

GLENKENS GAZETTE

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

December 2021 / January 2022

ISSUE 127

FREE

From Dishwasher to 'Scottish Young Chef of the Year'

Glenkens chef Fraser Cameron is celebrating a double triumph with two 'Young Chef of the Year' awards.

Fraser, 24, has just won the Federation of Scottish Chefs 'Scottish Young Chef of the Year' at a live cooking final in Glasgow. This follows victory earlier this year in the CIS Young Chef of the Year competition. This is the first time both awards have come to Dumfries and Galloway in the same year.

Fraser, who attended Dalry School and whose family still live in the village, found his passion for cooking aged just 14 when he started a part-time job washing dishes at the Ken Bridge Hotel. He says he knew at that point he absolutely wanted to be a chef. At school he was encouraged and well supported in this quest by his home economics teacher, Hilary Austin. Fraser also enjoyed spells working in the Lochinvar Hotel and Clachan Inn.

While attending the University of the Highlands & Islands to study professional cookery at Perth College he won a scholarship to train at the Andrew Fairlie restaurant at Gleneagles as part

of his studies. Following college, Fraser worked in a number of top, fine-dining restaurants in Edinburgh.

In 2019 he decided to return to Dumfries and Galloway to work alongside his friend and mentor, Jonathan Brett, who was setting up the new 1610 restaurant at the Globe Inn, Dumfries.

Fraser is passionate about the local produce in Dumfries and Galloway and has been a Chef Ambassador for Galloway Beef and the Galloway Cattle Society since 2018. He firmly believes that fine-dining opportunities should not be the reserve of the Central Belt when we have such quality on our own doorstep. This is reflected on the menu at the Globe Inn. Fraser is delighted



Fraser Cameron with mentor Jonathan Brett at the award ceremony.

that his recent awards have further highlighted what Dumfries and Galloway has to offer the culinary world.

Fraser often returns to Dalry and is extremely grateful for the ongoing support and encouragement from so many people in the Glenkens. He was delighted recently to welcome a group of his former teachers to the Globe Inn and looks forward to seeing more friends, old and new, from the Glenkens.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON COMMUNITY HOUSING IN THE GLENKENS

The trustees of Glenkens & District Trust (GDT) read with interest the recent focus on housing in the August/September issue of the *Glenkens Gazette*.

Housing was raised as a priority action area in the Glenkens & District Community Action Plan, published in September 2020. Due to the pandemic, alongside changes to the energy performance rules for rentals, local housing concerns have been thrown into sharp relief and reading about these issues highlighted for GDT trustees the urgent need to focus on this area as a priority.

After discussion with local stakeholders, including the Pamela Young Trust, GDT sought a proposal

from South of Scotland Community Housing (SOSCH) and has agreed to commission a Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA) using Blackcraig Wind Farm Community Fund monies. The process will include gathering the views of local community members as well as employers, other stakeholders and, where possible, people who have sought to move into the area but have been unable to.

Turn to page 5 to find out how you can have your say...

REMEMBERING JIM CHALMERS

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Jim Chalmers on 10 September 2021.

Jim was born in Brisbane, Australia, to parents without monetary wealth but an abundant wealth of love. The only devices that he had were a black and white TV shared by all, a few toys, a crystal radio he made for himself at high school and a push bike. Jim used this bike for riding to school, to visit friends and at times to explore Brisbane in the wee hours of the morning while everyone else slept.

In his teenage years, Jim and his friends formed a band called The Spectres and to his parents' and neighbours' dismay, practised in the garage for hours on end.

Jim's taste for travel started early. There was a huge world out there and he wanted to see it and experience it first hand. He wanted to immerse himself in local communities across the globe. At the age of 18 he sold his belongings, filled a backpack and began his travels around Australia. A split second decision saw him jump on a flight to India and thus began his love affair with India and the Middle East. Over the years he trekked through many countries, seeing and meeting people from all walks of life.

Jim trained as an acupuncturist in Brisbane, Australia, and graduated in 1988. He completed his postgraduate

studies in Nanning, China in 1991.

He joined the AACMA Board on his return, serving as chair of the Continuing Professional Development Committee and also as an early vice president in 1998, back in the days when the profession was struggling to become recognised and registered. Jim put in many hours and effort to further the cause of this great profession.

It was through his role as CPD Committee chair that Jim met Dr Marc LeBel, who had studied under the recognised 'father' of Auricular Therapy, Dr Paul Nogier. This gave rise to Jim's passion for auricular acupuncture, and led to him conducting courses worldwide and presenting at conferences.

His subsequent book on this technique, *Auriculotherapy Ear Acupuncture; The Practitioner's Guide*, was launched at AACMAC Brisbane in 2017.

After many years of living and working in Brisbane, Jim and his wife Mei followed his heart to his ancestral home and relocated to Scotland in 2003 where he continued to practice acupuncture at Crossmichael until 2020.

Jim was a great practitioner and friend to many, sharing all the knowledge and techniques he had accumulated over his many years in the profession. He was



loved and respected by all who came in contact with him and that is a testament to his wonderful and generous spirit, as well as his big heart. He had a wicked sense of humour too, and delivered deadpan jokes all with a twinkle in his eye!

Jim leaves behind his beloved wife Mei, three children and nine grandchildren. We express our deepest appreciation to all who have reached out during our time of mourning, we are grateful for your continued love and support.

Jim will be missed dearly by all who knew him.

Marcia Crichton (Jim's daughter)

Would You Like to Be a GCAT Trustee?

The Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) has continued to grow over the last few years and is now thoroughly embedded as an anchor organisation in the wider Glenkens.

There have been some new key appointments of late and we feel we are now very well placed to move forward in the next stage of our development. You'll see an article from our new executive manager, Helen Keron, on p13.

Would you like to join us and be part of our next steps? We will be looking to appoint up to three new trustees/directors at our AGM in January. In case you are wondering, both these terms are appropriate as, whilst GCAT is a company limited by guarantee, it is also a registered charity. Last year, two

new trustees joined our board and are playing an important part in developing our strategy for the future – could you support us too?

We are interested in hearing from people of all ages, with all backgrounds and from all over the Glenkens – the more diverse our experience on our board, the better we can serve our community. This year we are also particularly interested in hearing from residents who have a background in

the arts or are good with numbers. Apparently some people love a spreadsheet! The key thing is that you have a keen interest in what GCAT is achieving and have experience that would add to what we already have.

If you are interested please give me a call on 07769 680 938 or email me on Alan.Smith12345@btinternet.com for an initial discussion.

Alan Smith, Chairman, GCAT Ltd

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The Great Tiger Hunt

In the summer of 1972, while Jim Chalmers and I were sharing a rooftop flat in New Delhi, we came across a book entitled *The Man Eaters of Kumaon* by Jim Corbett.

We were fascinated by the blow-by-blow accounts of his hunts and, having not a lot to do at the time, we decided to go up to the Almora National Park, the scene of some of the Corbett tales, and see if we could find a man-eater to shoot. A silly idea, but we had Corbett's precise instructions as to how to do it. Neither of us had access to firearms so we decided on bows and arrows, an even sillier idea, but by now we were fired up by our plan. We went across town to the Assam Handicrafts Emporium, bought a couple of rather small bows and some wicked-looking arrows, and set off for Almora.

We spent the first night with acquaintances above the town on Cranks' Ridge, so named for the British eccentrics who had retired there. Some were still alive and had been joined by a variety of well-known 1960s characters, including Anagarika Govinda and the ground-breaking Scottish psychiatrist RD Laing.

Next morning we set off north along the ridge towards Binsar, a 7,500 foot forested mountain, which we climbed before nightfall. On the summit we were surprised to find a large British-style house with a rose garden and a stunning view of the main range of the Himalayas. A local family, who were caretaking the property, told us that it was owned by an English judge who had

returned to Britain two years before. They also told us that their buffalo, on which they relied for milk, had been killed the previous night by a tiger. Our pursuit of a tiger had suddenly become very real on the first day of the hunt.

There was only one place the tiger could have dragged a heavy buffalo - a rhododendron-filled gorge a few hundred yards below the house. We immediately went down to the gorge, got our archery equipment out and, in the gathering dusk, pushed our way into the dense foliage. We came out again a minute later, having realised that if the tiger appeared, we had no chance.

Our concerns were not over, however, since the only place we found to spend the night was a small shrine to the Hindu god Shiva with thick, stone pillars but open on all sides. I think we slept well enough after our long trek, hoping that the tiger, even if was a man-eater, would be content with its buffalo.

The following morning we found fresh leopard footprints on the trail down the mountain. Corbett had told us that leopards only kill humans at night so we decided not to sleep in open Shiva temples again. At the base of the mountain we came to a village where our tiger hunt took an exciting turn. The villagers told us two of their people had been killed by a tiger in the past month. They asked us to kill it and produced

two firearms, one of which was said to work well, the other being a bit dodgy.

Suitably armed, we now had to work out how we would

The following morning we found fresh leopard footprints on the trail down the mountain.

shoot the tiger. The classic Corbett technique was to find the area where the man-eater was operating, tether a goat and sit in a tree above waiting for the beast to appear. The villagers would give us a goat and we already knew where the tiger was operating, thanks to our experience the night before. The



Jim and the Shiva shrine where Robin and Jim slept.

only problem was that, according to Corbett, it could take weeks of sitting in the tree before the tiger appeared, if it appeared at all. Reality finally dawned on us and, in spite of the exciting and quite unexpected prospect of actually hunting a man-eater, we decided, with regret, that we had important things to do in Delhi and were not up for spending the rest of the summer up a tree.

The next night we spent in a splendid mountain cave where Shiva and his consort Parvati were said to have been married. In the morning, we had a nice cup of tea with fresh cinnamon leaves brought to us by the sadhu holy man attending the shrine.

Robin Ade

Jim Chalmers (see page opposite) dedicated his life to the Glenkens community as a provider of acupuncture and complementary medicine for some 20 years. This story serves as a tribute to Jim and a contribution to the record of his extensive and extraordinary travels.

Robin Ade is a local artist and naturalist as well as author of Fisher in the Hills; A Season in Galloway, a widely-read personal account of his early fishing days in the Glenkens.

David Tallontire CHIMNEY SWEEP

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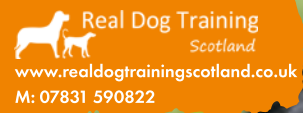




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A Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from all at CatStrand!



What's on at New Galloway Town Hall

October - December 2021

HOGMANAY CEILIDH

Friday 31st December 9pm - 12.30am
Music from Shore Road Band and Wyrdy Women
Tickets from New Galloway Community Shop from 6th December
Adults £10, under 18s £5, under 5s free
Stovies and oatcakes included - BYOB

MARTIAL ARTS FOR CHILDREN

Thursdays 7-9pm
Contact brianhilton237@gmail.com

ZUMBA CLASSES

£5, Wednesdays 6.30-7.20pm & 7.25-8.15pm
Contact samantha.rushton@hotmail.co.uk
Booking essential

DROP-IN TO CHAT

Hayley Edgar Community Engagement Worker in Town Hall most Wednesday mornings 10.00 - 11.00am to chat about local plans and activities

CRAFTY CORNER WITH TEA AND BISCUITS

£3, Mondays 2-4pm
starting 1st November
Contact Kristina on 07789 680468

SPORTS EVENINGS INDOOR BOWLING OR TABLE TENNIS

£3, Tuesdays 7-9pm
Contact Ray Bridgeman on 420438

GENTLE YOGA SESSIONS

£5, Fridays 5.30-6.30pm
Contact Kath at kathyr64@hotmail.co.uk

TAI CHI

Wednesdays 10.30 - 11.30
Contact Ros on 07789680468 to enquire

FAMILY BADMINTON SESSIONS

Informal and by arrangement - nets and racquets but no line markings - contact Ros 07749 249781



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LOOKING AT IMPROVING GLENKENS COMMUNICATIONS

The *Gazette* has been working with the Glenkens & District Trust (GDT) on a project to identify options to develop an effective communication tool for the whole Glenkens community.

This concept supports the Glenkens & District Community Action Plan 2020 where Theme 1 is 'A Connected Community'. The work was then combined with an existing Glenkens Community & Arts Trust/*Glenkens Gazette* project. We used an approach of desk-based research, qualitative research (in-depth interviews) and quantitative research (through a survey) to gain as much insight into the subject as possible.

Desk Research

We started with a review of published data on community publications. Finding the best balance between news and features is a critical decision, and there

are a range of free and paid-for local communications in various media. For our purposes, we included examples with catchment areas from one village to the entire region.

Qualitative research (19 in-depth interviews)

We interviewed key stakeholders to scope the issue of local communications. This covered general questions on community information before gathering specific feedback on developing the *Glenkens Gazette*.

We established that the *Gazette* is

"...there is a wide range of subjects. It's inclusive... I think that's what makes it stand head and shoulders above your average kind of community paper."

a well-established, trusted brand, valued for its neutrality and significant contribution to community cohesion. There was demand for providing information in a wider range of media. Many considered a community information hub (both on and off-line) to be desirable and felt that communities needed more co-ordination.

Quantitative research (103

responses to 4-page survey)

We surveyed people across the Glenkens and wider district to assess their views on wider communication issues and to gather specific feedback on the *Gazette*.

We found that people use a variety of sources for local information. Facebook is the most popular, except for those aged 75+ who prefer local newspapers, and that smartphones are the most common device for accessing local information.

A website featuring urgent local information and event details (for both attendees and organisers) was the most popular idea for improving communications. A multi-channel approach will be most successful and would likely include more online and pro-active outbound communications. It was apparent that we must also take care not to exclude those who do not access information online.

Next Steps

GDT and GCAT are currently considering the full project reports and will hopefully have more to say about where to go from here in the next issue of the *Gazette*.

To find out more about this project email Gill at gill@catstrand.com or call 01644 420 374.

Continued from front page...

The first step to SOSCH compiling this high level report will be an online survey of people's views on what the local housing needs picture looks like, which requires as many people as possible to take part.

If you're reading this and thinking "groan - not another report/survey/consultation!" here are **five good reasons** why you should take part in the online survey:

- 1) Lots of people have an informed view that this is an important local issue – but **creating change takes evidence** and a way to gather all those views together
- 2) An HNDA is the **key that unlocks the door to strategic and funding support** for community led housing initiatives – without one, no local project will be able to kick-start any serious action
- 3) This HNDA will cover all 10 communities covered by the GDT

area of operation – **the more people take part, the more meaningful the data** will be and the more chance there is of good data when chunked up by community. So if, for instance, Dalry or Crossmichael or Carsphairn wanted to use the HNDA to start its own housing project, it needs lots of people from those communities to have taken part in the research.

4) It will also inform the work of important local charities, such as the Pamela Young Trust, to **help shape their response to the evolving housing need** in our area, within the boundaries of their specific purpose.

5) It **only takes 10 minutes** to fill in.

Mike Staples, Chief Executive of SOSCH, says: "A Housing Needs and Demand Assessment will provide important information around shortfall in housing supply in the area and is a key first step in

progressing community-led housing projects. It is also a required part of the process in support of grant funding for housing delivery and securing strategic support from the Council. SOSCH is excited about this piece of work and looks forward to engaging with the Glenkens communities and a wide range of local stakeholders as we progress this work".

We really need your input - please take 10 minutes to complete the survey, and also share among friends, family and your local community.

You can find the survey online at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GlenkensHousingSurvey

For a paper copy or to get in touch regarding the survey, email stacey.sosch@outlook.com or call 07775 957 702.

Fiona Smith, Chair, GDT

GCAT – Did

Foot and Mouth crisis

2001

GCAT is formed by a small group of community activists looking to regenerate the Glenkens after the ravages of the Foot and Mouth culls. They purchase the derelict Primary school in New Galloway and embark on fundraising.

The Glenkens Gazette becomes part of GCAT after a sterling start by a community volunteer.

2001 was a busy year for GCAT! The **Glenkens Transport Initiative** launches with just one minibus.

UK financial crisis

2007

£1million later, **the CatStrand opens** as an Arts and Visitor Centre, providing community and cultural facilities for the whole of the Glenkens.

2008

The Watson Birds Project begins, designed to celebrate the work of renowned local artist Donald Watson. The Smiddy now hosts a permanent 'Donald Watson' room and exhibition, and a Watson Birds Trail has been created around the Glenkens.

2009

The CatStrand Youth Arts programme launches, creating high quality creative opportunities for our 5-24 year olds.

2012

Glenkens Children's Club in Dalry is formed in response to the shutting of the long-established Playgroup.

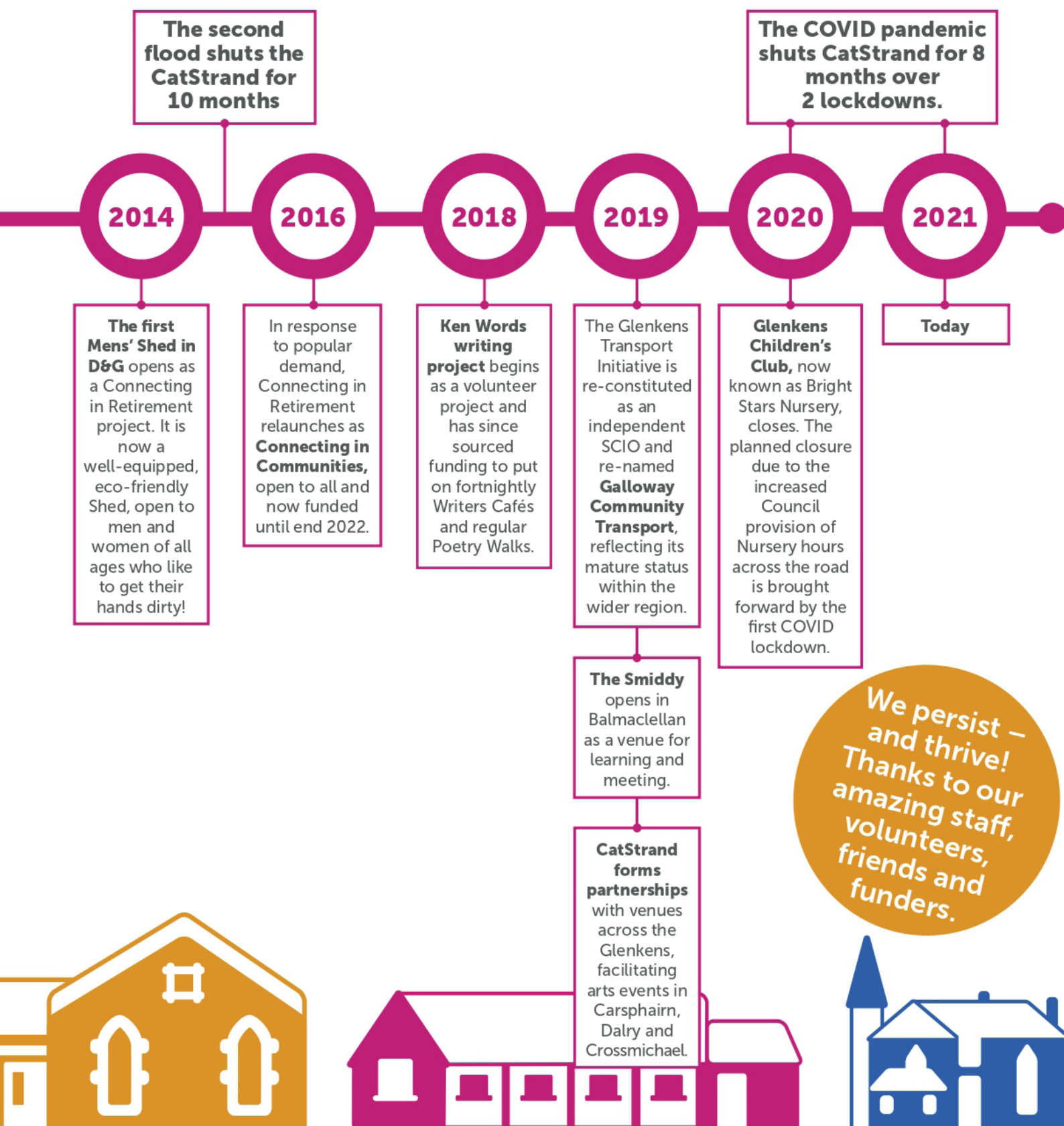
2013

The first flood requires significant restoration of the CatStrand

Connecting in Retirement launches – designed to bring the older communities of the Glenkens together through activities and classes.



You Know?!





Would you like to become part of our story?

There are so many ways to get involved!

Drive

We always need volunteer minibuss drivers. Full training given and excellent prospects of moving into a paid role if desired. **Don't fancy driving a minibus?** Taking people to hospital in your own car is simple, safe and extremely rewarding. All costs are covered.

Write

The Glenkens Gazette is always looking for contributors. Whatever your age, viewpoint or experience, it all makes our newsletter as representative as possible.

Steward

Fancy free front-row seats at some of our events?! Our stewards help to keep everyone safe and welcomed.

Consult

CatStrand Arts uses a small Steering Group to consult on the upcoming Arts programme, which we look to change out regularly and be as representative as possible.

Welcome

Are you the convivial sort? You could be the friendly face of CatStrand, in the day at the front desk or behind the bar at evening events. Full training given.

Share

Have you got a skill you could pass on to others? Connecting in Communities is all about facilitating workshops and classes for the community.

Join the Board

The Board of Trustees drives the strategic vision of GCAT. If you have thoughts on how to move the organisation forward, do get in touch!

Jump around

If you love working with young people and can match their energy and creativity, CatStrand Youth Arts often needs people to help at events.

For more details

of all these volunteer roles or for a no-commitment chat, contact Fiona Limbrey, our Volunteer Officer, on

Fiona@catstrand.com or 01644 420 374

SUSTAINABLE LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION IN THE GLENKENS

As reported in previous issues, Propagate, a collective specialising in community food work, have been conducting a local food scoping study building on the local food economy actions identified in the Glenkens Community Action Plan.

The first stage of the study - which included survey responses, focus groups and discussion with local producers, shops, hospitality and supply chain operators - is now completed, and clear key strands have emerged.

As a result, three projects have been outlined as next steps in developing robust, sustainable local food production and distribution in the Glenkens - these project outlines were presented at the Glenkens Local Food Feast in Dalry Town Hall as part of Glenkens Food Month 2021, where 25 people were treated to a sit-down three-course meal in which 95% of the ingredients were sourced within 25 miles.

Project Outline 1: Food Education in Schools. A clear theme identified in the study was increasing awareness of the importance of local food production and agriculture. The aim of this project will be to engage schools in the Glenkens in a well thought out and planned food education programme for an academic year.

Project Outline 2: Hyper Local Supply Chain. In response to the needs identified for a single point of ordering and a weekly delivery, both for households, shops and hospitality, this project will create a pilot for a local food distribution hub. Appropriate ordering systems will be put in place - online and by phone - which will likely build on the existing system used monthly for the Producer Market. A unit will be sought locally in a village central to the area with capacity to store food safely, and electricity for cold storage. Customers will be able to place weekly orders, products will be collected from local food producers, sorted at the unit and then delivered to customers.

Project Outline 3: Community Farm. The study showed an overwhelming demand for increased locally and organically produced vegetables and

fruit, and enthusiasm for developing a small (between 5-10 acres) Community Supported Agriculture project to help meet this. This would also meet the needs identified for training, education, skills development and local jobs. This would provide for vegetable production, areas managed for nature and biodiversity, and possible small-scale low-density livestock. Beekeeping and other rural skills will be integrated. Growers will be employed to manage the garden areas and a coordinator will need to be in place to oversee the farm and put educational, training and outreach programmes.

Conversations with landowners, producers and partner organisations are already underway to kick-start some of these projects. A funding application has been submitted to network local fruit and vegetable producers and build capacity to enable participation in a local supply chain.

It is clear from the surveys and conversations that people in the Glenkens are very enthusiastic about the idea of working cooperatively for the benefit of the wider community. People understand the challenges around producing and accessing local food, but there is a clear desire to tackle some of these big issues.

Of course, there are larger issues here that can only be addressed on a regional or national level. For example, land reform and agricultural payments



At Barmurrie Farm, Balmaclellan, one of Gillian Smith's beef cows grazes in a field of meadowgrass and wildflowers. Gillian also offers Treats from the Courtyard on the Glenkens Food Hub (see ad on back page).

are policies controlled by the Scottish Government. However, by engaging with existing structures such as the Dumfries and Galloway Sustainable Food Partnership, we can represent the views of the Glenkens and help to shape and influence regional policy. Additionally, there are opportunities to engage with the current and future consultations that will inform national policy by the Scottish Government. By building a good food network in the Glenkens we can act as a collective voice and have our seat at the table.

The work involved in the Glenkens Local Food Scoping Study has been funded by the Glenkens and District Trust and the Prince's Countryside Fund.

The full report can be accessed at www.propagate.org.uk/glenkens-food-hub

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Glenkens Producers' Market



2nd Saturday Monthly

Dalry Town Hall, 10am-1pm

- 11th December & 8th January -

Click & Collect online with the Glenkens Food Hub at <https://openfoodnetwork.org.uk/glenkens-food-hub/shop>
 or just visit us on the day

- for further details call 07776 034 260 -
entry by donation on the door
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Connecting in Communities

Since the easing of COVID restrictions, more 'face to face' Connecting in Communities (CiC) activities are taking place around the Glenkens.

Some of these include self-led **tai chi** at the Smiddy and Dalry Town Hall, a

photography group meeting weekly, **kettle bells** fitness at Balmaclellan Village Hall and **yoga** at the CatStrand. Please visit www.gcat.scot for further information on these and more CiC activities.

One of the many popular events during lockdown was our weekly online quiz (pre-COVID, this was the New Galloway pub quiz). This proved to be, and still is, a lifeline for many participants with some people joining from as far afield as Holland and France. Unbeknown to the team, the quiz was nominated and became a winner of BTs 'Unbreakable'

competition for 'service to the community during lockdown', with a prize of a live Zoom call with Sophie Ellis-Bextor!

The quiz is on Wednesdays at 8pm and is open to all - get in touch with Chris for a Zoom link to join.

The Glenkens Men's Shed is once again in full swing. Not only was our Shed the first in Dumfries & Galloway, it's undoubtedly the finest and also one of the greenest - so, if you've never been, now is a great time to come and take a look! The Shed is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9.30am

to 12.30pm and again on Wednesday afternoons from 2pm to 4pm, with this later session offering wood turning and carving.

Not only does the Shed look fantastic with its smart insulated cladding, new roof and solar panels, it now boasts state-of-the-art radiant heaters, batteries to store solar power, a brand-new car park and free electric vehicle charging points. The chargers aren't just for the Shed though - they're available for visitors and the wider community too.

CiC were thrilled to be awarded £13,300 from the People's Post Code Trust to allow us to provide more activities and events around the Glenkens. We would love to hear from you if you have anything in particular you would be interested in taking part in.

Finally, CiC has been identified as a suitable medium through which to roll out the 'Green Glenkens' element of the Glenkens & District Community Action Plan. The project is still in development but we have a number of exciting ideas. If you are interested in being involved please contact Fiona on fiona@catstrand.com or call 01644 420 374.

You can also email Brian at brian@catstrand.com or Chris at chris@catstrand.com, or feel free to call on 01644 420 374.

Brian Jones



Electric car charger situated behind the Men's Shed/ Smiddy in Balmaclellan, free for the community to use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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An Underrated Mystery Novelist: **JOSEPHINE TEY**

Many years ago I picked up a book in Wigton by Miss Tey and was enchanted by the plot and how well written it was.

Before the full benefits for book lovers of the internet were available, it was more difficult to add further novels to a collection.

Scouring bookshops, bookfairs and charity shops were the main avenues to be explored for out-of-print classics. Nowadays a simple click on ebay or Amazon will bring most books to the door in a few days.

Josephine Tey [real name Elizabeth Mackintosh] was born in Inverness and spent some time as a teacher in both Scotland and England before returning home to run her father's house. Val McDermid enjoyed her work, describing them as, 'brilliant unconventional crime novels'.

She wrote eight mystery novels, many with Inspector Grant featuring. Perhaps the two most well known are *The Franchise Affair* and *Daughter of Time*. My personal preference is more towards *A Shilling For Candles* or *The Man In The Queue*. The books

are not quite cosy mystery novels as they usually touch upon some raw human emotions such as jealousy and emotional scars. However, the touch is sufficiently light in this respect.

We can catch rather more than a glimpse of the frustration of a woman called back from a career and an independent life to the frustration and tedium of domestic life and family duty in the 1920s in her books. However her writing did bring some considerable benefits. She was wealthy, she wrote plays, one of which was a West End success, she helped to make the career, and keep the friendship, of John Gielgud.

In recent years the author Nicola Upson has used Miss Tey as the main character in a series of mystery novels. They really are very enjoyable and are best read in sequence. The first, *An Expert in Murder*, provides a valuable insight into many aspects of Miss Tey's life in Inverness, her desire to sample a more broad-minded city, her West End success and complex emotional life.

Finally, there are some excellent radio adaptations and audiobooks of Tey's novels and even two television dramas available on YouTube.

Bruce Smith



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A Robin's Supper

The robin chipped, the least of his modest calls that only a gardener would notice.

Amidst the cacophony of sparrows settling to the dusk in the nearby hedge, the robin stood aloof. At the highest and nearest point, he looked down at me. I called "hello robin" and he knew.

I turned another sod but found nary a worm, the flatworms had had them all.

Feeling guilt and shame for failing to provide the fee to the gardener's friend, I raided the pot of varied food that my partner kept for the flocks that came every day.



I strewed barely a handful of fat and seeds in supplication.

Never one for a feast, the robin was at my feet and took but a few of the finest morsels and then was gone, leaving the rest for those who wanted an early breakfast.

IG

CatStrand Highlights

There is a lot going on in December as the Glenkens celebrates the festive season in style.

We kick off the festive season on Friday 3 December with **The Sugar Revue**, a burlesque and cabaret show which returns to the CatStrand promising a "fun-packed sexy stocking filler of a Christmas show".

Grab your tickets quickly for the very popular and hilarious **Youth Players Panto, Old Mother Hubbard**, that is being staged on Friday 10, Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 December.

Join local bird expert Chris Rollie in Dalry for the **Winter Voices Poetry Walk** organised by Ken Words on Sunday 12 December. To warm up after the walk what could be better than joining the **Clachan Inn Folk Session** led by Ollie Rigg, Michael Muir (Muckle Spree) and Lucy Smith.

On Saturday 18 December, Balmaclellan has its own Christmas play, **A Christmas Carol**. This classic Dickens tale has been adapted as a spooky, funny, intimate and heartwarming two-person production by Neil Paterson and Jilly Henderson.

On Sunday 19 CatStrand will showcase two Christmas classic films. Earlier in the

day there will be a relaxed screening of **Elf** for young folk and their grown-ups, where tutting is strictly forbidden and laughing out loud is encouraged. This is followed by some 'own time' for the grown-ups with a viewing of **It's a Wonderful Life**, complete with mulled wine and a mince pie.

Looking ahead to 2022, there are a few shows worth booking ahead for...

Friday 28 January sees **Auld Lang Syne**, Mairi Campbell's critically acclaimed music theatre show, hitting the CatStrand stage. This performance explores the meaning of one of the world's most performed songs through the lens of Mairi's rich experience. A funny and heartfelt show resonates with wider universal truths.

On Saturday 12 February **The Paul McKenna Band** will hit the stage. Paul McKenna has long been ranked among



There will be a relaxed family-friendly screening of the Christmas classic, Elf, on Sunday 19 December.

our finest younger singer songwriters. He is highly regarded for his powerful yet intensely emotive voice and passionate social conscience.

Finally, we are very excited that on Monday 7 March we will be hosting **Moishe's Bagel** with some thrillingly original cutting-edge klezmer and world folk music from a selection of Scotland's finest musicians. As *The Scotsman* puts it, they "put the 'class' into 'unclassifiable'."

To book any of these events or find out more visit www.gcat.scot

Peter Renwick

FIRST FEW WEEKS IN POST

At the time of writing, I have been in post as the executive manager for the Glenkens Community and Arts Trust for three weeks, and it's been quite the three weeks!

My focus has been on listening and understanding the details of the organisation from its staff and some of our volunteers, all of whom are doing a fantastic job of delivering our many projects to support the communities of the Glenkens. As part of that, we have created a graphic of the evolution of GCAT over the last 15 years or so. This was fascinating to pull together and demonstrates the amazing growth of the organisation. We stand here now as a stable and mature organisation, ready to support our communities with the present and future challenges of

remote-rural living and the national and global context.

In the coming months I want to hear from many more people about how we can best do this, so if you would like a cup of tea and a chat about your priorities for our communities, do drop me a line on helen@catstrand.com or 01644 420 374.

This also ties in perfectly with the other element of my role, which is to lead and support the community to deliver the priorities set out in the Glenkens and District Community Action Plan (CAP). As we move into the next phase of delivery of the plan, partnership working between all our amazing community organisations across the area will be key, and I want to start talking to as many of them as possible to start that process. I will of course be working closely with Glenkens & District Trust and their CAP steering group during this process.

I feel that we are at a key point of transformation for our communities. We have such community spirit and

live in such a beautiful part of the country, but the challenges that COVID brought have disproportionately affected some members of our communities, and have highlighted the challenges of remote-rural living for everyone.

The good news is that we are supported structurally by well-established community organisations, as well as by our partners in Dumfries & Galloway Council, Third Sector Dumfries & Galloway and South of Scotland Enterprise, and also that we have access to our own funds in the form of community benefit. If we work together to deliver our community aspirations, there is no reason why we cannot overcome these challenges and access the undoubted rewards of living in the wider Glenkens together. So do please be in touch (individuals as well as organisations) and we will see where we can get to!

*Helen Keron,
Executive Manager, GCAT*

Working towards OUR CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY FUTURE

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12,000
ELECTRIC VEHICLE
MILES TRAVELLED

1,400
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'GALLOWAY FOOTSTEPS' EVENTS
COMMITTED TO **1,900**
FEWER PIECES OF SINGLE-USE
PLASTIC AND A SAVING OF
42 TONNES OF
CARBON

43 JOHN MUIR AWARDS ACHIEVED,
EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE IN
THE NATURAL WORLD

The Galloway Glens
Scheme is an initiative
of the Council's
Environment Team.



PRIMARY
FUNDER:



THE GALLOWAY GLENS SCHEME IS OVERSEEN BY A PARTNERSHIP BOARD, INCLUDING:

The Galloway Glens Scheme is working really hard with partners to play our part in tackling the Climate & Biodiversity challenges that we all face, changing habits and reducing consumption. Dumfries & Galloway Council has set the ambitious target of being a net zero carbon region by 2025. With the COP26 Climate Change Conference taking place in Glasgow, this is a chance to review milestones from within the Galloway Glens Scheme so far...

We're all in this together, contact us with any queries you may have on climate or biodiversity and we will help or point you in the right direction.

SUPPORTING THE LOCH KEN TRUST'S
'LOCH KEN PLAN',
ALIGNING WORK AROUND LOCH KEN WITH ALL 17
OF THE U.N. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

OVERSEEING THE
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DESIGNING AN ADAPTATION TOOLKIT FOR
THE LOCH KEN COMMUNITY IN THE
FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

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Youth Players Christmas Panto

After missing out last year, the CatStrand Youth Players are delighted to be back on stage again with their

2021 panto *Old Mother Hubbard*

The last public performances from the group were at The Fullarton Theatre in March 2020 as the senior team won the Open Drama Festival in style with their acclaimed production of *Henna Night*. Unfortunately, lockdown soon intervened and further progress in the next round of the Scottish Community Drama Association (SCDA) competition was denied. Now, 21 long months later, the curtain will finally rise on a Youth Players show again!

The hilarious story of *Old Mother Hubbard* unfolds in great style in the story from the pen of Paul Reakes with the characters brought to life by many of the Youth Player 'veterans'

ably supported by some new faces.

With her cupboards all bare once again and with her and her family facing eviction, a stroke of good fortune leads to the Hubbards being granted a wish by the Good Fairy. In true panto fashion, Mother Hubbard wishes that they could be transported to America to find her long lost brother Ossie, who has supposedly made lots of money in the ranching business in the Wild West.

Of course, it isn't all straight forward and all kinds of antics are thrown into the mix by the 'baddies' - Matt Vinyl and his sidekicks Hank and Jake while the Hubbards enlist the help of friendly locals - Old Tumbleweed, Tex Laramie and Little Deer - in their quest to find Ossie. The Hubbard's dog Dandy is the real hero in the end, though, as Ossie is finally discovered in unusual circumstances in Big Chief Thundercloud's camp!

It'll be great to welcome audiences back to the Christmas panto once again - but please book your tickets early to avoid missing out as they're selling fast!

Brian, CatStrand Youth Players



Neil Paterson can be commissioned to do cartoons for special events and occasions such as retirements, birthdays, weddings, etc. To get in touch email pater5365@yahoo.co.uk

Why Have Community Councils?

With Kells Community Council in real danger of being dissolved due to lack of members, the Gazette felt it may be a good time to reprint some of the thought-provoking piece written by Kerry Morrison, deputy chair of Dalry Community Council, which was printed in the June/July issue of the Gazette.

With open curiosity, I began to attend [community council meetings] every month. I learned about upcoming applications for wind farms and the wind farm community funding. I observed how members discussed issues and took decisions for actions based on votes. I soon became aware of the good work that the community council does for the community, like the winter emergency shed, which contains simple yet necessary items should we need them in times of extreme cold weather and power cuts.

Meetings are often quite matter-of-fact. Issues are discussed and acted upon. Some issues are quite mundane, yet crucial, like checking the salt bins are stocked up in winter; others, more pressing. Dalry Community Council acted swiftly in March 2020 when the country went into lockdown making sure the people of Dalry, especially the elderly and those with disabilities, people living alone and lower income families, had much-needed support. In all, community councils attend to the ongoing nuts-and-bolts needs of a community, as well as more complex issues.

Until I attended the meetings, I didn't know what community councillors got up to. I discovered that they are a bunch of involved and engaged individuals who get stuck in. They do this as volunteers. However, if no one volunteers, we risk losing our community councils, which are vital assets for our rural towns and communities. Our voices are heard and represented through our community councils, and community councils do make a difference.

I thought I would write this because, even though meetings are open to all, very few people actually attend. Perhaps it is because they aren't all that thrilling all of the time. However, they are informative and they are spaces for positive action.

Over the past months, during which

we've been dealing with the COVID pandemic and lockdowns, restricted movement and social distancing, I've experienced important things getting done, things that have made a difference. I am proud to be a part of this hard working group of dedicated individuals.

To find out more about your local Community Council, visit <https://info.dumgal.gov.uk/CommunityCouncils> (Dee & Glenkens is Ward 3; click to open the list of community councils, then click on your town or village for a contact email).

**The Royal Burgh
New Galloway & Kells
Community Council
needs more members - if
nobody new joins, Kells
Community Council will be
dissolved in April 2022.**

If you live in Kells parish, or live outwith the area but would like to support our community council (we are in dire need of someone with some accountancy skills, and can recruit from outwith the parish for this, taking someone on as an associate member), please get in touch with community council secretary, Sharon Fishwick, or bandsfish@gmail.com

D&G Virtual Operations Team

Many of us were affected by the severe weather and flooding at the end of October, with some folks effectively cut off and many others wondering whether they would be able to make journeys given the number of road closures across the region.

It was incredibly helpful to be able to check out the road network on the Dumfries & Galloway Virtual Operations Team (DGVOST) website - www.dgvost.uk - with regular updates on which roads were closed, where you would need to tackle a flood, and

which roads were at risk of closing soon.

What is DGVOST?

This site is an important communication tool that is only activated during emergency situations. It is highly effective for spreading accurate information to the general public in real time. Key safety messages are issued through the website and across social media channels such as Twitter and Facebook. Information is gathered from a wide range of sources, including through media and information shared by the general public.

Even though the site is only active in emergency situations, it is a good idea to bookmark the page on your browser, or write it down, for future reference.

Local Resilience Teams

It's also worth noting that most of our local community councils have



resilience teams and it can be a good idea to make yourself familiar with your local community council contact for this. You can find details for your area using the new locator map online, which you can find at www.dglocator.org.uk/dgResilience

There's also lots of helpful information about other organisations and information on volunteering with resilience groups in your community. It's worth noting that community resilience teams don't necessarily kick into action every time there's flooding, mind you - it depends on the nature and severity of the situation.

Morag Paterson

GLENKENS MUSINGS

Ah, the festive period has come around again.

It's funny to think that a year ago I submitted my first piece to the *Gazette* - this was the first time I had let people read something I had personally written, and it was something I'd never thought I would do.

I suppose the most dominant theme of this year has to be something that has occurred for all of us - change. It's actually quite a unique and comical thing if you really think about what it means. And during the past couple of years, it has happened so often it has probably broken records. But why are we told again and again to 'embrace' change? To be really quite honest, I would in a heartbeat rewind back to 2019 if I knew what was going to happen to our lives. I would go back to the years that I truly enjoyed and could do absolutely anything I wanted without consequences - within reason of course! Unfortunately,

and regrettably, that simply isn't possible. We are in too far and too deep to turn back.

So, what can we do to improve the scary and uncertain aspects that can come with change? We could pretend that it doesn't exist and believe everything is still all hunky-dory but perhaps that could throw up more complications rather than solutions. No, the only way, in my opinion, is to simply just go with it. I know that sounds rather blunt but in these current times you really can't be getting engrossed in all the little things that could or couldn't work. And, like I've said countless times before, you'll become so bogged down with the different theories circulating round your brain that you will spiral out of control, and it's just not worth it anymore. Who has the time?!

Going with it will just make things easier for everyone and that is what you have to remember; it is affecting everyone, not just yourself. Go at your own pace and don't get paranoid about what could go wrong.



Life is full of glitches and struggles but, strangely, I find that exciting because otherwise life would be boring and not a challenge. Go on and be adventurous. Live the life you were given.

I hope you have a very happy Christmas and I hope all you do in 2022 brings you joy and success.

James Wallace

The Old Man and the Captain

This short story won this year's national Cranked Anvil Flash Fiction competition.

It was September 1945, two weeks after the Japanese surrender.

The Captain stood looking out of the turret of his Sherman tank as they moved cautiously through the obliterated village. A single truck followed the tank and a platoon of soldiers, with rifles at the ready, accompanied them. The men were in two lines, one to the left side of what passed for a road, and one to the right. A soldier would occasionally raise his rifle and aim it if something moved, usually it was a rat or a dog but sometimes a person who would skulk away when they were spotted.

Ahead of them was the remains of a building, out of line with the others, it jutted out into the road covering the left half of it. All of the buildings had been made of wood and were burnt and blackened by bombing. It had rained recently so the village smelled of wet charcoal and unpleasant things which the soldiers tried to ignore. In the centre of the road, in front of the building, stood a frail old man holding

what looked like a vintage flintlock rifle; not aiming it threateningly, but holding it diagonally across his chest as if in defiance.

The Captain halted the column and sent for the interpreter. A young Japanese boy came forward from the truck, his head bowed and with an air of apprehension. "Go to the old man, find out what he wants, and why he will not let us pass." The interpreter bowed "yes, sir!" and scuttled forward.

The interpreter bowed deeply to the old man. The old man bowed in return, but less deeply. Words were exchanged in Japanese. The interpreter bowed again and returned to the Captain. "Sir, he says this is..." he seemed to be looking for the words "a respectful place of dead people. And he will defend it with his life."

The Captain considered his position. He could order the man to be shot; he was after all armed. He could order his men to drag the old man to one side and confiscate the antique firearm, but he chose a third way. He issued an instruction to his Sergeant and then said to the interpreter "go back to the old man and tell him that we will honour his respectful place of dead people and mark it so that no

Americans will enter."

The interpreter did as he was bid. The Sergeant took two men, erected a line of white tape around the ruined building and placed a sign, front and centre. The column began to move off, being careful to all move over to the right. The old man stepped back to let them pass.

The Captain nodded to the old man, which may have looked like a bow, and the old man gave a salute. The men looked at the newly erected red triangle sign as they passed, with its skull and crossbones and the word MINEFIELD.

Paul Goodwin

EXPERIENCED CARER REQUIRED

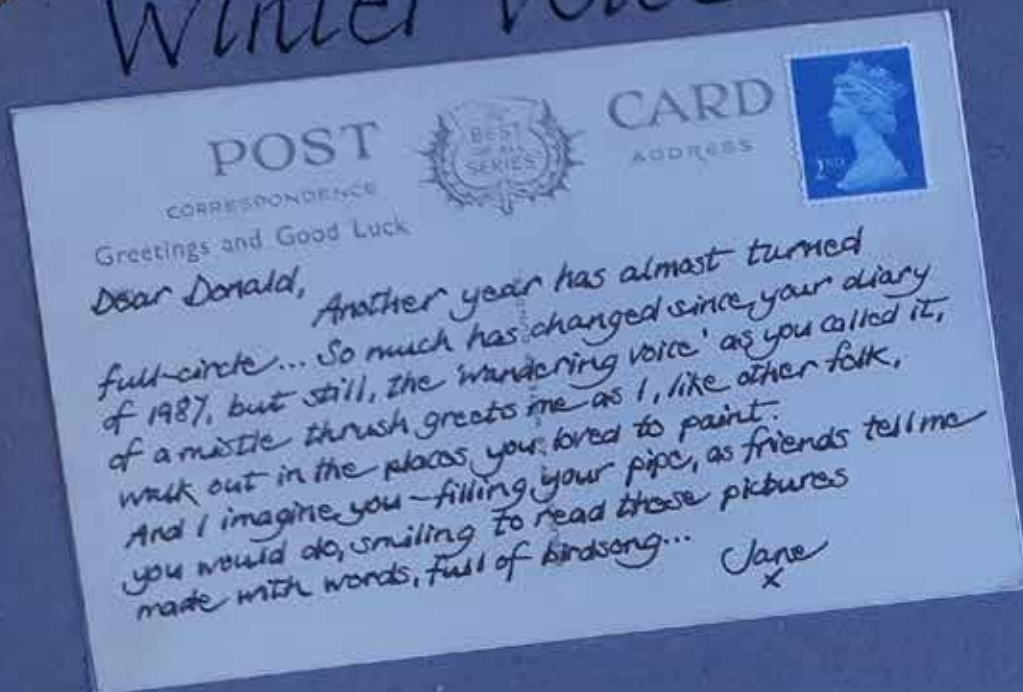
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Flexible hours, approx 2 hours/day at £13/hour.

Contact:

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Winter Voices...



Autumn expectations
 He expects stormcock expects the rain
 Expects red berries in his domain
 Expects northern crows to descend
 Expects his autumn feast to end
 Expects an approach towards him now
 Expects to fly somewhere somehow
 But does he know to where?
 I expect so.
Chris

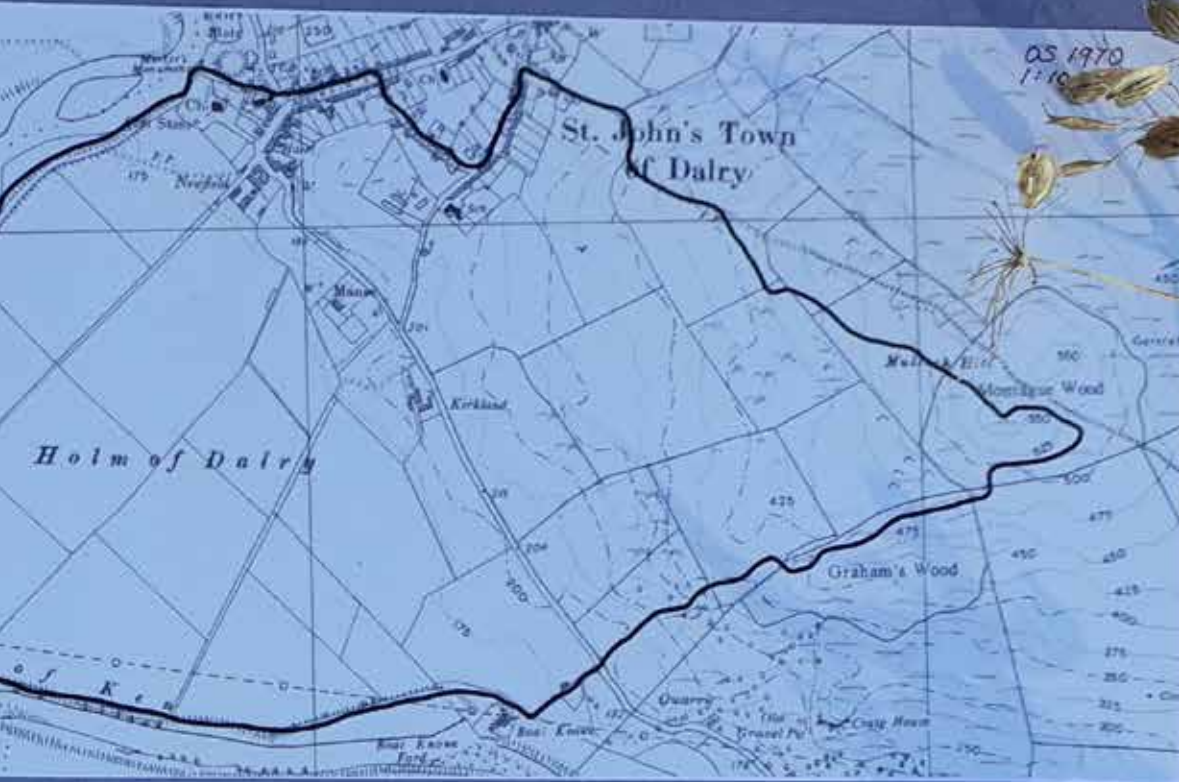
Autumn Field Notes — over hill and holm
 Ken Words Poetry Walk with Chris Rollie and Jane McBeth
 St. John's Town of Dalry, 3 October 2021
 Goldfinches, 1984 © Donald Watson Estate



winter more
 an unseen
 that sounds

Autumn Field Notes — over hill and holm
 Ken Words Poetry Walk with Chris Rollie and Jane McBeth
 St. John's Town of Dalry, 3 October 2021
 Goldfinches, 1984 © Donald Watson Estate

made with materials and words from the Donald Watson Bird Walk
 Winter Voices — a Ken Words poetry walk with Chris Rollie will take place on
 more details in the CatStrand brochure / www.catstrand.co.uk
 mistle thrush or stormcock (English) / skittery



ring
song
like spring

Jane McBeth



the mavis mimics phrases
from other birds' songs -
an unwitting archivist

Mulloch Hill, St. John's Town of Dalry

Ken Words Poetry Walk with Chris Rollie and Jane McBeth
St. John's Town of Dalry, 20 June 2021
Photograph © Andrew Mellor

Angus Macmillan 20.6.21



Walk - a 2½ mile trail over holm and hill in the countryside around Dalry
on Sun 12 December, and 'Bird Studies' runs at The Smiddy 6-31 January, 2022
goat.scot or contact jane.kenwords@gmail.com
feltie (Scots); mavis (Scots) / song thrush (English)

PROTECTING OUR SPECIAL PLACES: *Pollution*

Protecting special places concerns protecting wellbeing and assuring community sustainability.

That said, everyone has different ideas about what this means as we all have differing needs. A neighbour of mine had to produce five varieties of milk at the breakfast table in order to satisfy the health needs of her visiting extended family. Catering for the needs of variety is a tricky business. She solved this particular problem by telling them to bring their own milk. Similarly, as members of the Glenkens community, we need to bring our own ideas on wellbeing to the community table.

Each of us understands our own threshold in terms of allergy or intolerance to certain phenomena. However, in community terms we may talk about this in terms of pollution.

Nobody wants pollution, least of all in their own back yard, but there are plenty of developers who will push us to tolerate it. I would argue that it is up to every community to set a limit on acceptable pollution levels in their environment - we should not be forced to accept what we know to be unhealthy.

I was raised in a city within a very



An example of local pollution - the wind farm laydown area by Carsphairn village.

urbanised extended family and what I consider to be noise, light and air pollution today is life itself to many of my nearest and dearest.

In the time I have lived in this community I have learned that the majority of my resident neighbours cherish primarily peace, nature and dark skies. These are all qualities akin to the outgoing pastoral community. Now that our governing bodies are pushing towards the industrialisation of the Glenkens, our special places are in danger of being used as a landfill site for all the pollutants known to the urban environment.

Of all the pollutants, it is perhaps the hidden pollutant of insidious corruption that is the most damaging of all. Corruption seeks to persuade us that the many things that we know to be bad for our health are simply a figment of our imagination.

In order to live peacefully together we must manage our levels of community pollution and understand the needs of those who live alongside us. The nature of any animal is to move away from intolerable pollution. The nature of abuse is to continue to enforce pollution on any animal whose movement is restricted.

When we endeavour to protect our special places, we endeavour to mitigate abuse. We are right to feel a need to protect the places in which we find a sense of wellbeing, whether that is a peaceful glade or a noisy music venue. To discuss this, we must understand the fluidity of pollution, tolerance levels and the nature of corrupting forces. And to do this, we must come together as a community rich in variety of opinion and respect for others.

Fiona Clubb

Photo of the Issue

*Sponsored by the
Stockbridge Mac & Cheese Company*

This issue's winner is Lynn Stewart with this gorgeous shot titled 'Balmaclellan Sunset'.

Lynn wins two portions of mac & cheese of her choice from our competition sponsors, the Balmaclellan-based Stockbridge Mac & Cheese Co.

Company owner and competition judge, Hannah Gould, said:

"Having grown up running around the hills of Balmaclellan this is a view I've seen many times. Match it up with a stunning sunset and it's a view that takes your breath away every time. If you don't have much time, always make time for a Balmaclellan sunset..."



To enter you can send in any photograph taken in the Glenkens to glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk

Blackcraig Wind Farm Fund Drop-in

Thanks to all who dropped in to see us despite the inclement weather at Dalry Town Hall on 5 November.

The aim of the event was to share learning and celebrate the work supported by the fund to date, and some great conversations were had and connections made.

There were engaging stalls on display from funded projects such as the impressive range of energy efficiency measures installed at the Glenkens Mens Shed which have enabled reduced running costs, shared energy supply and a reduced carbon footprint; the Loch Ken Trust, who received an award to help pilot the incredibly successful Ranger's post, which helps protect and promote our community's natural heritage; the work led by Corsock

Village Hall to survey the community owned assets in the area and their facilities and needs so that local halls and other facilities can join forces to optimise use of these buildings; Propagate CIC came along with their recent report which proposes food education, a hyper local supply chain for local produce and a community farm as vital next steps to having a more joined up local food system and increased local food production; Dalry Town Hall Committee showcased their funded film *The Glenkens Rising* which was commissioned to promote our local heritage and help attract visitors interested in Covenanting history into the Town Hall and the village's facilities. Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) projects Ken Words and the *Glenkens Gazette* highlighted the value of connected communities and some of the innovative ways these connections are being made and supported locally.

We were also really lucky to have

support organisations on hand whose role is to help people build ideas into projects, and projects into successes, such as Community Land Scotland, Third Sector Dumfries & Galloway, Home Energy Scotland, the Moniaive Initiative, GCAT and South of Scotland Community Housing (see front page article).

Finally we also launched a new report providing an update on how the fund has been used in its first two years of grant-making, which you can view at <https://tinyurl.com/blackcraigat2> or email suzy@foundationscotland.org.uk for a copy.

Don't forget the next round of applications closes on 10 January with decisions in mid-March, so do get in touch if you would like to find out more about the application process - <https://www.glenkenstrust.org.uk/funding>

*Suzy Mercer,
Community Funds Manager for
Blackcraig, Foundation Scotland*

ARTISTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT Jilly Henderson & Neil Paterson

Having just moved to Dumfries & Galloway from the seaside town of Arbroath, on the east coast of Scotland, artists Jilly Henderson and Neil Paterson have found themselves inspired by the Glenkens area.

Jilly Henderson has been a self-employed artist for over 30 years. She graduated from DJCAD in Dundee with an honours degree in graphic design and printmaking. Jilly says: "Neil and I moved down here to experience a complete change. After lockdown we realised that life is precious and short, so we set in motion our dream to live in the countryside with a remote vibe but somewhere with things going on".

At the moment Jilly is working on a series of framed original ink artworks to be exhibited in the Gallery at Laurieston. She also encourages commissions from people for ink portraits of their houses, which are a really lovely and unique gift idea.

"I have just completed an original mosaic artwork on the front wall of our new house in Balmaclellan," says Jilly. "I love working outdoors and so this was an opportunity to showcase my

work plus meet some of our neighbours as they saw the work progress over a number of days".

Neil Paterson uses his knowledge of different art styles and working stone to create sculptures that have been commissioned for public spaces in Angus and Dundee as well as for private gardens and gifts. He carves in sandstone, marble and granite and is always on the lookout for suitable old stone that he can 'recycle' into a sculpture. One of his more challenging commissions was for a bagpipe-playing bear, representing the pipe tune *The Black Bear*.

A recent commission has been to carve two squirrels chasing each other around a recycled sandstone roof ridge tile for a private garden in Balmaclellan. Neil says: "I enjoy helping people to realise their ideas in stone. Aside from ornamental work, stone is a wonderful medium for memorials commemorating happy events such as weddings and anniversaries and for sadder times such as the passing of a family member, friend or pet. For gifts I usually have something in stock - the highland cow is always a popular design, but I'm also open to commissions."

Neil is also a cartoonist (see p15) as well as a songwriter and performer, and he would love to meet and play with other musicians locally so would like to shout-out to anyone interested to get in touch!

Neil can be contacted through his Facebook page @Neil Paterson Stonecarver Balmaclellan or at www.patersonstonecarving.co.uk/home



Neil and Jilly are enjoying throwing themselves with enthusiasm into Glenkens community life.

Jilly's work can be found in her Etsy online gallery plus look out for updates on future exhibitions on her Facebook and Instagram pages @JillyHendersonArtist or email; jillyhoo@outlook.com

Neil and Jilly are looking forward to presenting their family friendly adaptation of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* at Balmaclellan Village Hall on 18 December at 7pm - tickets for this event can be bought from Balmaclellan Village Shop or CatStrand.

Glenkens Freecycle

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natural power

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

FREE

Electric lawnmower and grass box. Contact: Ian on 07840 506 516

Three-seater IKEA Karlanda sofa, approx 7ft long, with spare set of covers. The sofa is light blue/grey, and the spare covers are mustard yellow. New Galloway. Contact: 07763170098

Horse manure (including some chicken manure), rotted and fresh, no weed killers used. Dig your own from a large heap, bring sacks or trailer. Contact: 07889 229 340

FOR SALE

Elite Care wheelchair, suitable for large person, barely used. £100. Contact: 07521 902 567

POLO 1.2 TSI SE, petrol bluemotion, 78,506 miles. VW MOT & serviced until 5 October 2022, full VW service history. £5,400 ono. Contact: 01644 430 373

WANTED

Chest freezer. Contact: Tony on 07507 704 821

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

2 x queen size mattresses. 1 sofa (preferably a sofa bed). Contact: Sarah on 07453 858 505 or saraheathomas@gmail.com

HOME WANTED IN THE GLENKENS

We are seeking to buy a home with 2-3 bedrooms and 3-5 acres of land, somewhere in the Glenkens.

We've been here for almost two years renting, are active in the local community and want to put down roots.

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Affordable housing for people living or working in the Glenkens whose circumstances would benefit from the provision of reduced rent.

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For more information or to download an application form, please go to www.pamelayoungtrust.co.uk, or telephone Peter Matthews of A B & A Matthews on 01671 404100.

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Eco Feature

Natural Power Gains Carbon Neutral Plus Status

sponsored by



The Glenkens based renewable energy consultancy and service provider, Natural Power, has achieved Carbon Neutral Plus certification, delivering on its commitment to the environment.

Natural Power has its own internal environmental committee, Green Space, which not only calculated the whole company's carbon footprint for 2019 and 2020, but has had this verified by an external auditor, Carbon Footprint, an independent organisation that helps businesses provide a robust demonstration of low carbon credentials.

Having established the data, Natural

Power has carefully selected and purchased offsets for its entire carbon footprint for 2019 and 2020. As an international renewable energy business, having worked on projects in more than 60 countries and with ambitions to expand support for customers internationally, Natural Power carefully selected and purchased offsets from projects in Europe (UK), Africa (Kenya), Asia (India) and the Americas (Brazil and Aruba). Each of these is verified to the highest standards, such as Verified Carbon Standard (VCS), to guarantee the emissions reductions.

As the business continues to grow, it will deliver upon a certified carbon reduction plan with the aim to continue reducing emissions and become a net zero organisation in 2023.

Natural Power was founded in 1995 with a drive to create a better environment for future generations. On its mission to live and breathe green energy, it designed and built its own



eco-office with power from renewable sources, heat from ground source and water from underground aquifers. The Green House is located at Forrest Estate, outside Dalry. Natural Power moved its head office to The Green House in 2000 and has since proved that high value jobs can be created (and sustained) in rural areas. Today, it is a global business employing more than 400 staff across 14 international offices, with 120 people employed in and around the Glenkens. The team has delivered projects in more than 50 countries, amounting to almost 215,000 MW of installed capacity – enough to potentially power more than 134 million homes annually.



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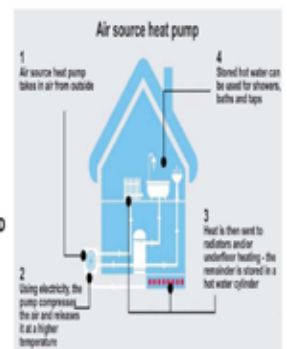
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REPAIR



The Optimistic Environmentalist

A Guilt-free Sleep, a Rant and Something for Christmas...

I get frustrated that whatever you do, there is always something that you can do better to reduce your carbon emissions.

This also gives me hope though because it makes me realise how much we could all do.

In April, we bought a new mattress. We spent a lot of money on it because I get so hot at night and I have Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis so my joints are very painful. Two of these mattresses failed, i.e. they became more dented and misshapen than our old one, within days. Going for a different replacement, to our great delight, we were told about an environmental option. All new Harrison Spinks mattresses are fully foam-free (foam cannot be recycled), glue free and FR (flame retardant) chemical treatment free. Special flexible micro springs replace the need for foam. They use traditional weaving methods with state-of-the-art weaving looms, creating a breathable and FR chemical free mattress, some of which is made from wool from their own sheep, farmed in Yorkshire. At the same farm they grow hemp and flax for the mattresses too.

All of the wood they use in the headboards and divans is sourced from sustainably managed forests that are FSC certified including wood from their own responsibly managed woodland. This makes the beds recyclable - at the end of their lives, they are taken apart by the company and are 100% reused - the company "re-fibernise" the polyester fillings into next generation materials and melt down the springs for reuse. Thus, their up-to-date products are entirely recyclable, reusable and nothing goes to landfill. The company also constantly looks at everything they do from the pens they write with, to the trucks that deliver their products.

This is not free advertising, but it shows what can be done when companies

put their mind to it. I feel stupid not to have thought to look into such a large purchase before we bought it. I must admit, though, that I assumed that there would not be much we could do apart from ask about how it would be recycled (we were assured it would be, but could not get any details when asking about the original purchase). When asking for a new model, we were lucky that a shop assistant told us about the Harrison Spinks models, but it was not something that the shop pushed as much as I would have liked and the Dumfries branch had not mentioned it at all.

We are really looking forward to the mattress coming in December. It shows that absolutely everything you do and use can be improved if the will is there.

RANT!

We have two big Labradors, one of which has boundless energy and always loves playing. As part of this they tug toys apart, enjoying getting the stuffing out. We have an A&E bag for cuddlies waiting to be mended. They get to the point that only certain bits are repairable, therefore odd limbs or strange creatures made from assorted body parts are strewn around our house, but the dogs love them just the same. When we first buy them, we have to take any plastic eyes or noses out as Remus will eat them otherwise. Disturbingly, in the last two-and-a-half years (Remus' lifetime) we have found that they also contain plastic beads; I assume this is to make them feel softer (although they don't feel more so than ones I had as a child), unless it's something to do with cost. All we can do with the beads is to throw them in landfill so they are not swallowed. We complain about microplastics in toiletries but it makes you wonder how many others there are floating around.

BEWARE

Having bought Christmas wrapping paper in WH Smith, their useful labelling showed how many wraps are not recyclable. It seems all papers are not created equal.

Try and think of the environment this

Christmas. If you can, search the high street or internet for environmentally friendly cards, gifts and decorations, or those without plastic. There are some interesting ideas and plenty of environmentally friendly toys for children of all ages. You could also change what you normally buy and give people gifts to support environmental or animal charities.



A BOOK IDEA FOR CHRISTMAS

Climate Change: How We Get to Carbon Zero by Bianca Nogrady, priced at around £7.50 for a paper version or £4 for an ebook.

This book is fascinating; she looks at topics as diverse as cement (it contributes 8% of our annual carbon emissions); food production (over a quarter global carbon emissions); to the two billion tonnes of waste we generate every year and how we can tackle these problems. Here's the publisher's description:

Man-made global warming is advancing inexorably. Are there ways to halt it? In this invaluable, one-stop guide Bianca Nogrady analyses the science of climate change and offers a concise overview of the ways in which our carbon emissions might be reduced. She examines the challenges posed by food and energy production and the cutting-edge technologies that could mitigate their polluting effects. She looks at initiatives to create green industry and transport. She explains the economics of emissions trading schemes and the practicalities of geoengineering plans to trap greenhouse gases. And she addresses the fundamental question: is it possible to safeguard our future before it's too late?

Denise MacDonald-Kiernan

Feeling stressed? Peace and quiet can be hard to find during the frantic countdown to Christmas...

In order to help, St Margaret's church in New Galloway is offering an escape from the stresses of the world during December.

No readings, hymns or sermons; no phones, computers, TV or social media – just a quiet (and COVID-compliant) space for silent contemplation and reflection.

All are welcome, whether you are a church-goer or not. We all need somewhere to unwind and de-stress. 10.30am–12noon on Wed 1, Thu 9,

Wed 15 & Wed 22 December. Pop in for five minutes, or stay an hour, to find some peace and tranquillity.

St Margaret's Church is on the Kenbridge Road, New Galloway, or visit the website for further information at www.stmargaretsnewgalloway.org

Nicolette Wise

Dalry Hogmanay Celebrations

Community Ceilidh, 31 December, 8pm-1am, Dalry Town Hall

Come along for a night of dancing, singing, live music, and contagious good cheer! You are warmly invited to participate with a song, a tune, a story. BYOB, bring your own nibbles. Free event but due to the restricted numbers for COVID safety, tickets

must be collected in advance - available from Wright's shop, Glenkens Community Shop and from Anne (see below).

Bells Get Together outside Town Hall and Clachan

Whether you are in the Town Hall, the pubs, or somewhere else in the village, come down at midnight for 'the bells' and join in a mighty Dalry Auld Lang Syne together!

New Year's Dip on New Year's Day

To freshen up after the party, or boost your immune system for the New Year, come down to the river at 1pm for a dip, followed by a hot drink at the Clachan!

More more info contact Anne on anne.chaurand@btinternet.com

Glenkens WW2 Deaths: Part Three

This is the third article in a series about Glenkens deaths in the Second World War.

Photographs of those who died are very difficult to come by, so we are lucky to have three relating to this article. If you have a photo of anyone listed on a Glenkens war memorial, I would love to copy it so that I can include it with future articles.

John Thompson was the son of Margaret Thompson of Hill View, Dalry. He served with the (Scottish) Battalion of the Parachute Regiment and, as part of the 2nd Parachute Brigade, landed in Italy in July 1943. In November they were attached to the 2nd New Zealand Division and the battalion was involved in the Battle of Monte Cassino and the battles along the river Sangro. John died of wounds on 7 December 1943 at the age of 28 and is buried in Sangro River War Cemetery, Italy. He is listed on the Dalry war memorial.

Thomas Archibald Blythe was the son of Bruce Crawford Blythe and Anne Monteith (Archibald) Blythe of Glasgow. He married Sheila Mary Rae Blythe of Westerton, Glasgow, in 1939. Although Thomas was born in Glasgow, his father (and siblings) had been born in Carsphairn and, in 1915, his uncle Walter was the village school teacher. Thomas was educated at Hillhead High School in Glasgow and initially worked with the Albion Motor Company before moving to Sheffield.

At the outbreak of war he attended the 162nd Officer Cadet Training Unit in Salisbury and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in February 1940. By 1942 he was Chief Instructor, with the rank of Major, at the Eastern Command Infantry Battle School. He requested a move to a fighting unit and was posted to the 1/7th RWR.

Thomas landed at Normandy on 29 June 1944 and took part in the fighting around Caen. On 8 July the battalion captured the village of St Contest, held by the 25th SS Panzer Grenadiers.

Thomas was killed in action on 8 July 1944 at the age of 29 and is buried in La Delivrande War Cemetery, Douvres, Calvados, France. He is listed on the Carsphairn war memorial.

James Gilchrist McFadzean was born at Darnscau, Carsphairn, the son of James and Agnes (Gilchrist) McFadzean. He was employed with the Galloway Water Power Company when he enlisted in 1941. He served with 59 Field Company, Royal Engineers. He was killed in action on 28 July 1944 at the age of 34 and is buried in the Florence War Cemetery, Italy. He is listed on the Carsphairn war memorial.

Robert Ferguson (known as Bobby) was the son of William and Margaret (Milligan) Ferguson and husband to Mary Ferguson of 2 Auckland Terrace, Dalry. He served as a Sergeant with C Company, 7th (Airborne) Battalion (Galloway), King's Own Scottish Borderers. The first of the Horsa gliders carrying the 7th Battalion KOSB landed at Arnhem on the first day of the battle, Sunday 17 September 1944, to secure the Ginkel Heath position designated as DZ-Y for the 4th Parachute Brigade. Bobby was declared missing in action between 20 and 21 September 1944 at the age of 31. By 25 September the battalion were defending the perimeter near Oosterbeek Hoog Railway Station and that night the survivors were withdrawn to cross back over the Rhine. Bobby's brother, Lance Sergeant John Ferguson, was taken prisoner at Arnhem by German forces. Bobby is listed on the Groesbeek Memorial (to the missing) at Gelderland, Netherlands; and on the Dalry war memorial and on the 7th KOSB Arnhem memorial in the Dumfries and Galloway Aviation Museum.

Thomas William Corrie was the son of Thomas and Mary Craik (Shaw) Corrie of Lowdenlea,

Balmacellan. He served with 6th Battalion, Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and he died of wounds on 15 December 1944 at the age of 24. He is buried in Sittard General Cemetery, Limburg, Netherlands where he is one of many UK soldiers whose grave is regularly tended by local schoolchildren. He was awarded the Military Medal for bravery which was published in the London Gazette on 12 April 1945. Thomas is listed on the Carsphairn war memorial.

Thomas Bryden Kirk was the son of William and Grace (Bryden) Kirk of Bogue Cottage, Dalry, and husband of Freda Dorothy (Harah) Kirk, of 15 Church Street, Driffeld, Yorkshire who he married in 1939 in Driffeld. Thomas was a foreman joiner in Bath when he enlisted in October 1940 and served with 114 Road Construction Coy, Royal Engineers as a Sergeant. He was killed in an accident in Burma on 25th March 1945 at the age of 30 and was buried at the Yazagyo Military Cemetery but was re-interred in Imphal, India in June 1945. His brother Harry was to die less than three months later and another brother, Robert, of the Royal Army Medical Corps was captured in June 1940 and was a prisoner of war for five years before being repatriated in May 1945. Thomas is listed on the Dalry war memorial.

My thanks to Ken Morrison of the Scottish Military Research Group for his assistance with research.

...to be continued... Paul Goodwin

Pictured, left to right, are Bobby Ferguson, John Thompson and Thomas Kirk.



GLENKENS PLACE NAMES: PART XIII

Taking a break from our recent exporation of the place-names relating to the Glenkens' lost or abandoned homesteads I'm taking a festive theme this edition and considering the possibilities for places named for the holly tree (*ilex aquifolium*).

The Gaelic word for holly is *cuillion*. In that language by appending the suffix *-ach* the meaning 'place of' or 'abounding in' is formed. Thus a place called *Cuillionach* would have been notable for its profusion of holly trees or bushes.

There are several contenders for places named for hollies in this way in the Glenkens and Galloway more generally but for all of them alternative derivations are possible and in many cases probably more plausible.

These include Craigencolon, a rocky summit north of Carsphairn overlooking Loch Doon. The Place-Names of the Galloway Glens website gives this as being derived from *creag a' chuilinn* the rock of the holly tree'. However this is the hill just north of the place-name Eldrick from Gaelic *eileirig*, 'deer trap', and given that proximity, it might be expected that the name could reflect hunting in the area. There is a possibility that this is the case, and that it is derived from *Creag nan Còmhlan*, 'rock of the bands, bodies of people, circle, company, groups or troops'. This would fit well with the name being a reference to the *tainchell* (Scots for 'beaters', from Scots Gaelic *timcheall*, 'surround'). Many helpers would have been required to drive the deer to the *eileirig*.

A second place-name that may contain the Gaelic word for holly is Collin Island on the Black Water of Dee just downstream from the well known Otter Pool. The Place-Names of the Galloway

Glens website gives this name as being derived from Gaelic *Eilean Cuillin*, 'holly island', and indeed there is another Holly Island about a kilometer upstream. However the website also gives the possibility that Collin Island reflects the Gaelic *eilean culein*, 'island of (the) puppy'. I imagine holly is the more likely solution here.

Forms in *Cuillionach*, 'a place abounding in holly', include Cullendoch Hill, north of Craigencolon mentioned above and one just outside our area, Cullenoch, a smallholding in the forest near Lauriston. The Place-Names of the Galloway Glens website gives both these names as from *Cuillionach*, 'place of hollies'.

It is possible that the northern-most place-name refers to the hill grazing ground pertaining to the former farm of Cullendoch, *Kullonach* on Moll, *Culenoch* on Ainslie 1797 and *Cullenach* on Ainslie 1820. If so the name of the hill itself is lost. Alan James has pointed



out that there is another Cullendoch on the Big Water of Fleet, a Cullendeugh in New Abbey, and a Balcullendoch in Penninghame parish, Wigtownshire.

James's paper considers the different possibilities relating to the possible specific and generic components of these place-names. I would agree with him that suggestions that Cullendoch derives from *cuillionn dabhach*, 'holly hollow', should be set aside (due to the implausibly early coining date this formation implies) and that we are more likely to be dealing here with *cùil*, 'a corner or nook', as the generic term. James points out the range of potential meanings for the specific that may be involved, *dabhach*, extending from a unit of landholding to a tub or vat-like landscape feature and a fish-trap.

It is possible that the Carsphairn Cullendoch is *Cùil na Dabhaich*, 'the nook of the fish-trap or of the tub'. However,

Cùil na Dabhaich would be stressed on *dabh-*, while the Galloway Glens website suggests *cuillionnach*, 'abounding in holly', which would be stressed on *cuil-*. I have not been able to obtain a pronunciation from a local who knows this hill well, but the nearest source I have found suggests that the stress is *Cùllendoch*. The pronunciation of Cullendoch today, then, seems to suggest that 'abounding in holly' may be correct.

Another possibility is suggested, however, by the Irish place-names Cullion in Clonallan Parish, County Down, and Lisdrumgullion in Newry Parish, County Armagh, which Toner and Ó Mainín derive from Irish *Cuilleann* and *Lios Droim Cuillinn*, ie 'a steep unbroken slope' and 'fort of the ridge of the steep slope' respectively. They state:

"The element gullion (et var) is often translated as if it were from *cuileann*, 'holly-tree', but TS Ó Máille has convincingly argued that in many cases it actually comes from *cuilleann* (gen *cuillinn*) 'a steep slope' (Ó Máille 1960)."

They also suggest that in some cases (such as with Cullion above) *cuilleann* may simply mean 'an area of high ground' or a steep unbroken slope. In either sense, therefore, *cuilleannach*, 'place of steep slopes' or 'high ground', may be the explanation of our Cullendoch. The hill is probably a bit steeper than its neighbours on the northern Rhinns. It should be noted, however, that Irish *cuilleann* is long obsolete, and that hill-names incorporating this element may be among the earliest strata.

The Ivy (*herera helix*) is *eidheann* in Gaelic. Unfortunately there do not seem to be any obvious place-names in the Glenkens which contain this specific element. However we do have Craignane, a hill overlooking the Water of Deugh in the very north of Carsphairn parish. There are other similar place-names in other parts of Galloway and usually they are taken to refer to birds, ie *creag an eòin*, 'rock or cliff of the bird', or *creag nan eun*, 'rock of cliff of the birds'. However it is possible that this represents *Creag na h-Eidhne* 'rock or cliff of the ivy'. The bird solution is more likely however.

Michael Ansell, Cars Fèarna




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LOCAL HISTORY with TED COWAN

An Early Christmas Present



I have collected books for most of my life and now age cruelly dictates that I have to get rid of them.

Time and again I have set out to reduce the piles of print around the house only to find in the first ten minutes a long lost volume that I start to re-read and good intentions are once again forgotten. I recently found in a catalogue a book for which I had long been looking. Despite its ridiculously high price I sent for it and thus acquired one of the most eccentric books in my collection - *Derwentwater or the Adherents of King James; A Tale of the First Rebellion*, with an appendix, "Containing Genealogical Notices and Several Ancient and Honourable Families by Robert Trotter, Gent Chief of The Name in Scotland, Edinburgh." The author makes the fatal mistake of producing a tale, "partly historical and partly romantic". The story is about the subject of the title, James Radcliffe Earl of Derwentwater, a catholic who, along with William Gordon, seventh Viscount Kenmure and an Episcopalian, joined the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715.

*"Flashed the broad battle axe clear on the river,
The shouts of the warriors were heard from afar;
Loud was the battle cry, 'Gordon for ever!'
Lord Gordon of Kenmure, and young Lochinvar."*

A co-conspirator was the Earl of Nithsdale whose faithful wife contrived his escape; the other two were impeached for high treason. Jacobites

notoriously did not make the most knowledgeable or successful of soldiers and Derwentwater was a young man in his early twenties with almost no experience of warfare. His biography is full of interest but Trotter made a complete hash of it. His attempt to produce a style which replicates that of Walter Scott is a complete failure and his language is flowery, sentimental and repellent. Consider, "They then crossed the river Ken, and scoured meadow and glen, like the coming of the distant thunder, like the swash of a thousand swans in the lake (loch to you and me!); and when they reached the cross of the new-made town of Galloway, James VIII, would-be Jacobite king was proclaimed in due form; the bells rang their merriest peal, and the shouts of applause were continued and loud."

This is an excellent example of why the study of history does not require any assistance from 'book culture' which has become alarmingly common in the literature departments of today's universities and literary reviews, which claim to 'improve' the past while in fact mangling, distorting, and misrepresenting it. The author offers no evidence for the rest of his statement. Is it likely that a village notorious for covenanters would now support the hated Stewart cause?

The other part of Trotter's book is a collection - an Appendix over twice as long as the tale of the unfortunate Jacobites. It provides evidential material and snippets on genealogies, mostly from Galloway, which he claims were supplied by folk that he consulted in 'big hooses', even castles. Needless to say, his informants were intent upon making these pedigrees as impressive and distinguished as possible. It is easy to

believe that the Trotters and their ilk enjoyed playing at the role of 'lairds'. Wherever possible they emphasised possible connections to their own family. They rented houses in the Glenkens for perhaps a couple of months in the summer but they went back to their homes and places of employment during the rest of the year. There is, of course, nothing wrong with this. They paid back the local community by writing about the history of their glen in their books and articles.

For example, Trotter tells us that the Barbour family, who recently appeared in this column, descended from the Barberini in Italy and that they first came to Scotland with Agricola; in other words, at the very beginning of recorded Scottish history, a claim for which there is no evidence. Clement, miller of Polmaddy, in the Glenkens, for entertaining James V and sheltering him all night, during one of his hunting expeditions in the new Forest of Galloway was granted 'all the lands of Polmaddy'. The Countess of Douglas at Threave Castle demanded that bone marrow be served at three meals a day. Her husband, no doubt anticipating COP26, wishing to stop her addiction, arranged for 300 lambs to be placed outside her window. When she asked why he did so he responded, 'For marrow to your Ladyship's table! A tear of pity bedewed her cheek but from that day a dish of marrow was never seen in Threave Castle. All trivial but unprovable like much nowadays associated with the Christmas celebrations. Hoping yours is merry and bright!

Ted Cowan

Vintage Sewing Machine Restoration

If you have an old sewing machine you would like to have restored or repaired, I'm happy to undertake any works sewing machines up to those made around the 1980s.

I donate my time without charge and I only ask to be refunded the cost of any parts required (you are welcome to order them instead!) and that a

donation be made to a mutually agreed local community cause.

Please get in touch and we can arrange for you to drop your machine off where I live in New Galloway - I am quite happy to assess a machine without obligation.

Please contact me if you have any

interest or if you have ideas concerning what community causes need or deserve support. I tend to be busy with tending the garden through the growing season but have time to spare through winter!

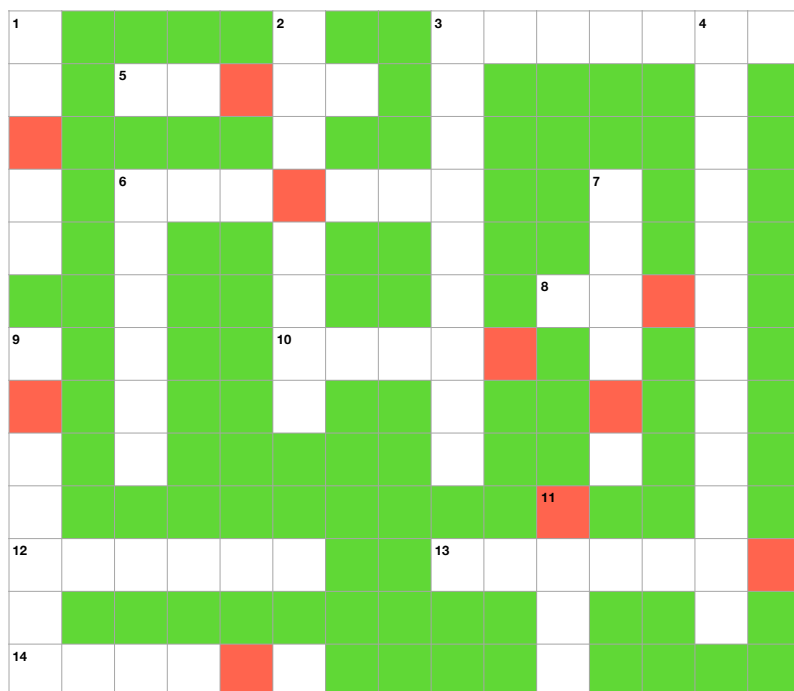
Best wishes,

John

jjohnes@gmx.com



CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD



Chance to win £25 in vouchers for The Clachan Inn, Dalry

Complete the crossword above and solve the Christmas anagram of the letters in the red boxes.

Send the winning word to philip.lancaster@sjpp.co.uk
and a winner will be chosen at random. Good luck!

Congratulations to Andrew Walker who won last issue's prize! This crossword is sponsored by Lancaster Wealth & Investment Management (see ad on p10).

ACROSS

- 3** Traditional festive bread originating in Dresden in the 1300's (7)
- 5** French name for a Christmas cake shaped like a log - French _____ de Noel (5)
- 6** Sport that takes precedence on Boxing Day in Australia, New Zealand (7)
- 8** What's every Elf's favourite type of music? (4)
- 10** Northern Italian city which gave us Panettone (5)
- 12 & 13** Who is never hungry at Christmas? The _____, it's always _____!! (6,7)
- 14** The Christmas Tree in Trafalgar Square is a gift from which country each year? (6)

DOWN

- 1** Key ingredient of sweet and spicy Lebkuchen cookies (5)
- 2** The single released by X Factor winner 2009 Joe McElderry, which missed out on the Christmas No.1 spot to Rage Against the Machine (3,5)
- 3** Who brings Christmas presents for our 4 legged friends? (5,4)
- 4** Who is Santa Claus' favourite singer? (5,7)
- 6** "Buddy the Elf, what's your favourite _____" (6)
- 7** The tagline for Luke Skywalker's Christmas Tree Farm - "may the _____ be with you (6)
- 9** Racecourse where the Boxing Day showpiece King George VI race takes place? (7)
- 11** A term originally applied to a pagan winter festival lasting twelve days, then later to Christmas (4)

Job Opportunity

Would you like to join our friendly team and make a real difference to your community?

WE HAVE VACANCIES FOR A:

- **Business Support Administrator**
(24 hrs/week)
- **Youth Arts Coordinator**
(21 hours/week)

Both roles are salaried positions with full employment benefits.

See www.gcat.scot/jobs for full details.

Closing date for applications is Sunday 12th December and interviews will be held on the 20th and 21st December.

**Glenkens
Community
& Arts Trust**

Spalding Bowling Club Winners 2021



Top row, left to right: Jim white, club president Paul Nicolson, John Peacock, Eric Broadhurst.

Bottom row, left to right: ladies champion Ann Hamilton, gents champion Gordon McAdam, Colin Ramsay, Sandra Dempster, Elizabeth Peacock and Fiona Ramsay.

A WINDY RIG MERRY CHRISTMAS

It's been a busy couple of months as the completion of the Windy Rig project fast approaches.

The teams have completed a rigorous testing and commissioning programme

across the 12 turbines and it was expected that all of the Windy Rig turbines will be exporting power to the grid at the end of November.

The remedial work on the C35 was completed in October and signed off by D&GC. There was also some additional work on the B729 that was completed at the same time. Work to reinstate and secure

the laydown area has also taken place with some weather dependant works still to take place.

Statkraft would like to thank all local residents for their patience during the construction of the wind farm throughout the year and take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



WINDY STANDARD WIND FARM COMMUNITY UPDATE

We recently held our public exhibitions about our proposals to repower Windy Standard Wind Farm.

The events were held in Dalmellington, Carsphairn and New Cumnock and attracted a number of visitors.

We really enjoyed discussing the plans with local residents and we hope that everyone managed to have their questions answered.

We are encouraging everyone to have their say on the proposals. We are still collecting feedback and can easily discuss the plans in further detail.

We would encourage everyone to visit the website www.windystandardwindfarm.co.uk, view the exhibition materials and provide their comments.

The team is also available to have answer any questions that people may have. Please get in touch by contacting communities@fredolsen.co.uk or by phoning 07435 763900.



Local Initiatives in New Galloway

Major Grant Award For New Galloway Town Hall

We are delighted to have been awarded a Community Ownership Grant of £175,000 by the UK Government towards the refurbishment of the Town Hall. This is a fund expressly designed to help those taking ownership of buildings for the community, which we hope to be doing shortly. An asset transfer process has been in train for a while now, held up by COVID and by the complexities of transferring a building held as 'inalienable common good', but things are moving forward now. We do need to secure matched funding for the grant and will be working our socks off to gain as much as possible.

New Kitchen And Toilets

In the meantime, we have not been standing still. With the help of some additional funding from D&G Council, we have already been able to install a smart new community kitchen and are just completing the installation of new toilets.

Events Manager

Yet another grant success, this time Scottish Government funding (the Enabling Neighbourhoods & Communities fund) via the Corra Foundation, has enabled us to appoint a part-time events manager. We are excited to announce that Neil Paterson has been appointed and will be working with us for the next five or six months (see article on p21 for more about Neil).



What's On

Since August, we have been gradually and carefully re-opening the town hall for regular activities, ensuring that sensible COVID mitigations are in place. All this takes time and attention to detail, but we have tried to make our guidance and hall hire arrangements clear and simple. In particular, we have instigated a simple way for people to hire the hall for events which are community run. To find out more visit www.newgallowaytownhall.com or @Local Initiatives in New Galloway on

Facebook, or there are posters around the local community. Also check out the Diary pages in this issue on p34-5, and below is an article from New Galloway's new community development worker, Hayley Edgar, with more on our Christmas festivities.

Hogmanay Ceilidh

We are thrilled to announce that we have been able to book The Shore Road Band for our Hogmanay Ceilidh, thanks to some events funding secured from D&G Council back in June. It will be wonderful to have another ceilidh (fingers crossed for no more sudden lockdowns) and we are so looking forward to being treated to a band with such a great reputation. All ages are welcome!

LING Lunches Restarting

Last, but by no means least, we are finally planning to restart LING Lunches on Tuesday 11 January. So many people tell us how much they have missed them, and we have too.

Those who volunteer are delighted that there is, at long last, a commercial dishwasher available, so not so many hours on dishwashing duty are required. Some things will be different because of COVID security, but the essence will be the same. Our new events manager will be invaluable in supporting the process and making sure it is as safe and welcoming as possible. We look forward to seeing many of our regulars again, along with quite a few new faces.

Ann Glaister

New CEW for New Galloway

I am delighted to have been appointed by New Galloway Community Enterprises as the new community engagement worker.

The role, formerly held by Sam Rushton, remains to support the economic and social wellbeing of the community of New Galloway and Kells. I will be in New Galloway most Wednesday and Thursday mornings if anyone would like to meet up with me in person, or if you would like to get in touch please see contact details below.

We have had a very busy summer since I started in the role and it has been great to meet and work with so many people as well as being involved in some exciting projects and events, including The Glenkens Food Month.

We are now looking forward to Christmas celebrations! For several years now the New Galloway Events Committee have held the Christmas lights switch-on. I was delighted, along with the Glenkens Community &

Arts Trust and Local Initiatives in New Galloway, to be asked to carry this on for 2021. We want to 'make this season bright' after our difficult period of lockdowns and restrictions. Therefore, we are asking New Galloway residents to join in the fun again and light up the High Street. Please could you have your Christmas lights up and ready by 5pm on Saturday 4 December, as the parade down the High Street will be that evening. If you need help putting lights up or need lights, please get in touch as I'd be happy to help.

To really bring the Christmas spirit to the Glenkens we are also hosting lots of mini-events throughout New Galloway on Saturday 4 December from 2pm - to see what's on please turn to the Gazette Diary on p34 of this issue.

Pre-booking needed for some events, so give me a call or drop me an email to book (details below). There will also be a brochure circulating around New Galloway which includes a list of events, church services and local business opening hours over the Christmas period.

Here at New Galloway Community Enterprises we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the



Glenkens community for your support and to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Hayley Edgar

hayleycew@newgallowaycommunity.shop
07741 656 601

Facebook @CommEngageNGK

BALMACLELLAN COMMUNITY UPDATE

Balmaclellan's community groups are working together to revitalise community life after the past months of COVID restrictions.

The Balmaclellan Community Trust and the Balmaclellan Village Hall Trust are working together to help the village hall utilise its full potential as a central hub for the community. Since lockdown restrictions have eased, lots of the weekly events have been restarted as well as new, interesting and engaging events for the future.

AFTERNOON TEA in the HALL

Our first Afternoon Tea was held on 5 October, an event enjoyed by all those who came to sample the home-made treats on offer. That successful beginning was the start of a monthly programme of teas on the first Tuesday of the month, each month having a speciality theme of cakes to suit the season.

Our next Afternoon Tea will be Tuesday 7 December, with a Christmas theme of course - booking is essential as places are going fast. To reserve a place please email julia.higgins55@outlook.com (please note that from January 2022 the cost per person will be £5).

BOOKS in BALMACLELLAN

The library re-opened in May 2021 and has an ever-growing membership, not surprising given the range, quality and variety of books available! Come along and see for yourself - you can spend time browsing our very full bookshelves containing a wide selection of fiction and non-fiction books available, and there are also lots of children's books and books you can buy.

The Book Room is situated in the

village hall, in the Templeton Room, and is open Monday from 6-7pm, and Wednesday and Saturday from 10.30am-12.30pm.

We are very grateful to everyone who has donated books for this great community resource.

GLENKENS CRAFTERS

Every Wednesday morning sees the village hall become a hive of crafting activities. The group is informal and friendly, and aims to bring people together creating friendships and support in a safe space. Practical skills in crafts and sewing can be learned, or you can bring your own project and relax and chat while you work. We have a good mix of complete novices and experienced crafters sharing ideas and techniques - why not come along for a chat and a cup of tea in good company. We also have an extensive craft library and craft resources which you are welcome to use.

BALMACLELLAN COMMUNITY GARDEN

Work is underway at the village hall, where volunteers are creating a brand new community garden. We hope it will become a social space for people to meet and mingle, for events, barbecues and picnics, but also a space for local gardening enthusiasts to come and swap tips, knowledge, seeds and spare plants or cuttings! Children and young people can use the garden to learn how things grow, learn about biodiversity or just meet, play and picnic.

It will also incorporate a heritage display to showcase the rich history of Balmaclellan and its people. The



Afternoon tea being enjoyed in Balmaclellan Village Hall.

Balmaclellan Community Trust received funding for the heritage project from Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership small grants scheme.

If you can spare time to help in any way, please contact either Julia on 01644 420 297 or julia.higgins55@outlook.com, or Ailsa on ailsamalone@aol.com for further details.

GLENKENS ART GROUP

On Thursday afternoons the village hall hosts the Glenkens Art Group. This is a group of artistically inclined people who come together for a couple of hours each week to paint/draw/create artworks in a variety of media in a peaceful, supportive atmosphere. We are a mixed group containing novices as well as experienced artists who share tips, encouragement and expertise and we welcome anyone who would like to come and work and enjoy a cup of tea. If you would like to join us, contact Tom Leach on t_leach1@sky.com

Julia Higgins

Watson Birds Exhibition

As part of the development of the signposted trails for the Watson Birds project, a new exhibition is on show in the Watson Room at The Smiddy, Balmaclellan.

There are reproductions of Donald's paintings for each of the nine Glenkens sites of the Donald Watson Art Trail. Illustrations of birds commonly found

around Dalry, where the Watson Bird Walks run, will also be showcased.

Please check with CatStrand at www.gcat.scot or call 01644 420 374 for access to the exhibition.

Trail markers and interpretation boards for these walks are currently being manufactured locally and we hope to have them installed before the end of the year. In the meantime, brochures for the art trail and walk are available at local shops across the Glenkens, as well as the Clachan Inn and the Ken Bridge Hotel.

This part of the project is funded by the Black Craig Wind Farm Community Fund and Galloway

Glens Landscape Partnership.

We are also working in partnership with Ken Words, led by Jane McBeth, and ably assisted in guided walks by local bird expert, Chris Rollie.

Roger Crofts



The Community Kindness Cupboard outside Dalry Library has home baking in every Thursday.

WHERE TO LOOK FOR LOCAL JOB LISTINGS

Dumfries & Galloway! What's Going on @DGWGO on Facebook; What's Going On Glenkens @WGOGlenkens on Facebook; Glenkens Gazette @GlenkensNews on Facebook – once on the page for any of these, use the search function to look for jobs. The Glenkens' largest employer, Natural Power Consultants Ltd, also have a jobs page - www.naturalpower.com/uk/careers

KEY GLENKENS CONTACTS

LOCAL DOCTORS' SURGERY

Glenkens Medical Practice - 01644 420 234

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

- Balmaclellan: Martin Warnock - 07939 261 391
- Carsphairn: Liz Holmes - 07718 358 160
- Corsock: Julie Garton - 07769 647 702
- Kirkpatrick Durham: Heather - 07551 639 629
- Crossmichael: Richard Middleton - 01556 670 691

- Dalry: Graham West - 01644 430 503

- Mossdale: Shop - 01644 450 281
- New Galloway: Helen Keron - 07741 656 601

- Parton: Erica or Brian - 01644 470 277

FOOD DELIVERIES

- Galloway Foodbank - 07730 788 335
- Hidden Veg - www.openfoodnetwork.org.uk/hidden-veg/shop
- Ballards Butchers - 01556 502502 (they also deliver groceries)

- Grierson's Butchers: 01556 502 637
- Henderson's Butchers: 01556 502 654
- Mitchell's Greengrocers: 01556 502 077
- Fleet Fish: order before 9pm Sunday evening for delivery the following week. Delivery days can be found when ordering at www.fleet-fish.co.uk or call 07966 103 912
- Roan's Dairy - 01556 620 374

LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS

Glenkens Community Shop: Contact Liz Lewis on 07530 804 217 or drop by the shop on Main Street, Dalry

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

Dalry Communities Properties Trust (DCPT): Contact Gary Blissett at garyblissett51@gmail.com or 01644 430 521

Dalry Town Hall: Contact Jim Reid on 07776 034 260 or jamescreid@hotmail.co.uk

Glenkens Community Centre: Contact Carylann Williamson at williamsoncarylann@gmail.com

New Galloway Community Enterprises (NGCE): Contact ngce5000@gmail.com or pop into New Galloway Community Shop

Balmaclellan Community Trust: Contact Julia Higgins at julia.higgins55@outlook.com

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

Schools: Visit 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

Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership (GGLP): Contact McNabb Laurie at 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.

CHURCH TIMES

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND:

Sunday Services

Balmaclellan: 11am - 5th Dec, 2nd Jan & 30th Jan.

Carsphairn: 11am - 12th Dec, 26th Dec & 9th Jan.

Kells: 11am - 19th Dec & 16th Jan.

Dalry: 11am - 23rd Jan.

Special Services

Carols by Candlelight: 12 Dec, 6.30pm, Dalry Church.

Carsphairn Community Christmas Service: 23 Dec, 5pm, Carsphairn Church. Watchnight Service: 24 Dec, 11.30pm, Balmaclellan Church. Christmas Day Family Service: 25 Dec, 11am, Dalry Church.

Local Church of Scotland congregations can be accessed on YouTube under 'Balmaclellan, Kells and Dalry linked with Carsphairn'. These can also be emailed - contact DBartholomew@churchofscotland.org.uk and paper copies can be provided to those who do not have internet access.

Contact David on 01644 430 380 for these resources, or simply for a chat.

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

St Margaret's Church, Kenbridge Road, New Galloway, DG7 3RP

Sundays: 10.30am Sung Eucharist (following current COVID guidelines) followed by coffees/teas.

Advent: Open for private prayer and reflection from 10.30am-12noon on 1, 9, 15 and 22 December.

Carol Service: 4.30pm, Sunday 19 December, followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

Christmas Day: 10.30am, Sung Eucharist.

Visitors are always welcome - for further information, including directions, please see our website www.stmargaretsnewgalloway.org or call our vestry secretary, Christine Rankin, on 01644 420 259.



**GALLOWAY
COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**
www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org
 email gct@catstrand.com
 phone 01644 420374 mobile 07841 512449

December 2021 – January 2022

Regular Services

GK2 Glenkens-Castle Douglas

(Tesco)

Wednesday Evenings

(Registered Route)

Out		Return
19:00	Dalry (Underhill)	21:15
19:05	New Galloway	21:10
19:15	Mossdale	21:00
19:25	Laurieston	20:50
19:30	Townhead of Greenlaw	20:47
19:37	Castle Douglas (Market St)	20:37
19:40	Castle Douglas (Tesco)	20:35

Booking not required

Glenkens to Newton Stewart

Tuesday Mornings

Outward Pickups:

Dalry (Underhill) 0930

New Galloway (Town Hall) 0935

CatStrand) 0937

To Merrick Leisure Centre and Aldi

Return Pickup Newton Stewart (Aldi Car Park)
1130

Return fare £3.50 Advance booking required.

Member Hire



GCT has 16, 15, and 8 seater minibuses and a fully wheelchair accessible electric car available for hire by community organisations.

For information about membership and terms and conditions of hire see the GCT website or phone 07841 512449.

GCT Ebikes

GCT in partnership with Sustrans



CYCLE TRAINING

Cycling can improve health and fitness

Would you like to try an EBike? Join a group cycle ride? Brush up on cycling skills?

Perhaps you haven't ridden for a while and would like a 1:1 **confidence building** session.

Thursdays at 10am

CatStrand, New Galloway

For more info or to book a FREE session please
contact: Annick.laroque@sustrans.org.uk

or call / text 07824863032

Sustrans is a registered charity in Scotland (SC039263) and in England and Wales (326550)



DRIVERS NEEDED

Galloway Community Transport needs your help to provide a wide range of community transport services across the Stewartry and beyond.

MINIBUS DRIVING

Minibus drivers with D1 (101 or by test) are needed to do volunteer and paid driving for our wide range of member community groups.

PATIENT TRANSPORT

We also urgently need drivers with their own cars for our patient transport service. Our volunteer patient transport drivers receive a generous mileage reimbursement and the satisfaction of providing a vital service to vulnerable people in our communities.

Interested?

Email gct@catstrand.com or phone 07841 512449

WHAT'S ON

DECEMBER

Ongoing, Watson Birds Project

Exhibition, The Smiddy, Balmaclellan

Wed 1, Thu 9, Wed 15 & Wed 22, Space for Contemplation, 10.30am-12noon, St Margaret's Church, New Galloway, see p24

Thu 2, CatStrand Late Night Shopping, 6.30-8.30pm, CatStrand

Fri 3, The Sugar Revue Burlesque & Cabaret Show, 7.30-9.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 4, Art Explorers, 10-11am for ages 5-8, 11.15am-12.30pm for ages 8+, CatStrand

Sat 4, Christmas Craft Fair, 11am-3pm, Mossdale Village Hall

Sat 4, The Smithy Christmas Shopping, 2-4.30pm, The Smithy, New Galloway

Sat 4, LING Teas 'n' Tinsel, 3.30-4.45pm, tickets available from New Galloway shop

Sat 4, The Smithy Carols & Hot Chocolate, 4.30-4:50, The Smithy, New Galloway

Sat 4, Christmas Lights Switch On, 5pm, begins at New Galloway golf course carpark

Sat 4, Mulled Wine & Shortbread, 5.20-7pm, CatStrand, book on www.gcat.scot or 01644 420 374

Sat 4, Santa's Grotto, 5.20-6.15pm, New Galloway Park, book on www.gcat.scot or 01644 420374

Sat 4, New Galloway Community Shop Late Night Shopping, open till 7pm

Tue 7, Afternoon Tea in the Hall, Balmaclellan Village Hall, email to book julia.higgins55@outlook.com or 01644 420 297, see p31

Tue 7, Macmillan Fundraising Bake Stall, outside Hair by Jayne, Dalry

Wed 8, Film: Little Women, 7.30-9pm, Dalry Town Hall

Wed 8, Christmas Coffee Morning, 10.30am-12noon, New Galloway Town Hall, see below

Fri 10, Youth Players' Christmas Panto; Old Mother Hubbard, 7.30-9.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 11, Glenkens Producers Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 11, Youth Players' Christmas Panto; Old Mother Hubbard, 7.30-9.30pm, CatStrand

Sun 12, Winter Voices— a poetry walk over hill and holm, 12-4pm, meet at Dalry Town Hall, book via CatStrand

Sun 12, Youth Players' Christmas Panto; Old Mother Hubbard, 3-5.30pm, CatStrand

Sun 12, The Clachan Folk Session,

5-7pm, Clachan Inn, Dalry

Sat 18, Art Explorers, 10-11am for ages 5-8, 11.15am-12.30pm for ages 8+, CatStrand

Sat 18, Dickens' A Christmas Carol, 7-9pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Sun 19, CatStrand Kids Cinema presents ELF, 1-3pm, CatStrand, see p13

Sun 19, Film: It's a Wonderful Life, 3.30-5:30pm, CatStrand

Wed 22, A Galloway Glens Christmas card, 7.30-9pm, CatStrand

Fri 31, Hogmanay Ceilidh with the Shore Road Band and Wyrdy Women, 9pm-12.30am, tickets from New Galloway shop

Fri 31, Community Ceilidh, Dalry Town Hall, 8pm-1am, see p25

Fri 31, Bells Get Together outside Town Hall and Clachan, see p25

JANUARY

Sat 1, New Year's Dip on New Year's Day, see p25

Sat 8, Glenkens Producers Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Fri 28, Mairi Campbell: Auld Lang Syne, 7.30-9:30pm, CatStrand

ADVERTISE IN THE GAZETTE

(price per issue incl VAT)

SMALL: 6cm x 6cm, £37.80 (+ 10% off with series discount)

1/4 PAGE: 9cm w x 13cm h, £81.90 (+ 25% off with series discount)

1/2 PAGE: 18cm w x 13cm h, £151.20 (+ 25% off with series discount)

FULL PAGE: 18cm w x 27cm h, £252 (+ 25% off with series discount)

Call 07727 127 997

VAT Reg. No. 882 8361 87

Macmillan Fundraisers

The Macmillan event outside Hair by Jayne in Dalry raised an impressive total of £905.18. The next bake stall outside the salon will be held on Tuesday 7 December and funds raised will go towards the hedgehog rescue sanctuary outside Carsphairn.

Christmas Coffee Morning Returns

Get into the festive spirit at New Galloway Town Hall on Wednesday 8 December. From 10.30am to 12 noon, the Glenkens Churches Guild and St Margaret's Ladies Guild are once again hosting their long-established Christmas Coffee Morning. Enjoy a cup of coffee with home-made mince pies or shortbread while listening to seasonal live music from Geoff Davidson.

Stock up on delicious treats for Christmas from the Baking Stall, and browse the beautiful array of Christmas gifts and decorations from the Craft Stall. There will also be a Raffle with some great prizes. Everyone welcome! Entry £2.50, children free.



Family and friends coming to stay?

Short of space?

Cosy country cottage available (sleeps 4)

Call Fiona on 01644 420 227

www.covenanters-holidaycottagescotland.co.uk



THE STEWARTRY VETERINARY CENTRE

CASTLE DOUGLAS SURGERY HOURS
Mon-Fri 8.30am-6pm

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

FOR APPOINTMENTS AT BOTH SURGERIES
OR IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

01556 502263

VETERINARY SURGERY
OAKWELL ROAD
CASTLE DOUGLAS



JAYDE DEVLIN

STEEL FRAMED BUILDINGS

Industrial and Agricultural buildings

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07901730 898

REGULAR EVENTS

Balmaclellan Village Hall:

Tuesday Afternoon Teas, first Tues every month, to book email julia.higgins55@outlook.com

Glenkens Crafters, Wed 10am-2.30pm, for info contact Julia Higgins on 01644420297

Books in Balmaclellan Community Library, Mon 6-7pm, Wed 10am-12.30pm & Sat 10.30am-12.30pm

Glenkens Art Group, Thur afternoons, contact Tom Leach on t_leach1@sky.com

Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn:

Bairn Banter; family stay & play session, 0-7 years, Sat 10-11.45am, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn

CatStrand, New Galloway:

Art Explorers, fortnightly Saturdays, 10-11am for ages 5-8, 11.15am-12.30pm for ages 8+

Newton Stewart Bus Service to Tesco, Wednesday evenings, see p33

CatStrand Youth Players, meet weekly to work on festival plays and an annual pantomime, contact briangm@catstrand.com

Youth Volunteers, every other Monday 5.30-7.30pm, ages 12-18

New Galloway Town Hall:

Crafty Corner with tea and biscuits, Mon, 2-4pm, contact Kristina on 07789 680468

Sports Evenings with indoor bowling and table tennis, Tues 7-9pm, £3, drop in or contact Ray Bridgeman on 01644 420 438

Drop-in to chat about local plans and activities with Hayley Edgar, Community Engagement Worker, Wed 10-11am

Tai Chi, Wed 10.30-11.30am, contact Ros on 07749 249 781

Zumba, Wed 6.30-7.20pm & 7.25-8.15pm, contact samantha.rushton@hotmail.co.uk (booking essential)

Martial Arts for Children, Thur 7-9pm, contact brianhilton237@gmail.com

Gentle Yoga, Fri 5.30-6.30pm, contact kathyr64@hotmail.co.uk

Informal Family Badminton, (net and racquets but no line markings), New Galloway Town Hall, contact Ros on 07749 249 781

Dear Gazette,

Here in New Zealand we are very proud of our grandsons, Olek and Karol, and their mum, Marta, for their amazing backyard constructions in Dalry!!

Maralyn & David McDonald

Take a look at Issue 118 of the Gazette to see the feature on Marta and the boys' amazing garden creations! You can find past issues online at www.glenkensgazette.co.uk

Dalry Library & Customer Service Centre

Main Street, Dalry, Tel: 01644 430 234 or 01556 502 643

Tuesday: For books and other walk-in services: 2-5pm

Friday: For NEC Bus Pass and Blue Badge appointments and PCs: 11.30am – 12.30pm; for books and other walk-in services: 1 -4.30pm.

Appointments can be booked in the library or on 01387 260 196.

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

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

Dumfries & Galloway

DEE & GLENKENS WARD

Councillor Pauline Drysdale

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

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

www.dumgal.gov.uk

Dumfries & Galloway

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

Dumfries & Galloway

A Season on Loch Ken

After taking on the role of Loch Ken Ranger in April, I had a vague idea running through my mind of what this new job might entail.

But this was a brand new venture, both for myself and for the Loch Ken Trust, and neither of us really knew what to expect.

Getting straight out and about was crucial; meeting local residents, business owners and landowners. The easiest way for me to maintain a realistic hold on the many and varied needs was to keep constant sight of the legislation that underpins much of what I do around the loch - the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. This is where our free statutory access to much of Scotland's land and inland waterways comes from.

The Act places an onus of responsibility upon anyone wishing to access land or water in that they must do so responsibly. The Act also places an onus of responsibility upon landowners, where they should not bar responsible access - physically or by way of signs or any other means.

The summer was a perfect storm of 'staycations', seeing high numbers of visitors released from a year of lockdown but with foreign travel restrictions remaining in place, and the hot and dry summer also increased visitor numbers to the loch. At times the public slipway at Boat O'Rhone was reminiscent of the

French Riviera, with families sunbathing, eating picnics, launching various watercraft or just cooling off, playing or swimming. That caused occasional conflict when folk were asked to move for fishing boats to be reversed down the slipway, which is something boat owners pay to do.

Section 5 of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code stipulates that wild camping is lightweight, done in small numbers and for two or three nights in any one place. Much of what I witnessed this summer could never be described as lightweight camping and it is easy to lose sight of the fact that such numbers must have an impact on our communities, the environment and upon wildlife.

My first observation is that this area of the loch is not a campsite and the people who pay to fish have regularly been denied that use.

Secondly, there are no toilet facilities alongside the loch and visitors doing what comes naturally has an environmental impact.

The last of my observations is the effect that constant disturbance from high numbers of visitors has on wildlife. For instance, there are three small islands on the loch and one in particular has seen considerable disturbance to nesting birds.

The vast majority of visitors, however, have been responsible and had an obvious respect for the outdoors. It is good to see the numbers of young people learning how to use the loch responsibly. Several parents commented on a desire to see outdoor education being included in the school curriculum and we are currently in



Ken collecting rubbish left by campers on the Loch Ken islands.

the process of looking at how we might be able to deliver this to local schools. Education is absolutely key - one of my fears for the future is that if enough complaints are heard at a high enough level, this may eventually force legislative changes to the Act with restrictions coming into place on the free access that we currently enjoy in Scotland.

If we all learn how to leave no trace of our visits, a landowner should have little idea that we were ever on their land and have no reason to complain. Loch Ken is a beautiful place and is big enough to accommodate the wide array of activities that take place on and around it, but too high a demand placed upon any area of it will inevitably have a negative impact.

To protect and preserve this beautiful area for future generations requires well-balanced care and consideration from all, and we can all play a part in that care.

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