is open to all with learning ideas and stories.

Castle Douglas IT Centre can offer individual help for those who are struggling to get to grips with unexpectedly needed technology to cope with our new way of life.

Following requests, a new Arts & Crafts group is planned as soon as possible, but in the meantime do let me know if you are interested in this.

It's incredible to realise that it is a year since we started our feasibility study on taking over the Town Hall. Apart from the

situation with COVID-19, this has been delayed because D&G Council has realised that it is a 'Common Good Property' so comes under different legal arrangements. This relates to properties which were in the ownership of the Burgh Council at the time of Local Government re-organisation in the 1970s. For some reason New Galloway properties were never set up with its own 'Common Good Fund'. The Burgh Council papers are held at the Kirkcudbright Museum but if you have any records or other information, I would appreciate if you would let me know on 01644 420 632 or ros.hill@rathanhouse.me.uk

In the meantime, all the best!

Ros Hill, LING chairman



Pictured is a series of three photographs taken by Dalry resident Paul Goodwin on 30 April. He spotted a funnel cloud - like a mini tornado - forming on Meikle Millyea and was quick enough to catch it on camera. Some of you may have seen the pictures already as Paul sent them in to BBC Scotland who featured it on the weather report that day.

Straight from the Horse's Mouth

There's something going on and I'm not sure what it is.

I may be a humble Fell pony but I do like to be properly informed.

My Person and the Other Person who owns the yard where I live most comfortably with my mates Bill, a big Welsh cob, and Kate, a rather posh ex-racehorse, like nothing better than a good chinwag...yackety yackety yak. But no anymore.

Now they work a shift system with only one here at a time and when they do meet, they stand several metres apart and shout. I think there has been a falling out.

More mysteriously, once my Person has finished her work here she drives away in her tin box muttering that she's going to do the Lock Down which I think is a kind of dance. She says everyone's doing it so it must be the latest craze.

I do get a few snippets of information from her though.

The Queen, she says, is doing the Lock Down at Windsor (hope she doesn't have the music on too loud) where she can ride her Fell pony, Emma, who is not unlike me. Can't be much fun for the pony, traipsing around Windsor Great Park with a lady in a headscarf on your back...and I

am reliably informed that it is absolutely forbidden to dump this particular lady in the mud. The most fun you can hope for is to get hair all over the royal jodhpurs.

And speaking of hair, my Person keeps groaning on about how hers is a mess because no hairdressers are working. Well, I have to agree. It does look like a lump of old sheep's wool that's been caught on the barbed wire all winter, but why all the fuss? What is so good about sitting there, having bits cut off, shampoo, smelly stuff and hot air blown over you and, worst of all, drinking that revolting brown liquid they all seem to like.

Why not just shed the winter hair and grow a sleek, shining new summer hair-do like I do?

She tells me that some people are wearing masks. Now that idea I do like! If she gets one, we could pretend to be Dick Turpin and Black Bess and go around holding people up.

But what people? There don't seem to be many around and not many tin boxes on the road either. We've had no visitors of late. Usually they arrive with trailers and sacks and collect poo from the much heap which I am told they put on their rhubarb and potatoes. I'm not sure I would fancy it. I hope they cook it well.

Last Friday was my birthday, and what did I get? An apple and some swede. My Person says she can't go to the shops



Ælfwynn meditating on the intriguing behaviour of people.

to buy me treats because she is old! Rubbish! It's just an excuse for being stingy.

I am calling a committee meeting – us, the sheep and the chickens – to see if we can work out what is going on and what we can do about it. Watch this space...

by Ælfwynn

(with a little assistance from Sue Wiseman)



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Meeting Places



Kindly sponsored by Glenkens Community Shop



The warmest of welcomes to *Meeting Places* – the page of writing by local people, previously called *Crossing Words*.

In the last issue we invited writing inspired by the viaduct across the River Dee at Loch Stroan. John Priestley's poem 'Stroan Viaduct' evokes nature in its early summer profusion of flowering and flight – an expansive freedom enjoyed by wild creatures that may bring for us a feeling of poignancy this year.

As we perhaps find our minds revisiting places we cannot be with others at the moment, in this issue we invite you to either draw on memory – of a local place you have enjoyed in company in a previous summer, or to reflect on your recent experience of being in places differently – out somewhere nearby alone or encountering other people by chance, at a distance.

If somewhere hereabouts has given you pause for thought, recently or in a summer past, and you would like to share that place, in any form of writing, with other *Gazette* readers, please do put pen to paper...

Laura and the Ken Words team

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.

For more details about current activities, please contact Jane McBeth at jane.kenwords@gmail.com

Stroan Viaduct

It doesn't stop

Between cutting
and embankment
a viaduct of stone
bull-nosed granite, arched
to solid ground.

On the embankment,
campion; fern; rose bay
willowherb; bees drone:
the cutting, drowned in brambles,
secret spaces below where

Red Admiral, Peacocks
circle in the warming air
between Ross Hill and Stroan,
bats sweep mayflies, skim midges
from the surface of the Loch.

It cannot stop.

John Priestley

Please send your writing (max. 250 words) to me, Laura, by email: laura.kenwords@gmail.com by Fri 26 June.

A selection of responses will be printed in the next issue and all submissions will be kept for possible future publication.

Galloway Place-names Database Launched

On 12 May, the 'Place-names of the Galloway Glens: The Language of the landscape' online seminar took place, with more than 80 people from across the world 'dialling in' to take part.

The event was led by the University of Glasgow's Professor Thomas Clancy and the Galloway Glens Place-names researcher Gilbert Márkus, about the ongoing project to study local place-names, how they are formed and what they can tell us about our landscape.

This project is a partnership between the University of Glasgow and the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme.

For more than a year, Gilbert Márkus has been working to catalogue place-names across seven parishes right in the heart of Galloway: Carsphairn, Dalry, Balmacellan, Kells, Parton, Crossmichael and Balmaghie. The seminar marked the unveiling of an online place-names database, which allows users to analyse

and search the findings of Gilbert's work, exploring the origin of names, the languages involved, probable age of names and what the names are trying to tell us about the landscape. More than 2,500 place names have been analysed and logged on the database.

The database is now available to all, here: <https://kcb-placenames.glasgow.ac.uk>

Gilbert said: "I'm really looking forward to getting feedback from users of the database. It isn't just a collection of names and interpretations. It is marked up so that people can analyse the data in all kinds of interesting ways, seeing clusters and patterns in the distributions for example, which will offer new insights. The launch is just the beginning."



Galloway Glens Place-names researcher Gilbert Márkus.

When We Walked in Crossmichael

Crossmichael Parish has experienced so much history.

There are glacial erratics - large ice-worn stones left by retreating glaciers, some like ton weight stone potatoes, dug up in our fields. 5000-year-old clay pots, Roman ruins, twenty mottes, forts, or burial mounds, even Viking treasures, and legends exist of Mons Meg, Mary Queen of Scots and Robert Burns passing through the area.

Records show of Templar Knights, a Crimean soldier, great bravery and sacrifice during WW1. 'Modern' industry, railways and large hydro-schemes can be seen, contrasting with our ancient church with its iconic graveyard with inscriptions recording (for example) JM Barrie's *Captain Hook* and a Covenanter Martyr from the 'Killing Times' and much more.

This rich and varied history became the creative inspiration for a group of local authors, working with the Gallery Writers in Kirkcudbright. Funded by the board of the newly-established Crossmichael Heritage Centre they created a collection of prose and poetry to explore the sense of place that Crossmichael offers.

The book also includes poignant photographs from the Crossmichael archive and contemporary images

of the village by award winning local photographer, John M Smith.

When I Walked Here began when the writers visited the heritage centre then enjoyed guided tours of the churchyard, which stands opposite the building, allowing themselves to be inspired by the real-life stories of those buried there. However, this book is not simply a history project and the writers were given a free



An angel in Crossmichael churchyard photographed by John M Smith.

The Wait

A Poem for VE Day

by Esme, age 10



Crowds of people gather as
they listen with uncertainty and
hope,
Their faces filled with visions of
peace.

The warmth of bodies anxiously
waiting for the news,
I taste the fear in the May air
around me, swirling past like a
Spitfire racing home.

Churchill, his voice crackling
through the speakers, a
moment of silence,
Words of freedom, words of
promise.

Excitement rushes through our
bodies as we rejoice,
Happiness oh happiness!

hand to use the inspiration of their visit to develop ideas for their work, to see where the images and stories took them.

The result is stories and poems dealing with everything from the dread of wartime to the nostalgic recollection of summer picnics, from religious fervour to romantic relationships, from love of nature to compelling characters, from distant war zones to water monsters. Oh, and also some teddy bears!

It is appropriate that Crossmichael should be celebrated in a book because, in addition to its general history, the parish has strong literary connections. Residents include poets Samuel Wilson (1784-1863) of Burnbrae, near Clarebrand, and William Neill (1922-2010), an important figure in the 'Scottish Literary Renaissance'.

The book was launched during Kirkcudbright's first book week, during March 2020.

Copies of the book can be obtained from alexandraemail221@gmail.com at a cost of £6.50 each. Proceeds from the sales will support the Crossmichael Heritage Centre.

You can find out more about the Gallery Writers at <https://gallerywriters.wordpress.com> and more about Crossmichael Heritage Centre at www.crossmichael.org/crossmichael-heritage-centre

Alex

USERS NEEDED FOR GLENKENS COMMUNITY CENTRE

Due to Covid 19 the Glenkens Community Centre's AGM has been postponed until it is permitted to hold a public meeting.

Sadly, the future of the centre is in the balance because currently there are not enough groups using the centre

and it is becoming difficult to keep it financially viable.

For the centre to have a bright future it needs to have more people involved and using it. The centre belongs to the community and we need to find out what people think about this situation.

Does anyone want to rent a space for a small business? Or does someone want to run a class?

We also need volunteers and new committee members. So, if you are



interested in getting involved, have a good idea or just want to have your say about this lovely community space please get in touch or come along to the AGM (date tbc).

We will keep people informed via local posters and on our Facebook page or you can contact Glenkens Community Centre Management Committee chair Carylann Williamson at williamsoncarylann@gmail.com

A Lovable Clerical Detective

Some readers may well be aware of the books introducing Sidney Chambers, a Canon of Ely Cathedral, who also dabbles in solving mysteries and other detective tasks.

He is a comparatively recent addition to the ranks of the fictional detectives.

At the moment there are seven books and they really are a joy to read.

The books by James Runcie are finely crafted and are based around the village of Grantchester near Cambridge. They are set around the 1950s and they have a lovely cosy and warm feeling to them. The author is the son of Robert Runcie, once Archbishop of Canterbury, and the clerical heritage is clear. The clerical and church context is not allowed to dominate the book or the plot.

The first book, *Sidney Chambers and the Shadow of Death*, contains six

short stories of reasonable length and introduces the five main characters that appear through the other books.

The books have led to a very popular ITV series, *The Grantchester Mysteries*, with James Norton as Canon Chambers and Robson Green as his detective friend.

The series is highly recommended to those who like gentle and lovable characters with a background that is historically accurate and which enhances and contributes to the plot. The plots are gentle, if not slow, but that is a welcome change to the frantic pace of many modern books

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Protecting Our Special Places

In the Glenkens we are blessed with many Special Places.

Some are of national importance, and some are a private oasis, while many belong to communal folklore and culture. What they all share is a contributory factor to our joint wellbeing; they are our Natural Health Service.

The ability of special places to deliver social, economic and environmental benefit is undisputable, yet residents in and around the upland periphery of the Glenkens are facing a fierce and lonely battle to protect them. Strong political forces have chosen to argue that many of our special places are without value.

It is in this political battlefield that regional planners must decide which of our special places will be sacrificed and which will be protected. Whatever place you hold dear in your heart may be the next to fall as the strength of national interest overpowers local need. Unless we act as a community to define the key elements of our Natural Health Service in the Glenkens, these special places are going to be blighted in the name of absentee colonial benefit.

I live in the Carsphairn area and have identified seven major landscape areas which I consider to be Special Places, each of which has the potential to deliver significant socio-economic and environmental benefit to the whole of the



Glenkens. In addition, there are countless smaller special places in our community which deliver wellbeing. They all deserve our protection.

In recent times we have come to understand how effective or ineffective our private curtilage is, in delivering wellbeing. The special place at the bottom of your garden may be of paramount importance in restoring mental health at times of overwhelming stress. As we come out of lockdown, I imagine that many of us will rush to our own heartfelt and sorely missed special place. Some may go to the pub, others will go to the golf course, some will visit a favourite country park, while I will be riding up the Southern Upland Way to the Benbrack Striding Arch in the company

of a very good friend. These desires go beyond mere aspiration. They are part of our psychological basic need for liberty and belonging.

I am planning to showcase the socio-economic-environmental value of Glenkens Special Places which I have dubbed our Natural Health Service. I hope the wider community can unite in the joyous task of identifying and celebrating our cultural heritage so that these Special Places may find protection in the hearts of people.

Over the next few issues of the Glenkens Gazette I will showcase some of our Glenkens special places which I feel to be under threat.

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Miss Dowey

During Term 3 and before the schools were closed because of the Coronavirus, the P3,4,5 class at Dalry Primary were lucky enough to have a lovely student teacher called Miss Dowey.

She was very kind and she listened about what we wanted to learn. Miss Dowey taught us about the rainforest and Religious Education. She also did some art with us like painting and drawing.

Over two lessons we drew and painted a selection of animals from the rainforest; I drew a black panther because they are cool animals.

My favourite thing of her time with us was when we learned how to filter water. Miss Dowey collected muddy water and we were given the task of working out how to filter the water to make it clearer.

To make it even trickier we had a budget that we had to stick within to buy materials to filter it. We had materials like marbles, sand, a sieve, and paper to choose from. It was good fun and we all worked together in teams of three to solve the problem.

That lesson taught me an important life skill, because if I was in a forest camping and I ran out of water I now know how to filter water so it is safer to drink.

I think that Miss Dowey will be a really great teacher when she finishes her training. Good luck at your next school!

Esme, P5

Lockdown Crafts and Cooking

During lockdown, teachers in the Glenkens Primary Schools Partnership, which includes Dalry and Kells schools, have been planning home learning activities for the children to do, whilst the schools are shut.

Aside from the usual reading, spelling, writing and maths, the children have been cooking, making things, drawing and painting. This has been very helpful with the health and wellbeing of the children during these challenging times.

Across the two schools the children having been participating in these activities, and have kept in touch with their teachers with emails and photographs.

One family have even taken on caring for the garden and poly tunnel at Kells. It's been lovely to stay in touch with the children and see what they have been doing.

Mrs Haynes

Pictured are some of the amazing activities that Dalry and Kells school children have been keeping busy with at home.



GALLOWAY MUSIC FESTIVAL 2020

The Galloway Music Festival 2020 managed to go ahead this year, just prior to us all going into lockdown.

Nine children from Kells and Dalry Schools competed in several different classes with great success.

Dalry P4-7 Recorder Group (Esme, Daisy, Maddy, Owen, Imogen, Aiden

and Charlie) came first with their performance of *Clown Dance*, winning the Burgess Cup.

Maddy and Owen came first in the recorder duet beginner class, with *Irish Lullaby*, with Esme and Daisy coming a very close second playing *Fais Dodo*.

Owen playing *Old MacDonald* and Imogen playing *Skateboard Ride*, came joint second in the beginner descant solo class.

Sophie and Megan from Kells won their recorder duet with *Boogie Blues*, taking

home the Penningame Cup.

Megan also came first playing *Kitty Lie Over* on the penny whistle, winning the Philgown cup.

In addition, Sophie took home the Carty Cup for her rendition of *Daisy Bell* on the clarinet.

Mrs Muir would like to thank the hard work of all the children involved, and for their exemplary behaviour representing the two schools at the Music Festival. Well done to all!

SOMETHING NEW AT DALRY SCHOOL

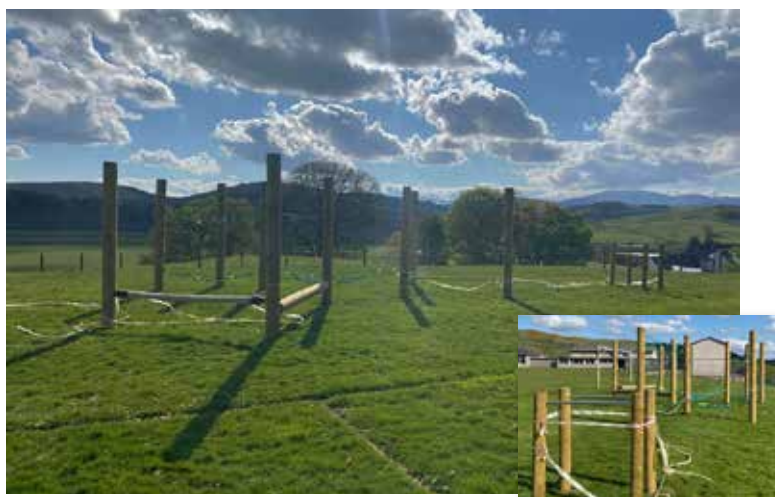
After the schools closed in March, something exciting happened in the playing field behind Dalry School...

The much-anticipated climbing structure which the children were involved in choosing, and which was generously funded by a grant from Blackcraig Community Fund, has been installed!

At present, with the government restrictions in place during lockdown, it cannot be used (hence the safety tape around it), but when the schools go back after the summer, or if restrictions are lifted during the summer holidays,

children will have a whole new play area to explore.

This project was supported by Blackcraig Wind Farm Community Fund with funding from Blackcraig Wind Farm (Scotland) Limited, administered by Foundation Scotland working in partnership with The Glenkens & District Trust.



Dalry Secondary Home Learning

Prior to 20 March, Dalry Secondary pupils and staff were busy.

S4 were working towards completing coursework and preparing for the upcoming examinations when our young people could demonstrate all the skills and knowledge they have been developing for many years.

Junior pupils were working hard too and were beginning to look forward to their well-earned Easter holidays.

Since the school closed to pupils on that date, everyone has been developing their skills in digital literacy and teachers have moved their classrooms from the building to digital platforms accessible to all pupils in their homes, allowing learning to continue.

Those who need it have been provided

with the necessary IT. School now consists of uploaded teaching resources, recorded lessons, assignments for pupils to complete that are marked by teachers, messaging and live video conferencing of lessons. Arrangements have also been made to ensure that those entitled to free school meals can access the nutrition they need.

Some teaching staff are also involved in volunteering at the CDHS/ Dalry and Dalbeattie childcare hub (in Dalbeattie campus) where they are supervising and supporting children of key workers such as NHS staff as well as other vulnerable children who cannot be looked after safely at home. Mrs Gillies, Depute Headteacher, is also part of a team of science teachers volunteering with a local company producing solutions for testing PPE equipment being used in the NHS.

With no immediate end in sight, teachers are working closely with the SQA to ensure that - whilst the examination diet has been cancelled - our young people's abilities, skills and knowledge get the recognition they deserve.

We are also planning for all of our normal transitions: S4 heading off to CDHS, "virtually" for now, or to employment or future learning elsewhere; S1 and S2 moving on to the next step in their Broad General Education journey; S3 moving into their S4 Senior Phase; and, after the summer, to our new S1 becoming part of the Dalry Secondary Community.

For now our message is: stay home, stay safe, look after your emotional well-being, and keep learning!

Dalry Secondary Staff

Dalry Community Choir

On 16 May 2019 Dalry Community Choir started up, as a result of a few 'strands' that came together.

I was a new teacher at the school, and keen to run some sort of activity involving the school and the community; our school was mindful of the well-being of its members and wanted to do something to facilitate this. As a singer, I felt some sort of singing group would be a good starting point. I did wonder, though, what my well-being might be like as a result.

We were constrained by the days/times when I am at Dalry, fitting in with everyone's commitments, and the hours when the school was open. Immediately after school was thought to be the optimum time because staff (and possibly pupils) would still be in school, and we hoped community members might also be able to join us. We started on a Thursday; then we had a timetable change, which also resulted in a change of staff hours, so

we had to move to a Wednesday. Initially, the group consisted of just staff members. Then a few members of the community came along; once, even a few pupils attended. If everybody comes, which is rarely the case, there are 12 of us; the least there has been is three, but we keep singing. We meet for a community sing-song, to experience the buzz of singing in harmony, and sing for the sheer joy of singing. There are no auditions, and we don't have to be able to read music - we just enjoy singing together as part of a group of a variety of ages. The repertoire is mixed and is tailored to meet the skills and interests of the participants.

But, we keep having interruptions! First, the summer holidays, then a break in the autumn because of extra panto rehearsal time, and now we're in lockdown because of COVID-19. We are trying to keep singing, though; as part of my home-school teaching/learning experience, I've been creating a series of Microsoft SWAY documents that can be circulated to choir members - these include the lyrics, sheet



music and backing tracks which choir members can access and hopefully sing along to. You can follow the link on the school blog - <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/dg/dalrysecondary>

And the answer, dear reader, to the question I posed at the start about what being involved in this community choir might do for my well-being? It is at times stressful - having the resources planned and prepared, the prospect of a rehearsal at the end of a busy and sometimes challenging day. But as soon as everyone arrives and we start singing, all the stresses slip away and both my physical and mental well-being are restored; I hope others feel the same. I really miss my time with the choir - the people and the singing, and look forward to being able to sing together again.

Perhaps one day you'll come and join us?

Mrs Sue St Joseph



GALLOWAY GLENS

Landscape Partnership

A Look Back...

Here are some snapshots of just some of our Glenkens projects over the last year - happy times and great progress! Thanks as ever to all our partner project staff and volunteers, without whom all this could not happen.



June 2019

LING volunteers hard at work on the walled garden at Garroch.



December 2019

The Smiddy refurbishment in Balmaclellan was completed by GCAT.



July 2019

The CatStrand Singers with their Small Grants cheque from Jude for their 'Singing the Galloway Glens' project.



September 2019

Opening of Crossmichael Heritage Centre.



January 2020

Carsphairn Heritage Initiative completed Phase One of their archive digitisation project.

February 2020

Children from Kells School explore the new footpaths in the New Galloway golf club forest.



March 2020

Gerry, Jonathan and David walk the new Glenkens Pilgrims' Way from Carsphairn to Polmaddy.



March 2020

Local Primary School children attend Food and Farming Days at Wallets Mart.



March 2020

Our Greenlandic geese left Scotland and are currently getting all romantic on the West Coast of Greenland – goslings will follow. *Photo credit: John Bowler RSPB*

Looking Forward...

None of us can tell what the immediate future holds, but the Galloway Glens team is working hard with our partners to make sure that all our projects continue as best they can. Look out for our monthly programmes of online talks in the Galloway News and on social media, and some of the projects like the Ken Words writing project have transferred extremely successfully to the virtual world. Others are having to accept that there will be a delay to their outcomes - but remember that we're here until March 2023, and there's plenty of time to get everything finished before then. We'll get there!

Marta's Amazing Garden Builds

It was a Sunday morning when Olek asked: "Mother, do you need this wood in the basement?"

To which I responded, "Yes son, why?"
"Oh I just wanted to make something productive"

"Like what?"

"I don't know..."

"Give me an idea... so I can tell you if you can or cannot have it."

"I want to make a tree house."

"Go for it, you can have the wood. Let me know if you need any help."

30 mins later...

"I don't really know how to make it..."

"Hmmm...Ok then... let's figure it out together."

And as I was on holiday that week, we spent most of the time in the garden building it. The idea came from Olek spending the previous weekend enjoying the ability to climb our tree for the first time. He spent a bit of time up there, away from Karol and I. However, it wasn't very comfortable...

When we started, nothing was straight, more of a wave design to the floor, and I thought "at least water will run off easily". Then by some miracle it even turned out square... which by all means was not intentional; more like the last thing on my mind!

One of the days as we were building, Karol said... I always dreamed about a tree house. "Would be great if it had a fireman's pole..." The only thing that came to my mind was... "are you kidding me?!" The words that made it out were slightly different; "sweetheart this is very difficult and I am sorry, I've no idea how to do it, how it'll hold in place and so on..." It took me two days of pondering and then we just went for it.

In the meantime, support poles were a difficult challenge as I didn't have the right screws so I called a friend to see if he had any spare ones. We video-chatted, it turned out that my plan of action for attaching poles needed improvement, as he was drawing and

explaining I took screenshots. We hung up... then five tries



and four hours later, the first pole was up. The other three Olek and I did in an hour, having got the hang of it. Karol was a great helper throughout the whole process too, cutting boards and supporting with positive chat.

To finish it off - I realised I didn't have enough wood for the wee barriers. Our neighbour offered pallets he had in a shed, and we used a couple of them, but it still wasn't enough. However, as I woke the next day I remembered big shelves in the basement... it turned they were built just from the right kind of wood so, an hour later and lots of shifting and lifting and we had everything needed to finish the treehouse. Both boys painted it.

Inspired by our treehouse creation, Karol decided to take on one of his own. His project started with Captain America's shield which we created from cardboard. As we were discussing colours and painting it he was playing with boxes in the kitchen and said; "How about for our next creative task we'll build a tank? Do you remember that big box I had my baby toys in?" "Yes, I do, we still have it." However, the massive box was very sizeable when Karol was four. Him now being 10, apparently the box had shrunk. Karol had his heart set on the tank idea though, so I said; "How about we'll use wood?... but if we do, we'll have to wait until the weekend before we start." So in the meantime we used the baby toy box and made a den in the living room, in which Karol slept over the next few nights. We also used our creative time to design and discuss the tank. Then the weekend arrived and we set to work. It took two days and four afternoons plus one more day to finish. We had great time and a few challenges too. Karol's project didn't require dismantling of any more shelves; however, basement ceiling-to-be is no more and a couple of other house-related projects will have to wait now too. Karol learned how to drill, cut wood, sand, measure, glue, find things that can be used in a different way - like



an old fridge shelf which made a perfect windscreen. We painted the tank with a protective layer; however when we can go freely to shops, we will venture out to find colours Karol likes.

Marta McDonald, Dalry



NAOMI'S FARMING UPDATE

In the past month so many new things have happened.

Such as: I went camping in my tent in the garden, I have started to help my mum with the milking of the goats, I have baked a cake, I feed our pet calf every morning and I have made a lot more progress with taming the goat kids.

I was bored one Friday afternoon, so I went, got my tent, set it up and spent the next few nights in it. It was really fun. The WIFI just barely reached the tent which I was happy about. It was nice to get away from my family too. I had to take it down though because it was windy, and it was about to be blown away. I also had a campfire where I got the frying pan and cooked some bacon for my lunch and then I got some marshmallows and my sister and I roasted them.

I have recently been helping my mum with milking the goats. The first day I just milked one goat, but I had to leave some for her kid. The second day I milked two goats, but they did not have kids this year, so I had to get all the milk. I really love milking goats, but it hurts my arms a lot, so I do not do it very often, but I've started to do it more. I have also made a lot more progress with

trying to tame the kids. Some are still quite scared, and some are still a bit too friendly. But it is getting a lot better.

We now have a pet calf which I feed every morning. We are going to try and get her to walk with a halter but we haven't had much success yet, but we are going to keep trying so then next year we might be able to bring her to a show. Her name is Juliet. She is bouncy, so it is hard to get her to even stand still.

I participated in the 2.6 challenge. This was a challenge to raise money for Guides and Brownies. It was held because the London marathon was cancelled due to COVID-19 so on London marathon day I cycled to the Glenkens Fish Farm and back which is 2.6 miles. For the challenge you could do something 26 or 2.6 times.

We also have 13 chicks and two poults with more hatching right now! We have some black chicks and some yellow ones. The yellow ones are called nankins and the black ones are called Scots dumpys. I prefer the nankins because I find that they are cuter, but I love them all a lot.

I have also been helping my mum in the garden by digging a trench then putting in the compost, raking a bit of the soil back, then putting the potatoes in and then putting in the rest of the soil. I also planted some cauliflowers into some pots. There were normal ones and



Naomi with their pet calf, Juliet.

purple ones! I don't know what they are going to look like but I'm excited to see them once they have grown.

And last of all there is VE day. For VE day I made some bunting which I put up at our road end. My mum made a cake as well which was delicious. Recently I have also made a cake which tasted nice too. My mum also made a Swiss roll at the same time as the cake for VE day. It was a Victoria sandwich cake with cream and raspberries.

This month has been jam-packed with things and so will next month I hope, so stay tuned for the next edition to hear what happens next!

Naomi McCreath, age 12

FINLAY CARSON MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for
Galloway and West Dumfries



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please get in touch

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What Does VE Day Celebrate?

That VE Day commemorated the end of the war is a common misconception.

Recently we celebrated the 75th anniversary of VE Day and several news headlines added the phrase "and the End of the War" but omitted "in Europe".

A missive from the Dumfries & Galloway Regional Council to all Community Councils detailing the proposed celebrations for the anniversary of the end of the war, prompted me to point out the error. I had a polite reply agreeing that I was correct but that the details were about the VE Day and details on the VJ Day celebrations would be published shortly. That was three months ago and I am not aware of any announcement for VJ Day on 15 August. I remember pointing out a similar omission on the 70th anniversary, but it made no difference; 15 Aug passed largely forgotten.

As one of the generation born around that time and with a father and several neighbours who fought in India and Burma, I grew up hearing the names Arakan, Donbaik, Tiddim Road, Kohima and more. My Dad's good pal Jim Bell, who ran the Lochinvar Garage in Dalry, often visited on a Sunday afternoon and the two recalled the places and campaigns (and perhaps with the presence of two young boys, without mention of the brutality and death) that they experienced just 10 or more years earlier. I know more now of the horrors of the Burma campaign and was reminded last week during the Captain Tom documentary of the appalling conditions and brutal foe facing our troops.

Britain at one point was struggling against the superior numbers of the Japanese army and was in 'managed retreat' towards India. Dad's cousin William, captured in the fall of Singapore, was now a slave in a Japanese copper mine.

My father was born in 1918, died 1995 and went to Crossmichael School before going to Castle Douglas High School. When clearing Dad's desk after his death I found many letters sent home from the far east. The censor's scissors ensured that only oblique references were made of places and outcomes; the following are examples of ways of getting round the censor with creative language.

Dad was in the Indian Mountain Artillery with their field guns

disassembled and carried by mules over mountainous ridges and deep gullies. One letter said that he had been doing much "hill climbing" and as a result felt pretty fit. He mentioned the Tinker's Loup (above Dalry) and stated that the tinker had nothing on him and some! In a memoir written 40 years later he recalled ordering the guns to shell his own OP (Observation Post) as it was about to be over-run by the enemy. He and his colleagues abandoned the OP,

jumped the Khud (deep ravine) and escaped under the curtain of shellfire. After that narrow escape the letter continued 'We are not following the old school motto now.' ('Forward' was the old CD High School motto, meaning Dad's regiment were in retreat). "Had visions of joining cousin William, but changed my mind" - quite an understatement!

Among Dad's letters was a story of his regiment's voyage to Burma. They were heading for the Western desert when Singapore fell and the ship was diverted for the Far East (they had to repaint all the artillery jungle green instead of the desert colours) He wrote that he had a great time on the voyage with a lot of Glenkens boys: "We have had a good voyage - weather good - it was lovely at sunrise this morning. I was pretty sick at first day out but nothing much compared with the majority. For dry land sailors we soon got our sea legs. JD (Jim Bell) keeps well and cheery as also Jock Little, while Cheery McQueen is still cursing

The Burma Casualty

The sun is burning in the diamond sky.
Vultures gathering where the scattered bodies lie.
The khaki masses in a scorched field of brown.
Flies swarming round them and sunlight blazing down.

I see them through the glasses and some chaps seem to sleep.
Through bushes in the hollow as if posing for a leap.
Attitude of many show the pain in which they died.
Over them the carrion birds and ragged pinions glide.

I lift my gaze and shudder for beyond the dreary scene.
A wounded man is lying by a little patch of green.
A bullet got him yesterday, he cannot get away.
He must lie among his slaughtered mates, all through the burning day.

We cannot get him in - it's half a mile to go.
The enemy's between us with machine guns in a row.
No comrade, we cannot help you, much as we want to try.
We will have to stay here and wait, and watch you - die.

I watch him and I find I cannot tear my eyes away.
I keep him in the glasses all through the hell-short day.
He sits up sometimes trying to brush away the flies.
Or drag himself from the grim graveyard where he lies.

It is grand and terrible to watch him fight to keep alive.
His water bottle's dry, but his burning lips still strive.
To draw life from a dry mouth, that has no life to give.
He seems to say the rest are dead - but somehow I must live.

Then came the dark and how the battle ended was not seen.
But in the morning, nothing moved by the little patch of green.
His strength had failed him and his tortured soul had fled away.
The war may be forgotten but the memories will stay.

After I am out of it, there's one thing sure.
This thing I will remember - how sick and helpless.
I peered through glasses and watched - a comrade die.

Dombaik, Burma, 1943

everybody but aye ready to help. We had quite a gathering of Glenkens lads yesterday morning - Gallacher, Jardine, McMin, McDowall, Paterson, McQueen, McMath, JD and myself. The last six all from New Galloway (excluding JD & Dad). The envelope states 'Posted from ships' and Passed by censor No 45. There is no date on the letter or envelope but it would be late February/early March 1942.

I found, too, a poem written by another gunner who observed an appalling death from his OP, which is included above.

Britain celebrated the end of war in Europe. Those who fought the Japanese called themselves 'The Forgotten Army' and continued to fight for another three months after VE Day.

Let's not let them be forgotten again on the forthcoming 75th anniversary on 15 Aug. Remind your councillors and MSPs that there should be a celebration too of VJ Day - perhaps this time 'We will remember them'...

*John Nelson,
Spearford, Crossmichael*

Local Initiatives for Dalry

Local Initiatives For Dalry (LIFD) are a group of local volunteers bringing hope, joy and unity to our community with engaging events and activities, as we all stay at home, stay safe and shield.

Stones of Kindness

LIFD launched a Stones of Kindness hunt across the Glenkens, starting on Monday 18 May to mark the start of Mental Health Week. What's not to like about a walk in the fresh air whilst finding a precious piece of art work created by someone else, a mood booster or what?! Perfect to give you a little 'LIFD' for the day...

We're asking our communities, old, young and anything in between to decorate a stone (with or without a message of kindness). Take the stone with you on your next walk and 'hide' it (in a visible place!), have a look around on your walk, if you find

any more Stones of Kindness take a photo of it and post it on LIFD's Facebook page or email gw08devlinjenna01@ea.dumgal.sch.uk. Once you've done this, please leave it for someone else to find. Let's keep this going through lockdown and beyond, to spread a bit of love and cheer across the Glenkens. Nb Please do not touch the stones.

Plant Swap Shop

There's also going to be an unstaffed 'Plant Swap Shop' on Main Street in Dalry (location tbc) for the foreseeable future. Gardening is widely known to help boost physical and mental health, so why not have a go? How it works - maybe you have an abundance of seedlings or plants that you'd quite like to swap for a variety of others?

Quite simply, head to the Plant Swap Shop (on your daily walk or when in Dalry to get supplies) and take one



and leave one. Please maintain all COVID-19 guidelines whilst using the Swap Shop. Happy gardening!

Scarecrow Festival

Just for fun... create a scarecrow! Any design, any theme and display it outside your home. Make someone smile with your creativity as they pass by. If you don't live in the village, take a photo and post it onto our LIFD Facebook page or email gw08devlinjenna01@ea.dumgal.sch.uk for us to share with others.

Join in! Let's spread smiles with a little LIFD.

Report Squirrel Sightings

It may be tempting to think everything is on hold but the plight of the Red Squirrel continues, with the advance of the invading grey squirrel not respecting any lockdown period.



It is so important that everyone continues to record sightings of squirrels across our area, as we are one of the last bastions for the red squirrel in southern Scotland. We need reports of a sighting of either a red or a grey squirrel - simply visit www.scottishsquirrels.org.uk to input your sighting.

Reports are sought whether the squirrels are alive or dead - any dead grey squirrels on the road are still a vital report, confirming their presence.

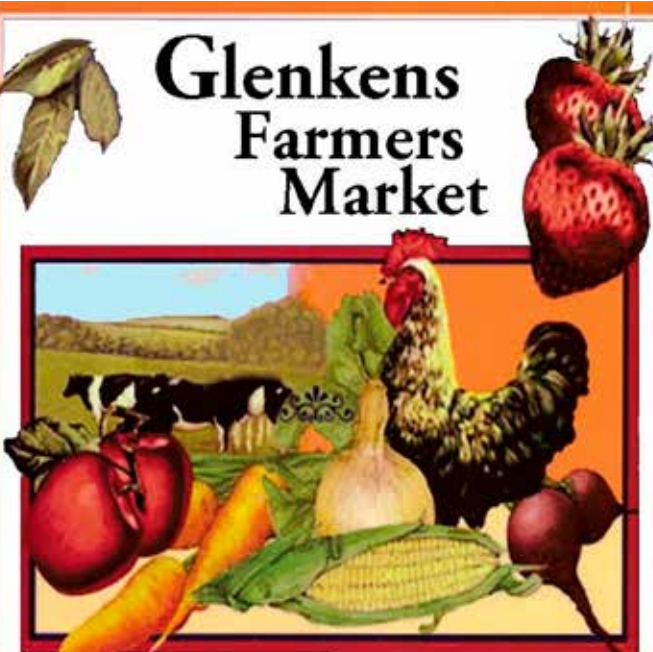
Unfortunately, here in the Corsock area, there have been recent reports of grey squirrels on the Corsock House and Crofts estates.

We need your support for all efforts to protect our lovable red squirrels - or in no time at all there will be no reds left!

Thanks to everyone across the Glenkens who are already helping our red squirrels.

If you would like to do more (post lockdown) please contact bobpeace@btinternet.com or caroline.pridham@birdlife.org to join the Glenkens Red Squirrel Group.

Many thanks,
The Corsock Squirrel Crew



Glenkens Farmers Market

2nd Saturday Monthly
13th June • 11th July
10am-12.30pm

*** Dependent on the government's guidance at the time regarding COVID-19 ***

For further information or to book a stall ring 01644 430 454
 or visit www.dalrytownhall.co.uk

Entrance by donation - proceeds towards Dalry Town Hall Refurbishment Fund
 North of Castle Douglas, A713 Ayr Road

Crossmichael Woodland Walk

Plans are now being finalised for improving the walk that runs through the community woodland on the outskirts of Crossmichael village, heading towards Culgruff House.

The project is being led by Crossmichael & District Community Council, and is being funded by the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme and by Blackcraig Wind Farm Community Fund with funding from Blackcraig Wind Farm (Scotland) Limited, administered by Foundation Scotland working in partnership with The Glenkens & District Trust.

The woodland, owned by the Shedden family of Crossmichael, is in the management and care of Crossmichael & District Community Council and the path is part of a popular circular local walk. The path improvements will provide a better path surface, drainage, gates, picnic tables and a

new footbridge. Discussions are underway now about when the work can get underway – precise timings and timescales will depend on national developments and guidance.

Richard Middleton, chairman of the Crossmichael & District Community Council, upon seeing the plans being finalised, said: "The community woodland in Crossmichael is a well-loved amenity and the community council is keen to enable residents to make the most of it. In particular, we have for a long time wanted to improve the main path, which gets very wet in bad weather, and also to make it more accessible for folk with buggies and wheelchairs."

These improvements form part of the broader Galloway Glens 'Out & About' project that sees a range of work taking place up and down the valley, focused on improving access for all abilities to the amazing natural environment we



have in Galloway. Jonathan Barrett, Galloway Glens Land Management & Access Officer, said: "This project will significantly improve the usability of this part of the core path as well as enhancing access to and the facilities of the community wood which is a treasured local asset. Particular thanks to the Crossmichael Community Council and the Shedden family as landowners for bringing this project forward and to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, supported by lottery players across the country."

News Update: Windy Rig Wind Farm

Following announcements in late March, and as many local residents will know, the construction site at Windy Rig was temporarily closed on Tuesday 24 March 2020.

Throughout the closure we closely monitored the Scottish and UK Government and industry guidance and light activity resumed on site in May with a view to assessing what is required to allow the safe resumption of construction.

The safety of our own staff, our contractors and the local community is of utmost importance. The next phase of the work being undertaken on site throughout May and June is

solitary by nature – individual workers sitting in enclosed machinery cabs preparing ground works. This will enable us to work safely and in accordance with Scottish Government construction guidance.

For up to date information on construction progress visit www.statkraft.co.uk/windyrig

Are you a regular user of the B729? Receive text messages to be told about any large deliveries or additional activity on the route to our site. Contact Doug Wilson if you would like to be added, at doug.wilson@statkraft.com or call 07542 754 642.



For the Love of Scrubs

The cottage industry lives again across Dumfries & Galloway as many work to create and distribute essential personal protective equipment for the NHS.

As part of the UK-wide For the Love of Scrubs campaign, housebound makers across the region have downed the gardening tools and taken up their fabric shears to meet demand and protect our NHS.

Co-ordinators local to the different corners of D&G are sourcing approved fabric, elastic, labels and pins and delivering to the doorsteps of skilled volunteers;

they in turn are printing patterns, cutting hundreds of pieces and over-locking their love and appreciation into the finished articles before leaving them on the doorstep again to be collected and taken where needed.

To find out more visit the NHS D&G For the Love of Scrubs Facebook page.

Pictured: In Corsock, pre-schooler Siena scrubs up well in her Mum's handywork.



The Mystery of Huntingdon 290

Continued from last issue...

When Earl David died in 1219 the earldom passed to his son John then reverted to the English crown in 1237. An important Scottish power-base close to English nerve centres was thus removed and with it Scotland's remarkable influence in the south. Earl David and other members of the family are said to be buried at Salitre Abbey (present-day Sawtry, just north of Huntingdon), founded in 1147 by Simon de Senlis the younger, Countess Maud's son from her earlier marriage.

But that's only the start of the story. The Huntingdon brood continued to make history hundreds of miles to the north. In 1290, when the legitimate line of William the Lion petered out, Earl David's descendants were prime candidates for the Scottish throne.

One of his girls, Isobel of Huntingdon, married the 4th Lord of Annandale. Their grandson, the 7th Lord of Annandale, became King Robert I (Robert the Bruce). One of his grand-daughters, Devorguilla Princess of Galloway, married John Balliol, founder of Balliol College, Oxford (this Balliol not to be confused with their son, the younger John Balliol, who became King of Scotland in 1292 after a contest with 12 other claimants). Balliol the Younger's claim was through Devorguilla, daughter of Margaret of Huntingdon, Earl David's eldest daughter. The other leading contender, de Brus (Bruce), 6th Lord of Annandale, was the son of Isobel, the second daughter of Earl David. He was one generation older and supposedly "closer" to the throne.

In tricky situations like this it was customary to invite a foreign monarch to choose. The notorious bully Edward 'Longshanks', hungry for supreme lordship over Scotland, seized his chance. He selected Balliol, then proceeded to make his life a misery... so much so that Balliol resigned the crown in 1296 and was locked in the Tower for his impudence. Scotland was again without a king and menaced by the English. The bloody struggle for

independence began, led by William Wallace.

In 1306, to make absolutely certain of the crown that should have been his father's, the 7th Lord of Annandale murdered his rival the Red Comyn, Guardian of Scotland, on the altar steps of Greyfriars Church in Dumfries, an offence for which he was excommunicated. Nevertheless, within weeks he was crowned King Robert I.

So enraged were Longshanks and Bruce's enemies the Comyns and Balliols, that Bruce was forced into hiding in the wilds of Galloway and his family made to suffer. The men were executed and the ladies "caged". Nearly everyone's hand was against him. How this great-great-grandson of David and Maud, with a small band of followers, turned the tables and finally triumphed at Bannockburn is the stuff of legend.

Does any of this explain the mystery of the MidSteeple mileplate? Could Huntingdon

to this part of the world to rate a mention alongside London?

We know that after the Border wars and the Union with England the legitimate cattle trade between Galloway and the South was considerable. In 1697 a proposal for a proper drovers' road from New Galloway to Dumfries White-sands was backed by James Earl of Galloway, Alexander Viscount of Kenmuir and John Viscount of Stair among other major landowners.

The herds tended to change ownership at the great market in Dumfries before being driven down to lucrative outlets in Norfolk and Suffolk, according to one source. But they would have reached Huntingdon first.

We may assume that this trade was just as important to the local economy in medieval times but must have been severely disrupted between 1300 and 1600 by the Border troubles, which made drives southwards through the Debatable

Lands vulnerable to attack by the notorious reivers.

If there were epic cattle drives from Dumfries and Galloway they'd have ended with the arrival of the railways in the mid-1800s. The cattle trade hadn't

...a proposal for a proper drovers' road from New Galloway to Dumfries White-sands was backed by James Earl of Galloway...

and its close neighbour St Ives - which was the venue of one of the four Great Fairs in medieval England drawing traders even from Europe - have been a major destination for cattle drives from the north? With huge landholdings north and south of the border, the earls of Huntingdon would almost certainly have been cattle barons, perhaps using their Huntingdon outpost to push northern beef into the rich markets of the south. We know that vast herds were rested and fattened on the lush meadows of the Great Ouse at St Ives before meeting buyers up from London and across from The Midlands and Norwich. On the town's coat of arms are four "bulls' heads proper", although the cattle market is long gone.

I turned up nothing meaningful at the Huntingdon end, where the sense of history is fixed chiefly on Oliver Cromwell, their one-time MP. So can anyone here explain why Huntingdon was important enough

been a fixed and settled business with permanent buildings, so few if any records survive. And the rail connection at Castle Douglas in 1859 changed everything.

Huntingdon Castle, rebuilt by William the Conqueror in 1068, was enlarged by David and Maud, who presumably lived there from time to time until 1124 when David's kindly duties took them to Scotland. The castle was dismantled in 1174 by a furious Henry II after the revolt against him by his own family. Huntingdon by then had passed to David the 3rd Earl after William the Lion (his brother) ascended the Scottish throne in 1165, but the castle was still held at the time by William, who had unwisely sided with the rebels. William was already in dispute with Henry over the earldom of Northumbria and, as one of the leaders of an armed rebellion, was made to pay dearly.

Stuart Littlewood

GLENKENS PLACE NAMES: PART IV

In this edition I would like to look at what place-names can tell us about the different wild animals that frequented the Glenkens in the past.

Of course there is a difficulty with place-names featuring an animal of some sort to decide whether the name was coined because of the common frequency of that animal species in that location or because it had been seen there as a rare one-off and therefore name-worthy occurrence. Nonetheless it is interesting to look at the types of wild animals commemorated in our local place names.

I will start off with the cat, more likely the wild cat. The Place-Names of the Galloway Glens is an excellent resource for local place-names and is a collaboration between the Galloway Glens and Glasgow University (<https://kcb-placenames.glasgow.ac.uk>). It shows seven place-names in the Upper Glenkens incorporating the Gaelic element cat (spelled as in English). However two of those listed are likely to be mistaken, the website entry for Ballingear being confused with Ballingait (which is supposed by the website to represent Gaelic Baile nan cat, farmstead of the cats), which place is in fact a former farm located somewhere near Craigenbay. This place-name will likely be from Gaelic Baile an Geata, farm of the gate, a place-name still remembered from the road from Glenlee up the Craigshinnie Glen, the Gaithill Road. I am also very doubtful that Catbellie, the former name for Burnfoot, just south of New Galloway, derives from the cat or wild cat as suggested (very hesitantly) by the website. So leaving these two to one side a noticeable northern distribution of wildcat place-names remain.

Behind Garryhorn farm rises a rocky hill called Craighit. This is from Gaelic Creag a' chait, Rock of the (wild) cat. In the photo above one can see the upstanding rocks where it could be imagined would make a good den location for a wild cat. That this was the case is further backed up by the Scots place-name Wild Cat Slack which appears on an estate map of 1839 (shortly to be placed on line at National Library of Scotland). Old Norse slakki, adopted as a Scots word slack, is 'a small shallow valley, a hollow in the ground'. This feature appears to be the glen of the un-named burn between Craighit and Black Craig.

Of the other four wild cat place-names three are in the remote northern extremities of Carsphairn parish and all have preserved a slightly different anglicised form of the specific 'cat' element. These are two places called Allwhat from Gaelic Ail Chat, wild-cats' rock and Polwhat, Gaelic Poll Chat, for wild-cats' burn. The final wild-cat place-name in our area is Dalwhat for Dail Chat, wild-cats' haugh, somewhat incongruously on the slope of Beinn Naoimhe, sacred

mountain, now Blackcraig Hill.

The Place-Names of the Galloway Glens website suggests that the anglicisation of Gaelic cat in the genitive singular as 'hit' is unusual however this is not the case in Galloway where outside the Glenkens we find forms such as Craighenhitt, Craig Het, Craiget, Craighit, Dalhet and Altehet (this last being Gaelic Allt a' Chait, Burn of the wild-cat). This perhaps suggests two things, one that wild-cats were once well distributed (unsurprising) but also suggests the Galloway Gaelic pronunciation was perhaps somewhat different from that in the rest of Scotland (the genitive singular element chait being pronounced something like 'hatch' currently).

The next beast I'd like to discuss is the badger. The Gaelic word for this is broc, giving rise to the familiar Brock the Badger in English. Gaelic Broclach, a badger warren occurs in two Carsphairn Brockloch place-names and indeed all the Glenkens badger references share a remote northerly distribution with that of the wild-cat. Solitary badgers are referred to in Carsphairn parish at Clashbrook Bog (near



Creag a' Chait, Craighit, near Garryhorn - Wild Cat Slack is behind the hill.

Castlemaddy), from Gaelic Clais Bruic, badger's den. Cassinbrock is a lost place-name near Strongassell and The Place-Names of the Galloway Glens website has this tentatively as Gaelic Carse a' bhruc, the badger's carse. However it seems to me more likely to be Gaelic Casan Bruic, badger's path. The badger also seems to put in an appearance at Marbrack/Moorbrock near Cairnsmore of Carsphairn (Càrnas Mòr, big cairn shaped hill). The Place-Names of the Galloway Glens site makes a good case for Marbrack and Moorbrock being connected and probably originating in Gaelic Marg Bruic, badger merkland. Incidentally there are a cluster of Marg place-names around Carsphairn (Marscalloch, Muirdrochwood, Culmark, Bridgemark, Marbrack) that we will return to in a later edition.

An eastward spur of Corserine on the Rhinns of Kells terminates in the rocky cliff of Craigbrock, above Loch Harrow. This will be Creag Bruic, badger rock or cliff.

As mentioned before, the jury is still out on the provenance of the supposed only Galloway Gaelic poem, Òran Bagraidh but it is interesting, given the prevalence of badger place names in the upper Glenkens and Carsphairn in particular that one of the

lines in the poem is Bhite brocach Carsa Fèarn (they would be badger hunting in Carsphairn).

Auchenshinnoch, a farm on the high ground east of the Ken in Dalry parish is derived from Gaelic Achadh nan sionnach, field of the foxes. This place-name is still pronounced Achenshinnoch locally. Up the Gaithill Road mentioned earlier is the ruined farmstead of Craigshinnie, situated under Creag Sionnach, fox's cliff.

The Gaelic word for goat, gobhar, is sometimes difficult in place-names to distinguish from odhar, dun coloured. However there are several likely 'goat' place-names in our area. Rinn Gobhair, Ringour meaning Goat Point on the side of Loch Ken. On the slope of Millyea, noted on a 1768 plan (see The Place-Names of the Galloway Glens website) is a rock called the Achneygour Stone, probably from Achadh nan Gobhar, field of the goats. On the ridge above lie the Lochans of Auchniebut, possibly Achadh nam Boc, field of the bucks. Craigengower, Creag a' Ghobhair, rock of the goat, is a minor top on Beinn Naoimhe or Blackcraig,

mentioned above. Knockower at the north end of the Rhinns could be the dun coloured hill or goat hill and Craigower near Craigshinnie also could be either.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given that a lot of the Glenkens comprised part of the hunting Forest of Buchan, deer feature in our local place-names. A tributary of the Polmaddy, rising between Meaul (Gaelic Meall, a lump) and Craigchessie (pronounced Craigjessie for Gaelic Creag Deasach, south facing cliff) is the small Blaree Burn. This must be named for a level field in the area, Gaelic Blàr Fèidh, deer sward. Close by, between the Polmaddy and Forrest Glens is Craigmaharb for Gaelic Creag na h-earba, rock of the hind. Another

Gaelic word for a hind is eilid as seen in Craignelder in the Polmaddy glen and Craignaltie (both from Gaelic Creag na h-eilde) on the lower slopes of Benbrack (Gaelic Beinn Bhreac, speckled mountain), beside Blackcraig or Cairnsmore of Dee (Gaelic Càrnas Mòr, large cairn shaped hill). Close to Craignaltie is Hind Craig, a direct translation.

The final Gaelic animal place-name I'd like to mention is rather interesting. There is a burn on the Forrest Estate called Altibeastie. This is possibly from Allt na Bèiste, burn of the beast, possibly meaning otter (bèist-dubh). Note however The Place-Names of the Galloway Glens website gives several alternatives, the most likely in my view being Allt na Bèiste, burn of the cattle.

There are a few Scots animal names in the Upper Glenkens, oddly two commemorating the polecat, Fumart Liggat (gate) at Earlsiton and Fumart Glen up the valley of Glenlee. The Scots alternative to sionnach, fox or Tod is seen in Todstone farm, also near Earlsiton with another Todstone near Burnfoot south of New Galloway. It could be that a personal name is involved here however.

Michael Ansell, New Galloway

LOCAL HISTORY with TED COWAN

Letters from Balmaghie



A fascinating series of letters, 267 in all, dated between 1789 and 1845, concerning the Neilsons of Balmaghie and their associates in Scotland and Canada, has just been made available online.

This resource is provided by Kenneth Veitch of the European Ethnological Research Centre, School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh University, the organisation that last year published *Dumfries and Galloway: People and Place*.

[Since the original spelling is somewhat erratic for modern readers I have silently amended some words]

Three years ago I wrote a short piece in the *Glenkens*

Gazette about the Balmaghie Bookmen who became the leading publishers of 'useful knowledge' in

Quebec and thus Canada, in the late 18th and mid 19th centuries. This new collection enables us to find out more about the family, especially those who remained at home. The person who attempted to make sure that relatives stayed in touch on both sides of the Atlantic was Isobel Neilson who was always badgering her sons, Samuel and John, to write to her. Typically of emigrant letters the folk at home never receive enough information, in fact less, as time goes by, and the interests of the parties become more specialised or obscure. Both sons were the biggest publishers in Canada, John becoming a prominent politician and philanthropist. Isobel stayed at Livingstone Boat, so named for the ferry across the Dee at that point. She later moved to Laganorie and Gatehouse. When Samuel learned that another brother, William, had ambitions to be a carpenter, he sent him a pile of the best available texts on all kinds of building and architecture, a neat example of knowledge transported from the New World to the old instead of the other way about. Sam believed that

knowledge was the noblest ornament of human nature, as did the whole family, and there was much more to carpentry than might be assumed today; the Glenkens men who became the Kings of Cotton in Manchester also based their phenomenal success on joinery apprenticeships. Isobel sent Dumfries newspapers out to Quebec. Newsprint was often the last link with the Auld Country for emigrants. In Ontario, and doubtless elsewhere in Canada, in the 1980s, queues began to form around lunch time on the sabbath for copies of the Sunday Post. Isobel asked Sam to acquire fur for a cloak requested by 'Mrs Lorie of Woodhall' if it was not very expensive. It turned out to be too dear but folk continued to assume fur would be cheaper at source than in Scotland.

Sam's cousin Andrew Brown, the first of the family to emigrate, wrote from Greenock while awaiting a ship

through all the parish, and in

Crossmichael likewise, and that part of Grenlaws Estate called Casayend and Carlinwork and Black Park which he sold to the Dowglasess, at present possessed by men of the name of Douglas who has erected a Stepel [steeple] and a Councel house and prison and made it a burrow [burgh] where they have one Bilie [i.e. baillie] and six Counselers to be elected every three years. They now call it the burrow of Casteldouglas and they are now carrieng on the Cotton work there as well as Gatehouse, Kirkcudbright and Dumfries. They have built several houses for that purpose both there and in other places in the Countrie."

Not all was upbeat. "George Brown boatman is lost in the water six weeks ago; he threw himself out of the boat for he was rather wrong in his mind;

we got him a corpse in about four hours; he has left a wife and eight children in a poor melancholy condition."

Occasionally the days of lang syne

Sam believed that knowledge was the noblest ornament of human nature, as did the whole family...

back to Canada remarking on the great changes that had taken place in Galloway since he had left it a decade earlier. "It seems to be almost another land, the vast improvements in agriculture has altogether altered the appearance of the surface, and the great number of well regulated manufactures of different kinds draws such a quantity of money to the country that [the value of money is less appreciated], to which if we add the great improvement that the manners of the inhabitants has undergone we will not wonder at their former way of life being altogether changed and must conclude that the country is becoming new."

Samuel's brother-in-law sent welcome news of home. "In respect of Balmaghie parish it is much altered for there is not a gentleman dwelling in the parish but Mr Lowrie in Woodhall and he is going to his new building in Crofts of Crossmichael this spring and Mr Muir is said to come home to Livingston this Summer but agriculture and farm houses is much improven in this parish both on the Duchra and Balmaghie estets [estates] and

came to mind, as in a letter that William wrote to John in Quebec joyfully recalling the happiness of their childhood. It would take someone who knew, or knows, Balmaghie really well to fully interpret the following. "I have been several times at the Dornald (Dornell) of Balmaghie, and had the pleasure of crossing over the ground where we spent a part of our youthful days about the wod perk, bog é loch, breakus muir, the Mickle drum, the wee dornal, the wee dornal hill, the green hights, the reans nest, the mid hill, the mur dycke, the grey craig, the sput, the all barn, the seugh yard, the brae abune the spring wall, the falls loch gour, the nitchle brae, the dramans slap, an out the road to Belly Mack an Lauriston." Some are obvious, others not so, but all are evocative.

This is a very rich source with lots more to come but if you cannot wait, you can read more at:

www.regionalethnologyscotland.llc.ed.ac.uk/written/selected-letters-neilson-family-galloway-and-quebec-1789-1845

Ted Cowan

BUSINESS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Fleet Fish

Many local businesses are working hard to ensure they are able to continue to provide their services. In this issue, Fleet Fish, a delivery service providing fresh fish, fruit, veg and more, talk about how they have adapted to cope with the current coronavirus crisis.

"It was a difficult decision for us to move online as our customers were used to the 'old service'," says Charlie of Fleet Fish. He continues:

"Our normal service was a weekly door to door service offering fresh fish, fruit and vegetables. We were struggling to work within social distancing guidelines due to COVID-19 and we were concerned that due to the distance we covered and the volume of people we were in contact with that we could potentially spread the virus - which was a concern for both our customers and our family. Online allowed a 'contact free' service as produce was paid for online and we simply needed to drop the delivery at the door.

"Going online has been a very steep

learning curve for us - changing our business model was not something we had in our plans! However, our customers have been very supportive and have adapted very well. People have been very accommodating. Our produce is sourced at Glasgow market and due to supply/demand the choice can vary but people have been very flexible and understanding. We also stock chicken, sausages and cold meat plus eggs, milk and cheese.

"We are very pleased that our previous customer base appear to have followed us online and we have also been able to offer a service to vulnerable people who are self isolating in rural areas. Our product range is available to view at www.fleet-fish.co.uk - people are asked to order and pay online before Sunday 9pm and their order will be delivered the following week. The Glenkens delivery day is Friday.

"We understand that not everyone has access to the internet - if family



The Fleet Fish van delivers all around the Glenkens each Friday.

members can place an order for people that is the easiest option but we can also take orders over the phone.

"This way of working could potentially be our 'new normal' - but we will seek feedback from our customers before we make any decisions."

You can order online or by phone. Order before 9pm Sunday for delivery the following Friday at www.fleet-fish.co.uk or, if you don't have access to the internet, call Charlie on 07966 103 912.

Walk the Glenkens Pilgrims Way

A new path has been created from the deserted settlement of Polmaddy to Carsphairn, entitled the Glenkens Pilgrims Way.

The path construction works are now complete, with plans underway for the signage and other interpretation features along the route.

The historic path route, known locally as the Pack Road, is part of what was for more than 500 years the main route for travellers and the movement of goods from the North down through the Glenkens to the coast. This path formed an important part of the network of pilgrim routes across southwest Scotland which brought pilgrims from Glasgow and Edinburgh to the cradle of Christianity in Scotland at Whithorn. Historic records show that King James IV used part of this route on one of his many pilgrimages on foot in the late 1490s to visit the shrine of Saint Ninian.

The upland part of the route, south of Carsphairn, provides evidence of human

activity from prehistoric times with numerous stone cairns including Cairn Avel, whose construction predates the Egyptian Pyramids, and later Christian era monuments together with abandoned steadings and enclosures. This improved part of the route ends at the ruins of the agricultural settlement or farm town of Polmaddy which was finally abandoned in the early 1800s.

Despite the historic importance of the route, it was gradually disappearing and urgent attention was required to save a route rich in the history of the area.

The improved path is proving to be a very popular walking route over wild upland terrain with magnificent views of the Rhins of Kells, through peaceful forest planting to emerge at the enigmatic ruins of Polmaddy.

Jonathan Barrett, Galloway Glens Land Management & Access Officer who led on the delivery of the path improvements, said: "The recently completed Glenkens Pilgrims Way project has seen the completion of 7km of improvement works to revive what was barely accessible to all but the most determined walker. Although



this was a technically demanding project it presented a once in a lifetime opportunity to preserve and protect a much loved and historically important local path route for future generations. The next step will be to plan suitable signage and interpretation that allows the user to better understand the surrounding landscape as they pass.

"Galloway Glens would like to give particular thanks to landowners along the route for their support: The Sinclair Family, Czernin Kinsky Scottish Company Ltd and Forestry & Land Scotland."

BUTTERFLY COLLAGE COMPETITION

Dalry Community Council had a difficult time judging last issue's butterfly collage competition.

All the entries were colourful, engaging and made us smile; we think the Glenkens has some talented young artists and hope they all continue to draw and paint the world as they see it. After much deliberation, first prize goes to Liam

McMiken, age six, and second prize goes to Casey Patterson, also age six, with all other entries (pictured below) receiving a runner-up prize. Thank you to everyone for taking part - you have brightened our day!

Dalry Community Council



Men's Shed Lockdown Lowdown

Last May business was booming at the Glenkens Men's Shed with internal development work nearly complete.

Work was progressing nicely at The Smiddy too, looking pristine with its new roof, restored fascia, and cedar clad extension.

Fast forward twelve months and the Smiddy is up and running and the Men's Shed has finally got a roof that doesn't leak! Not only is the Shed now watertight, it also has a fantastic array of solar panels, producing lots of lovely kilowatt hours of free electricity from the exceptional weather we've enjoyed of late.

For the technically minded the Shed's new roof panels can produce up to 12KW of electricity and saves about 2.5 tonnes

of CO2 per year, whilst contributing towards the Scottish Government's ambition to have 1GW of locally owned energy by 2020. Many thanks to Gill Warnock from GCAT (and Shed member) who masterminded the new roof project and contractors Solarae who did the installation. The Sheddies are eternally grateful to an anonymous donor, SP Energy Networks Green Economy Fund and Blackcraig Wind Farm Community Fund (administered by the Glenkens Community Trust) for supporting this project.

New roofs and panels aren't the only thing new at the Shed; we now also have a fabulous metalwork room, courtesy of the Galloway Glens scheme.

Sadly, everything is on hold whilst the COVID-19 restrictions continue, but the sheddies are meeting up in cyberspace in the meantime and are primed and ready for when lockdown ends.

Although we are the Glenkens Men's Shed, we are gender neutral, and like to promote inclusiveness, encouraging attendance from all areas of our community. Membership fees are £15 per year and subscriptions at £1 per week for as many sessions as you like. So if you want to see what goes on, meet new people, pursue a hobby, lend a hand or learn a new skill, then please join us, whatever age you are.

Glenkens Men's Shed is supported by Connecting in Communities, a LEADER and Big Lottery funded project. To find out more, contact Chris or Brian on 01644 420 374 or email chris@catstrand.com or brian@catstrand.com

Normal (non-lockdown) Shed opening times are: Mon 9.30am-1pm & 6.30-8.30pm; Wed 9.30am-1pm & Woodcarving 2-4pm; Fri 9.30am-12.30pm.

*Chris Jowsey,
Glenkens Men's Shed Treasurer*

Scarecrows in Balmaghie

As well as delivering food and vital medicines to self-isolating community members, as part of their response to the COVID-19 crisis, Balmaghie Community Council's newly formed community resilience team have been trying to cater to both the social and emotional needs of community members during these challenging times.

In addition to offering support such as a friendly phone call, local trained volunteers from in and around Bridge of Dee, Glenlochar and Laurieston have been offering free 'laughter yoga' sessions to cheer villagers up, as well as access to free professional mental health support from a local qualified counsellor.

Similarly, to help with the isolation and boredom that many have felt during lockdown and to help build community

spirit, the community resilience volunteers have developed a six-week programme of 'sociably distant village challenges' with varied activities designed to suit all members of the community. This has included weekly puzzles, treasure hunts, quiz sheets, knitting challenges, an online 'pub quiz', as well as competitions for the best window display and most recently a scarecrow competition which has been the most popular event so far.

Over the weekend of 9/10 May, 24 households across the three villages of Laurieston, Bridge of Dee and Glenlochar, displayed their scarecrows, many of which were themed around the current

crisis, either offering words of encouragement or poking light hearted fun at the situation we all find ourselves in. Volunteers

from each village took pictures on their daily walks and entries were posted on the Balmaghie Community Council Facebook page so Dougie Campbell, local councillor for Dee and Glenkens, could pick a winner.

The winner was Grace, aged 10, from Bridge of Dee, with the Brown family (also from Bridge of Dee) taking first runner-up prize. Dougie said that the bright attention-grabbing colours of Grace's clown scarecrow and the lovely message to key workers was what made her entry stand out.

Shirley Thomson, chair of Balmaghie Community Council, commented: "The community spirit even during these difficult times has been tremendous and we are so thankful to the volunteers for all their hard work. We've had lots of positive comments from community members who are grateful to have things to occupy them. We hope to keep at least some activities going even after restrictions ease so we can keep some of the connections which have been made during our time in lockdown."

To keep up to date with the activities of Balmaghie Community Council and their community resilience team, you can follow them on Facebook, or to access support from the community resilience team, call or text 07745 188 845 or email grace@sleeping-giants.org.uk



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To find out more and see if you are eligible talk to us at **RJ McCulloch** or visit **GOV.UK**

DO YOU LIVE IN BALMACLELLAN OR NEW GALLOWAY?

Local charity Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) is asking everyone in Balmaclellan and New Galloway to get involved in helping tackle the climate crisis.

They are researching the potential for local renewable energy projects and they need your help to understand how energy is used in people's everyday lives, and what projects people would like to see investigated.

Since last year Gill Warnock, who usually works part-time for the Galloway Community Transport part of GCAT (formerly GTI), has attended six day-long workshops run by Community Energy Scotland (CES). These were full of information about the potential community energy projects that could benefit our communities.

Gill learned about the latest thinking on things like low carbon transport, smart networks, low carbon heating and smart buildings, and she is now leading this project for GCAT with the help of a CES adviser.

Answers to the survey will help identify viable community energy projects that would be supported locally in Balmaclellan and New Galloway. Funding restrictions have limited the

project to two villages at the moment. The information from the survey needs to be analysed by the end of June, so Gill is asking that people in these communities, if they haven't already done so, could please complete and return their survey now.

If you have any questions email Gill directly (details below - along with website details if you prefer to complete the survey online). Drop off your completed survey at the box outside the CatStrand's front door (New Galloway) or at Balmaclellan Stores.

The information being gathered about our rural communities isn't available anywhere else so it is really important that we build the case for local energy projects in order that funding can be secured for our communities.

Gill says that there are no plans in place yet as ideas for potential projects are still at an early stage, so feedback and ideas are very welcome. An example of a local community energy project is that last year GCAT led the replacement of the dilapidated roof on the Men's Shed in Balmaclellan and installed solar PV panels onto the new roof (see article on p29).

This project has also opened up further possibilities of, for example, electric vehicle charging points which could be connected to the panels so visitors can re-charge their vehicles while they visit the Men's Shed or the Smiddy. Also, battery storage could be added to the system so the renewable energy generated by the panels is



Gill (and Hamish) admiring the new solar PV hard at work in sunny Balmaclellan

available during the evenings or less sunny days.

Using the feedback from this survey, the hope is that the Glenkens can benefit from more community energy projects such as these, potentially reducing people's energy bills and lowering our carbon footprint to help preserve our beautiful surroundings.

Missing your survey?

Complete the survey online at <https://tinyurl.com/gcatenergy>

Or email Gill Warnock and ask for a copy to be delivered to your home: gillenergy@pm.me

Another Accolade for Duncan

Multi-award-winning local photographer Duncan McNaught has bagged another prestigious prize with his striking shot entitled *Lonesome Larch*.

The photograph won Duncan the title of Scottish Nature Photographer of the Year at the annual Scottish Nature Photography Awards where entries are submitted by professional and amateur photographers from around the world.

Duncan says: "My entry, *Lonesome Larch*, was taken from the Raiders Road early morning last Autumn. This is my first win in the Scottish awards; in 2017 I was placed second in the same category, to make first this year is a fantastic achievement particularly during these troubled times.

"Galloway Forest Park has been

particularly hit with the virus *phytophthora ramorum*, which attacks and kills vast areas of larch trees. I was out early one morning last year hoping to get a few shots of the morning mist. On my way home I spotted this lonesome larch amongst the sitka spruce trees showing its full autumn colours. I guess it was a seedling that had taken root amongst the other trees.



Duncan's award-winning photograph, Lonesome Larch.

"I now wonder if it evaded the virus due to its location, away from the other larch trees in the forest."



This window display in New Galloway says it all really...

APPLICATIONS SOUGHT FOR SMALL GRANTS SCHEME

The Galloway Glens Scheme is focused on connecting people to the heritage of the Ken/Dee Valley while boosting the local economy and supporting sustainable communities.

The 'Our Heritage' Small Grants Scheme has been set up to provide awards of up to £5,000 to projects that allow people to connect to the natural, cultural or built heritage of the Ken/Dee Valley.

A budget of £100,000 has been allocated towards this, with more

than £51,000 awarded so far to 16 projects from Carsphairn in the North to Kirkcudbright in the South.

Galloway Glens Administrator, Jude Crooks, said: "We welcome applications for original and exciting projects that help communities and visitors alike to look after, learn about, access and celebrate the Galloway Glens landscape in an enjoyable and rewarding way, and which support our aim of connecting people and communities to their heritage."

For details of the projects supported to date, to review the guidance or to make an application visit <https://gallowayglens.org/our-heritage-small-grants-scheme>

For this fourth round of Small Grants Scheme funding the deadline for applications is 14 September 2020.

"I liked the picture on back page of the last Gazette, accompanying the Knockengoroch Festival piece. I also have difficulty getting the duvet cover on..." Sue

Heathhall

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OUR GLENKENS FIREFIGHTERS



At the end of April, a forest fire blazed in the Galloway Forest Park outside Mossdale.

The fire raged for days, and for days and nights firefighters from our local New Galloway branch along with other firefighting teams worked relentlessly to

quench the blaze. Helicopters were drafted in to drop water at key points, and firefighters kept fighting the blaze until eventually they had it under control.

Situations such as this remind us that we are so very lucky to have such brave and capable Glenkens reserve firefighters.

If you would like to join the New Galloway branch of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, call 01387 252 222 or visit www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-area/west/local-stations/dumfries to find out more.

Pictured: Left and below left - after weeks with no rain, the fire rages across the Galloway Forest Park. Below right - some members of the New Galloway branch of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service.



This snapshot of a wild boar swimming across Loch Kendoon was taken by Eric Broadhurst, photographed from the B7000 High Carsphairn road, looking east.

Eric said it was swimming so fast that by the time he got his camera out it had almost crossed the loch!

Glenkens Church of Scotland

The Revered David Bartholomew is preparing weekly reflections that can be accessed on YouTube.

Search on YouTube under 'Balmaclellan, Kells and Dalry linked with Carsphairn'. The words of the reflection and prayers are accompanied by pictures of the Glenkens and soft music.

David is also happy to send these directly to people by email if they contact him at dbartholomew@churchofscotland.org.uk

Paper copies can also be provided to those who do not have internet access. Contact David on 01644 430 380 if you would like to receive these resources, or simply if you would like to have a chat.

Food Bank

The Castle Douglas Development Forum operates the Heart of Galloway Foodbank.

They are open for pick-ups every day from 12noon to 2pm, and they also have a 24-hour dedicated phone line where you can ring up for help **07730 788 335**.

They are aware of the potential problem of people in the Glenkens getting to CD and they do deliver, and are already helping several people in the Glenkens. The service is great, and if you ring up in the morning, you can have a parcel delivered that afternoon.

There is also a national number (**0800 111 400**) which will take you through to Dumfries & Galloway Council where their social work department is operating a triage system in case people require other help in addition to food parcels.

Blackcraig Wind Farm Community Fund

COVID-19 Emergency Fund



THE GLENKENS & DISTRICT TRUST

Trustees have set aside £20,000 to provide emergency grants over £500 to:

- ✓ Support activities by community organisations providing help to vulnerable people in difficulty because of the coronavirus emergency.
- ✓ Support community organisations suffering major adverse impacts as a result of the pandemic, which put their services at risk.
- ✓ Primarily benefit the residents of Balmaclellan; Balmaghie; Carsphairn; Corsock & Kirkpatrick Durham; Crossmichael & District; St. John's Town of Dalry; Dunscore; The Royal Burgh of New Galloway & Kells Parish; and Parton, as defined by community council boundaries



Apply online:

www.foundationscotland.org.uk/programmes/blackcraig

For more details call Emma Goodlad 07718 772 726 or email egoodlad@foundationscotland.org.uk

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 jamesreid@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



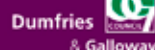
DEE & GLENKENS WARD

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

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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



Events and activities are on hold at the time of going to print due to the COVID-19 lockdown.

Please check government guidelines to find out up-to-date guidelines on social activities during June and July.



Galloway Community Transport

(formerly Glenkens Transport Initiative)

www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org

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

COVID-19/ CORONAVIRUS

In compliance with Scottish Government guidelines all GCT services apart from the Wednesday evening GK2 service from the Glenkens to Castle Douglas (Tesco) have been suspended until further notice.

Updates will be posted on www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org

GCT is following lockdown rules to help ensure that the impact of the coronavirus on our area is as limited as possible. We're currently only operating essential services that allow people to access Tesco in Castle Douglas. Distancing and cleaning procedures are strictly adhered to.

We're working from home on plans for resuming regular services, member hires and excursions as soon as it's safe to do so. We're also seeking funding for an electric bike scheme to help people travel short distances around the Glenkens and for an environment-friendly electric vehicle.

To help look forward to happier days here's a photo taken on one of our excursions.



Out	GK2 Glenkens to Castle Douglas (Tesco) Wednesday evenings Timetable	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

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.

Dalry Library & Customer Service Centre

Tuesdays 10.30am-2pm

Fridays 11am-4.30pm

For further information contact Castle
Douglas library on 01556 502 643

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).

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

ALTERNATIVE GAMES MILESTONE

This August would have seen the 20th Scottish Alternative Games in New Galloway.

However, it will be no surprise to anyone that the long running event has had to be postponed this year due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The event began in Parton in 1977 when the late Mungo Bryson had the initial idea for the quirky event when he found an old rusty gird 'n' cleek while clearing out a shed at his farm. Gird 'n' Cleek Racing has been the main feature of the Games ever since and the event has even claimed to be the official world championships in the historic sporty game.

In the early years the annual attraction was known as The Parton Games but after a few years of increasing popularity and national press exposure the name was changed to The Scottish Alternative Games which perfectly summed up the alternative quirky nature of the activities and led to the strapline being added on advertising – the Lowland Alternative to the Highland Games.

Events have varied greatly over the years and have included things such as Flingin' the Herd's Bunnet – propelling a shepherd's cap like you would a frisbee; The Last Fling – often held at Parton to appropriately close the Games and was simply throwing a cobbler's last as far as you could; and The Uphill Struggle which was a team game involving pushing a big round bale up a slope! Whilst the bunnet flingin' was abandoned due to the fact it was very prone to the

detrimental effects of wind and rain, there is no doubt that the latter two maybe didn't meet health and safety requirements with the likelihood of a stray cobbler's last landing amongst the crowd or a big bale rolling backwards and flattening the family who were supposed to be propelling it up the hill.

However some of the original events from 1977 are still held today – Gird 'n' Cleek Racing of course but also Tossin' the Sheaf, Hurlin' the Curlin' Stane



All ages enjoying last year's Games.

and the ever popular Snail Racing. A new event introduced since the Games took up residence in New Galloway is The Tractor Pull which now even has a wee brother event, The Quad Bike Pull to satisfy demand from younger participants.

Other constants throughout the years have been the famous 'unique atmosphere' that many people comment on and also the many families from around the region and throughout the UK who return year after year to compete at the Games or simply to enjoy the day as a spectator. Many

people started coming to the Games with their parents or grandparents many years ago and are now bringing their own children!

Although the cost of running the event has inevitably increased over the years with the cost of insurance, advertising, printing etc. being a major outlay in the run up to the Games, the cost of admission has been kept as low as possible to make it affordable for families to come along. Any surplus

funds over the years have been used to support various charities and local good causes.

When the Games initially moved from Parton they were organised by a sub-committee of New Galloway Community Council but now the small organising committee is separately constituted. The committee are very grateful to everyone in the community who helps in any way to ensure that the Games happen every year and would always welcome new members to join the committee. Please look out for the AGM which will be advertised in the Gazette and is usually planned around October. Obviously with

there being no 2020 event funds are fairly limited for distribution this year but if you are a member of a local organisation and would like to apply for a grant from the Alternative Games, please email bjedgar19@gmail.com for an application form. Similarly, any other enquiry regarding the Games can be sent initially to Brian Edgar on the same email.

Many people will miss the Alternative Games this year but rest assured that the 20th Scottish Alternative Games in New Galloway will have even more reason to be celebrated in 2021!

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

GLENKENS MEDICAL PRACTICE

General Medical & Dispensing Services

*The Surgery
High Street
New Galloway*

FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL

01644 420234

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Call 07727 127 997

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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

AUG/SEPT COPY DEADLINE: 5 JULY



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