

'Mothballing' proposal for Dalry Secondary Council officials defy local opinion

Education officials are to ignore the results of a recent public consultation and are recommending that Dalry Secondary School should be mothballed after the summer holidays.

The news was delivered to a public meeting at the end of January to discuss the future of the school. Around 70 audience members were in

attendance including parents, members of the community, community councils, ward councillors, local employers and Finlay Carson MSP.

The community was unanimously against the proposal, which flies in the face of a recent public survey which had backed keeping the school open. The process of 'mothballing' was likened by an audience member to "closure by stealth".



Dalry pupils and parents outside the secondary school

Continued on p3...

Soldier Beth Awarded MBE



Pictured is Beth receiving her MBE from the King at Windsor Castle on 12 December 2023

Twenty-eight year old soldier Beth Duggleby was presented with an MBE by the King for operational services in the field during an investiture at Windsor Castle.

Carsphairn-born Beth grew up with her mum, Clare, brother James and step-dad Alan. She attended Carsphairn Primary followed by Dalry Secondary School (where former classmates will know her by her previous name, Beth Bosworth).

Having wanted to be an accountant throughout her teenage years, she chose Kirkcudbright for her Highers. On completing her schooling, she went on to Heelinriot Watt University in Edinburgh to study for an accountancy degree.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE



The Galloway Food Hub Fair Food for All scheme is supporting distribution of this edition to outlying properties across the Glenkens - look out for info inside!

...turn to page 2 for more on what this scheme is all about



Success of childminding recruitment pilot

...turn to page 3



New management at the Ken Bridge Hotel

...turn to page 13

Fair food for all with

Are you having trouble with paying household bills? Do you know someone who is struggling?



Galloway Food Hub is piloting a scheme to help people who are experiencing food inequalities in the Glenkens.

We want to make sure that everyone has access to good food. If you or someone you know would like to have access to high quality local food but may struggle with the cost, you can get in touch by emailing lesley@propagate.org.uk putting 'Fair Food for All' in the subject line or call 07587 122 151.

Your enquiry will be confidential, and we will not share your personal details with anyone else.

This scheme is being funded by the DG Climate Hub to give more people better access to climate and nature friendly, local food.

Pictured: Lesley from Galloway Food Hub delivers local good food order to regular customer Amy and her family



GALLOWAY FOOD HUB

A local, online, farmers market.

Open every other week for collection from Dalry or delivery within the Glenkens.
gallowayfoodhub.org.uk

What's new on the Glenkens Hub?

The Glenkens Hub has been growing and evolving, expanding in response to feedback and demand from local voices.

In this article are examples of new information and resources now available on the Hub.

GLENKENS COMMUNITIES



We have brand new *Glenkens Communities* pages, bringing together information about our various localities. Each community's page features:

- quick links to Community Councils, Community Groups and Community Spaces
- emergency information such as defibrillator locations and community contacts

- helpful information, nearest Post Office, community website and Facebook pages
- events and activities in the community
- businesses and things to see and do in the area
- news

If you see something missing from your community's page, do let us know - the url for this page is www.glenkens.scot/glenkens-communities or scan the QR code on this page.

HEALTH, WELFARE & ADVICE



Our *Health, Welfare & Advice* page has been updated and now has easy-to-find links to warm spaces, local support and financial advice, plus UK-wide resources, all in one place at www.glenkens.scot/health-welfare-advice or scan the QR code on this page.

REPORTS & RESOURCES ARCHIVE



Thanks to the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership (GGLP) scheme, our resources section not only has Community Action Plan (CAP) documents, such as the *Energy Efficiency in Glenkens Homes* and *A Vision for Land Use in the Glenkens* reports, but also all the wonderful, detailed videos, booklets and 3D models created by GGLP and the Can You Dig It team during their five-year operation.

You can find the *Reports & Resources Archive* at www.glenkens.scot/reports-resources-archive or scan the QR code on this page. and jump to overviews of CAP and GGLP, or browse individual reports. Pick a dreich day and make sure you have a cuppa; there's a lot to explore!

LOCAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY



Our *Local Directory* at www.glenkens.scot/local-directory-listing (or scan the QR code) is nowhere near complete but already contains nearly 100 local businesses, places to visit and things to do. Local businesses are vital to our communities; if you'd like to be in the Directory, please email us at glenkenshub@hotmail.com or message us on Facebook @Glenkens Hub and we'll do the rest.

Survey in next Gazette

The Glenkens Hub will be one year old in April!

The *Gazette* is asking for your views on its first year; is it doing what it was designed to do? Do you use it? Is it useful?

Please think about any improvements you'd like to see and keep an eye out for the survey in the next *Gazette*.

A community voice for education

Continued from front page...

Under questioning, the education officials could give no examples of schools having reopened after mothballing, or of any criteria or process to enable them to reopen.

The survey followed a meeting on 5th December between John Thin (Head of Education - Education and Learning Directorate, Dumfries and Galloway Council), Dalry School's Parent Council and members of the community, to discuss the future of Dalry Secondary School.

The survey asked respondents their view on five options. Respondents were overwhelmingly in support of option 5, a return to the historic provision of nursery through to S4. It was the preferred choice for 47% of all respondents and 52% of respondents with pre-school/school age children. A total of 72% of comments received

for this option were positive, far greater than the second most positively commented option, number 3 (Nursery to S2) with 41%.

Option 1 (continue as is with no change, S1-4) and option 4 (secondary closure and re-alignment) were both equally unpopular (the preferred options for only 17% of all respondents) and the majority of comments received about both options were negative.

The survey results can be found at www.glenkens.scot/glenkens-news/dalry-secondary-school-survey-results-published

However, despite the survey results, education officials told the community that they will be putting forward the mothballing proposal at the next Education and Learning Committee meeting on Thursday 14 March at 10.30am.

A parent council representative said: "We cannot change the geography of our area;

the nature of the place we have chosen to live, and to raise our children, is rural. Due to journey times, to remove higher education from the Glenkens is to sign the death knell for families staying in, or moving to, the Glenkens. Our children have the right to an education, just like everywhere else in Scotland, and the local authority should be working to provide this, not to take it away."

It is feared that 'mothballing' will have hugely detrimental impacts across the communities of the Glenkens into the future.

The Parent Council is calling on all members of our Glenkens communities, as well as those living further afield with an interest in the health and wellbeing of the area, to lobby councillors who sit on the Education and Learning Committee. You can find a list of committee members, along with contact details, at www.dumgal.gov.uk/dgclive

Successful recruitment pilot creates new Glenkens childcare

A newly-registered childminder is up and running and set to welcome the first children into her business in the Glenkens thanks to an innovative campaign to recruit new childminders in rural areas.

Simone McDonald, who lives with her husband on a working farm in Dalry, applied to become a childminder after seeing an advert online, encouraged by the package of help available which offers one-to-one support, funding and training to help get started.

Simone was working shifts as an intensive care nurse on the children's ward in Glasgow and had been thinking for a long time about switching career to childminding to enable her to spend time with her own children. After losing her mum to a terminal illness, she decided that she wanted to re-evaluate and finally make the jump to a new career, still working with children but which would provide her with much more flexibility.

"My own children are young (eight, five and three years old) and I was really fed up travelling long distances back and forward to work and feeling guilty about missing so much of their lives. They're only this once! I wanted a new career with more flexibility, but which still enabled me to

work with children. I'd always thought about childminding, and spurred on by the advert and the support I could see was available, I decided to apply.

"I've been so appreciative of the one-to-one support I received from the Scottish Childminding Association in helping to guide me through from the start of the journey to now being able to say I'm a newly-registered childminder in the Glenkens."



Simone recently put a post on social media to say that she is now a registered as a childminder with the Care Inspectorate and open for business and was inundated with over 40 enquiries from parents, some from over 30 miles away.

The demand for Simone's service further underlines the crucial need for childminders in rural areas such as the Glenkens.



Offering flexible childcare five days per week, Simone wants Little Farm Childminding to provide a nurturing, home-from-home childcare environment. With a large garden,

vegetable beds, an orchard, farm animals and lots of wildlife on the doorstep, her setting will also naturally very much focus on rural life experiences, with many unique outdoor learning and play opportunities for her new 'mindees'.

Led by the Scottish Childminding Association, this innovative pilot scheme was funded for the Glenkens area by Scottish Government and Glenkens & District Community Fund.

Graeme McAlister, chief executive of the Scottish Childminding Association, said: "The opening of Simone's new childminding setting in the Glenkens is a real success story and a great example of the ways in which this unique pilot is helping to provide high-quality, flexible childcare for families that need it to enable them to live and work in rural areas."

For anyone interested in a career in professional childminding in the Glenkens visit www.childminding.org/childminder-recruitment for further information.

Pictured are Simone's own three children enjoying the outdoors

St Margaret's raises funds for Castle Douglas Hospital

The St Margaret's Church Guild presented a cheque for £400 to Castle Douglas Hospital League of Friends.

The bulk of the money was raised at the St Margaret's tombola at the Alternative Games in August, and then supplemented by Guild funds. Christine Rankin said that "my mother received exemplary care when staying in Castle Douglas hospital and it is nice to be able to contribute

to their funds. All of our members know someone who has benefitted from the work of the hospital's League of Friends".

Isabel Anderson, chair of the Castle Douglas Hospital League of Friends, was delighted to receive the donation. She explained that the Covid pandemic had adversely affected their work, much of which involves visiting patients in hospital which was not allowed for a long time.

"This generous donation came just as we are planning a New Year campaign to attract new



volunteers now that we are allowed to visit again".

The money will go towards extra equipment for the hospital as well as Christmas presents for the patients.

Members of the Castle Douglas Hospital League of Friends being presented with the £400 cheque by Christine Rankin, President of St Margaret's Guild

World Day of Prayer



This year the World Day of Prayer service will be hosted by St Margaret's New Galloway, on Friday 1 March at 2pm.

Those taking part will be drawn from all the churches in the Glenkens and the service is open to everyone.

Each year the World Day of Prayer service is put together by a particular country - this year it is Palestine, that tiny area in the Middle East that has been host to the three Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam for thousands of years.

The theme is 'I beg you... bear with one another in love', a particularly poignant New Testament quotation for these troubled times. The Palestinian Christian women who have developed the service are searching for a deeper understanding among all the people who share their land, trusting for and hoping in the humanity of one another.

Following the service, the St Margaret's Guild will be serving refreshments.

The Stewartry Birdwatchers

The Stewartry Birdwatchers always welcome non-members at our meetings.

About halfway through any talk we have an interval when all can enjoy refreshments, have a chat and put any questions to the speakers.

Our next talk will be at 10.30am on Thursday 14 March in Balmacellan Village Hall. The speaker will be David Pickett, site manager of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Caerlaverock Reserve.

The reserve is a wonderful place to visit to see thousands of barnacle and other geese as well as hundreds of whooper and mute swans, and many species of ducks and waders. These can all be viewed from a comfortable heated modern hide! The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust are developing the management of the reserve to increase the wetlands and the biodiversity in the face of a changing climate.

Our excellent talk in December was by Chris Rollie titled *Donald Watson's birds in a changing landscape*, which was illustrated by many of Donald's beautiful paintings. It was all rather depressing to see how much of Galloway's wonderful countryside has disappeared under blanket forestry and to know that nowadays so much more is going under blanket windfarms and blanket silage fields.

Donald moved to Dalry some 50 years ago and enjoyed Galloway at its best. I was lucky

to know him and many years ago walked the 15-mile length of our hills, the Rhinn of Kells, with him and two other friends. Almost at the end of the day Donald identified a rough-legged buzzard for us - a real surprise.

I only appreciated the smoke from his pipe when we spent many hours amongst Galloway's hordes of midges trying to locate the nest of his favourite bird, the hen harrier!

The last talk of the session, at 7.30pm in Balmacellan on Thursday 11 April, is about hen harriers, which were once widespread in the UK but have now fallen victim to habitat loss, land use change and continuing persecution.

The results of a recent national survey of these birds will let us know how they are faring in Scotland. Artist, ornithologist and author Donald Watson made a special study of this species and his important book *The Hen Harrier*, illustrated by the author, was published in 1977 by Poyser. Many changes will have taken place since then.

Joan Howie

Carrión crow and male hen harrier photographed by Maisie Welsh, a member of the Stewartry Birdwatchers



Music for all at the Carsphairn seniors' dinner

Carsphairn Community Council organised a festive meal for the senior members of the community in the Lagwyne Hall in December.

Although Carsphairn is a small community numbering fewer than 200, residents are spread out over a large area and the dinner presents opportunities at a seasonal event to meet friends and acquaintances not regularly seen, and to welcome mature newcomers to the community.

A delicious three-course meal was served, followed by a raffle raising £100 in support of Carsphairn children's Christmas party. After the meal there was a concert, which was open to the whole community, with Nick Jenkins on fiddle and mandolin and Sam Gillespie on guitar, flute and vocals. This excellent performance finished off a thoroughly enjoyable evening, which has received much positive feedback from those who attended.



WATSON BIRDS Needs You!

After 15 years leading the Watson Birds project, having reached the age of 80 I would like to hand over to new folk, giving the local project new life and impetus.

What is done in the future is up to new volunteers. I hope you will join and add your ideas and lead on activities. Let me know

by giving me a call on 07803 595 267 or by emailing roger.dodin@btinternet.com

There are lots of opportunities to promote nature and the arts in the Glenkens through Watson Birds.

- Running activities with young people at school and in the community
- Leading guided walks and trips around our two trails
- Holding talks about our local environment
- Putting on musical or other events in the villages
- Reviving the Watson Raptor Science Prize under new

leadership by an outstanding scientist

- Installing bird boxes in all of the villages
- Refreshing the permanent exhibition of Donald Watson paintings at the CatStrand
- Selling cards, posters and books at the CatStrand and elsewhere
- Making sure that we have brochures advertising the project in the local shops
- And the many ideas you will undoubtedly have

The book of essays about Donald and his work, written by Chris Rollic, John Threlfall, Lousie and

Vanessa Watson, Des Thompson, Colin Galbraith and myself, is currently with a publisher. I hope that will be released later this year with events in the Glenkens and at the Scottish Ornithological Society's Watson Gallery in East Lothian.

I suggest that Watson Birds remains a component project of the Glenkens Community and Arts Trust as this has provided a good home and excellent support since the outset.

I hope to hear from many folk to add to the lively activities we have in the Glenkens.

Roger Crofts

SWI loyalty award for Margaret Brown

Scottish Women's Institute (SWI) member Margaret Brown of Carsphairn has been presented with the organisation's Loyalty Award by Mary Burney, the SWI's national president.

Margaret is a long-standing and much valued member of Carsphairn SWI. Mary, Dorothy Faulds and Christine Whipp shared a lovely afternoon with Margaret.

See the What's On section on p30 for topics of upcoming Carsphairn SWI meetings.

Margaret Brown being presented with her SWI Loyalty Award by SWI national president Mary Burney (left) and Dorothy Faulds of Carsphairn SWI president (right)



Glenkens Youth Correspondent

Joshua Wells, age 14, is our *Gazette* youth correspondent and will be writing each issue about things which interest him.

In this edition he looks at Balmaclellan and the history of witch hunting in Scotland.



Balmaclellan

What does *Outlander's* Sam Heughan, a witch and Old Mortality have in common?

They have all got links to Balmaclellan; not bad for somewhere with a population of around 130 people! When I heard about the witch I had to find out more...

In 1428, the first 'witch' was tried, in Valias, Switzerland. This led to countless other 'witches' being tried across Europe. Witches were tried for many reasons, for example: having a black cat, taking part in strange rituals, talking to themselves, living alone, being deformed or disabled, or having a 'witch spot' - moles and warts were called a 'witch spot', and were supposedly left by the devil. I feel as if this is quite shocking as many of these things are seen as normal today.

There was a big outbreak of witch hunts in 1661-1662, in Scotland (this was called the Great Scottish Witch Hunt and it lasted for 16 months). At this time it was believed that 660 people were tried for witchcraft, but it is unknown just how many were executed. However, after that there was a sharp decline of witch trials. The belief of witches still continued, and the elite began investigating witchcraft more than before, so why was there a decline in the hunt? Trials were more tightly overseen by the government, torture was more sparingly used and the standard of proof was increased.

On 24 August 1698, the last 'witch' in the southwest of Scotland died. Elspeth McEwan was accused of tormenting her neighbours by bewitching their poultry and causing hens, ducks or geese to stop laying their

eggs, fall ill or die. She also apparently kept a wooden pin hidden in her rafters which she used to steal milk by touching it to the cow's udder.

She was jailed in the Kirkcudbright Tolbooth for two years, in a dark dungeon, in very bad conditions. I can only imagine that it was damp, smelly and pest-ridden and quite frightening. When at the Tolbooth she confessed, probably being forced into this outcome. Her punishment for witchcraft was being strangled and then burnt at the stake.

She was buried in the graveyard of the Balmaclellan parish - you can find the gravestone by the left-hand side of the church near the back as you enter. The gravestone is a rough uncut stone. In folklore and superstition it is thought that if the witch was not marked with an uncut stone the witch would be able to rise from the dead and cause harm to the living. It was also thought if a witch's head was cut

off they would be able to die, and that if their graves were not marked with uncut stones, their spirits would be able to return.

I believe it was a massive tragedy that swept through the whole of Europe, against mostly women. It is also disgusting that many people did this, just for financial gain. I think many people will be glad they didn't have to live through that time.



Photograph of Elspeth McEwan's gravestone in Balmaclellan kirkyard, taken by Joshua Wells

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Beth goes from strength to strength

Continued from front page...

After this fairly focussed academic path, Beth surprised everyone by deciding that after all, an office job wasn't to be, and she wanted to join the army!

Clare, Beth's mum, said: "It was a complete surprise when Beth said she wanted to join the army as she had never shown any inclination before – I guess she's a bit of a Private Benjamin! I was so proud to discover Beth had been awarded an MBE."

Beth says: "I'm really into personal fitness and this was my inspiration for joining the reserves while studying in Edinburgh. I enjoyed the experience so much, I knew at that point I wanted to join full time. What I enjoy most about the army is having the chance to influence defence as well as gain qualifications and skills that otherwise I wouldn't have the opportunity to."

"I'm incredibly honoured to have received an MBE; it was a complete surprise, with my being only three years out of training."

More recently Beth has turned her focus from CrossFit training to weight

lifting and last year won a world title in France. Beth entered through the British Drug Free Powerlifting Association, the only internationally recognised UK powerlifting organisation, winning the Under 70kg World Deadlift Championship and also qualifying for this year's British Bench Championships in powerlifting.

Mum Clare goes on to say: "I'm beyond proud of her. If you'd have asked me what career I thought she would have

ahead of her when she was growing up, I'd have opted for something business oriented or creative."

What seems certain is that Carsphairn's Beth Duggleby is set to stamp her mark on the world - go Beth!

Pictured below is Beth at an inter-services lifting competition



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Eco Feature

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Supporting local climate action

The new D&G Climate Hub has been off to a busy start since its November 2023 launch.

This is a Scottish Government funded initiative hosted by the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere. Climate officer Sarah Thomas is covering Wigtownshire and Stewartry supporting community climate action, while Annandale & Eskdale and Nithsdale is covered by climate officer Steven Clark.

The Climate Hub's first initiative - seed funding for community climate action - has been a huge success. As 2023 came to a close the Climate Hub was overwhelmed by the number

and diversity of applications. It is now supporting 26 projects across the county, two of which are based in the Glenkens.

The Galloway Food Hub (GFH) was supported through the seed fund to pilot a new Pay It Forward scheme which seeks to address food inequity in the Glenkens. They wish everyone to have access to high quality local food but understand the cost can be prohibitive. They are seeking people who would like to shop with GFH but would need support to do so - see the dedicated article on page 2 of this issue. The hope is that this will inspire GFH shoppers to donate to the Pay It Forward scheme in the longer term.

Local Initiatives in New Galloway was supported through the seed fund to host a Sharing of Skills Day

where participants will learn skills to boost self-sufficiency. Participants will rotate between four work stations throughout the day learning soap-making, knitting/sewing/crocheting and mending, herbal remedy making, and fermentation.

This will be held on Saturday 24 February from 9.30am to 4pm at New Galloway Town Hall - please see article on page 15 for further information and how to book tickets.

The Climate Hub is also in the process of mapping community climate action across the region and there's so much going on. We look forward to what 2024 has in store!



Locally- grown lettuce from Hidden Veg, Balmaclellan

You can follow D&G Climate Hub on Facebook and Instagram for updates on events and workshops.

Land use vision moves forward

Groups across the Glenkens have been hard at work to turn the Glenkens Land Use Vision into reality.

Thanks to funding from NatureScot and SOSE, Dalry Community Council (DCC) and the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) have been able to commission some valuable work around next steps in achieving this.

The Glenkens Land Use Vision is an addendum to the Glenkens & District Community Action Plan, and can be found on the Glenkens Hub ([www.glenkens.scot/reports-resources-archive/a-vision-for-](http://www.glenkens.scot/reports-resources-archive/a-vision-for-land-use-in-the-glenkens)

[land-use-in-the-glenkens](http://www.glenkens.scot/reports-resources-archive/a-vision-for-land-use-in-the-glenkens)).

Working in partnership, DCC and GCAT have created a three-pronged project that seeks to move the aims of the Land Use Vision forward while integrating with existing plans and processes.

Firstly, Becca Nelson, who some of you may know as the Glenkens Community Spaces network facilitator, is working with the Dalry communities to make sure that their Local Place Plan integrates land use into the vision that people have for their parish. It will also draw heavily on the Community Action Plan. Having created an LPP template, she will then work with Carsphairn to create their Place Plan, and having then refined the process, a template LPP will be made

available to all Glenkens and district communities to use to create their own LPPs, if they so wish.

In parallel with this, Stephen Connelly of Dalry is working on a feasibility study to see what it would take to create a Glenkens Land Use Forum and what it might look like. He's been interviewing people on the topic through December and January, but if you have a view on this and would like to talk to Stephen about it in February, contact helen@catstrand.com and she will put you in touch.

Lastly, artist Kerry Morrison is working on how we can better understand what our landscapes mean to us all. Through February and March, Kerry will be out and about

in the area recording our landscape through writing and drawing. She will be pulling up with her art cart in a variety of locations, so if you see her, please do pop over for a chat! Kerry is keen to discover the different ways in which we connect to our villages and the wider local landscape, and would love to hear from as many different people as possible.

The joint GCAT and DCC steering group will then pull these three projects together into something we hope will be really useful for our communities, and also perhaps the next steps in achieving the Land Use Vision. The project completes at the end of March, so watch this space!

Helen Keron

Glenkens Freecycle

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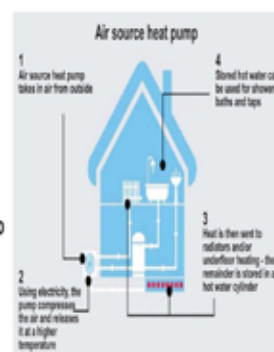
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For the last two years, Loch Ken trustee Suzy Rook has been cold water swimming daily and is an advocate for the tremendous mental health benefits.

Cold water therapy has been shown to release endorphins in the body, helping to boost mood and relieve pain.

Having lived in Crossmichael since the age of nine, Loch Ken and its wonderful environment is very close to Suzy's heart. It is also of special significance as her late friend has their ashes scattered here.

After leaving in 2005 for University and to represent Scotland at rugby, the mum of three returned to Crossmichael in 2016 where she lives with her family. Suzy has played rugby for 16 years, achieving International honours and caps for Scotland, three 'Player of the



League' trophies and having competed in over 400 games worldwide. Suzy is now a social worker, specialising in through-care for high risk offenders, and was named Scotland's Social Worker of the Year in 2022.

Also in 2022, Suzy and her friend Emma co-founded the female open water swimming group Swim Queens, empowering women to try cold water swimming. The group now has over 400 members and Suzy encourages anyone thinking about taking the plunge to reach out via Facebook @Swim Queens est 2022.

"I Just love the coldness at this time of year!" says Suzy. "If you think you might fancy it, Swim Queens have a specific group to help newcomers. It's private and a community full of fun and support."

Suzy first got involved with the Loch Ken Trust when the Swim Queens helped with a safe open water

swimming demonstration at the Trust's family water safety event back in July.

Water safety is at the forefront of the Swim Queens group, who ensure all members use tow floats and swim in groups. They also organise regular safe

open water swimming workshops.

"Water safety is very important to me, and I am very passionate about Loch Ken, so

applying to become a trustee was an easy decision for me.

"It has been great to work with the Loch Ken Trust and ranger service towards the goals of the Loch Ken Plan. Loch Ken will always be home to me and I am keen to help protect and cherish Loch Ken for my children and the generations to come."

Pictured above is Suzy on patrol with Loch Ken Ranger, Leanne Pump, and to the left, Suzy enjoys the invigorating benefits of a cold water dip.



Volunteer Ranger Scheme

Later this year, Loch Ken Ranger Service will be launching its Volunteer Ranger Scheme. The team is busy organising the details, so look forward to more info in the next issue. If you may be interested in getting involved, please get in touch at LKToffice@protonmail.com

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NEW DRIVERS NEEDED TO JOIN THE AMAZING TEAM AT GALLOWAY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT IN 2024!



Let us know you are there!

Galloway Community Transport can only function due to the amazing contribution made by the dedicated team of volunteer drivers.

So, if you are looking for a new adventure for 2024, please consider joining our fantastic team.

Please get in touch with Jon on **07841 512449** or Sue on **07704 662925** or drop us an email: **gct@catstrand.com**

In particular we are looking for drivers for our local Glenkens school services, and volunteers for the Wednesday evening Tesco service

Minibus drivers

If you are interested in driving a minibus all you need is:

- D1 on your driving licence (for our larger vehicles)
- Willingness to complete a one-day MiDAS training course.
- Some spare time.

We run community services which drivers volunteer for, generously giving some time to enable trips for local people to happen.

Drivers also do paid work driving for our community members for which they are paid the real living wage on a self-employed basis.

A driver commented recently: "It's a privilege to see the enjoyment of young people going to events and activities that in a big town or city would be taken for granted, it's a real pleasure".

Patient Transport drivers

To become a patient transport driver:

A full driving licence and your own vehicle are required.

Drivers volunteer to drive patients to and from appointments locally and further afield and they receive mileage expenses, plus a subsistence allowance if the trip takes longer than 6 hours.

Patient feedback; "The service is an absolute lifesaver, and the conversation and laughter we have on the way make it a lovely journey".

Fancy becoming a community bus driver?

Looking for an adventure in 2024? Why not join the fantastic team of drivers at Galloway Community Transport!

Galloway Community Transport (GCT) provides vital transport for individuals and groups across Galloway, including patient transport, local school bus services as well as minibuses for groups and organisations.

Occasional excursions also provide opportunities for travel and socialising. Forthcoming trips include taking school children to their swimming lessons in Castle Douglas, a research trip to the Isle of Arran and transport to local social events. Driving is interesting and varied.

GCT drivers are passionate about their role. One driver said: "It's a privilege to see the enjoyment of young people going to events and activities that in a big town or city would be taken for granted. It's a real pleasure."

GCT patient transport drivers generously

use their own vehicles to take patients to appointments and their mileage expenses are reimbursed. Doing this, GCT drivers provide not only transport for people who need it most, they are sometimes the only social contact that person may have during the week. One patient said recently: "The service is an absolute lifesaver, and the conversation and laughter we have on the way make it a lovely journey."



GCT simply would not be able to operate without the generous contribution made by the dedicated team of volunteer drivers. Driving for GCT can offer the opportunity to visit new places and meet new people, and also the chance to see what some of our local community

projects involve. New volunteers are always welcome and much needed. Are you tempted?!

If anyone would like to be part of the team, GCT would be delighted to hear from them. Please get in touch with Jon and Sue at the CatStrand on gct@catstrand.com or see www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org for more information.

Galloway Community Transport is supported by the Glenkens & District Community Fund, D&G Council and Scottish Government schemes.

Update on the new GCT Electric Minibus

We hope to have the new bus in service very soon. The bus supplier underwent some organisational changes shortly after it was delivered to us, which resulted in their engineers being unable to come and perform an essential technical update on the vehicle.

This situation has now been resolved, and we hope to have the bus out in use very soon!

All change at the Ken Bridge Hotel

The Ken Bridge Hotel changed ownership in September from that of long-time proprietors who we wish well in their retirement.

New owners are Alistair and Tatiana Elder who will be helped by their two sons, Leo and Owen. Tatiana says: "We are really excited and look forward to getting to know the locals, as well as visitors from further afield, and to hopefully create a really lively, active community hub for the villages of the Glenkens."

The bar is also fully open from 4-11pm every day mid-week and from 11am to 11pm at weekends, with a pool table

and darts available in the games room. Alistair says: "Both restaurants at the hotel are available for functions, events, corporate and social gatherings, exhibitions, etc. We already have some groups coming for quizzes and meetings."

The couple have lots of plans in the pipeline and are keen to involve the local community. Something they hope to offer soon are three hydro spa hot tubs in the camp site which will be available for hire. They are also keen to attract live music of any genre, and would love to set up a regular gig night, as well as jam nights.

"We have had several suggestions of forming a pool team and also a darts team and it is something we are keen to do," continues Alistair. "We really are open to suggestions from anyone - can pop in and see us! Our aim is to turn the Ken



Bridge back into a hive of activity, providing a welcoming space to get together."

The couple would like to remind visitors that dogs are welcome on the outdoor terrace but not inside the hotel, and Tatiana goes on to say: "We are intending to make more of

a mess outside as part of the necessary repairs, remedial works and improvements over the coming months but rest assured everything inside the hotel is fully open and functional - so come in and see us!"

Further details can be found in the ad on page 29.

Why menopause really matters

Perhaps it feels like you're hearing a lot about menopause these days with celebrities making TV programmes about it and hormone replacement therapy (HRT) shortages making the news.

However, it wasn't that long ago that menopause was hardly ever talked about. Like many things in our patriarchal society 'women's issues' were taboo, under-researched medically and confined to women-only conversations. I'd like to encourage more people to talk about this topic. Half the population will experience this natural biological process. Around 13 million women (including non-binary and trans-people) are currently menopausal! We all know and have connections with women in many ways.

Menopause usually happens between the ages of 45-55 according to NHS data. Actual menopause is just one day, twelve months from the last menstrual period when the ovaries have stopped producing eggs. You'll only know you're menopausal

retrospectively unless you start to notice symptoms of perimenopause. Menopause can also occur when the ovaries are damaged by specific treatment such as chemotherapy or radiotherapy, or when the ovaries are removed via a hysterectomy.

Perimenopause is the time when a woman's hormones are fluctuating, and noticeable symptoms may occur. This can start 10-15 years before menopause, ie from the age of 30! Around a third of women will experience no symptoms, another third will have some, but manageable symptoms, and a further third will experience debilitating symptoms.

There are 34 recognised common symptoms of menopause, but many more are possible. Whilst many of us are aware of the potential hot flushes, mood swings and the stopping of bleeding often attributed to 'older' women, these are often not the first signs and much younger women can be affected. Low stress threshold, anxiety, panic attacks, low self-esteem, brain fog and even suicidal thoughts can often be the first signs of a change in hormones. This is often why many women are wrongly prescribed antidepressants when HRT would

be more effective. A confusing time for both patient and GP! Please seek help if this is the case for you or your loved one. There are resources listed at the end of the article.

HRT has wrongly been stigmatised by an old research paper from the Women's Health Initiative research in 2002.

New medicines (transdermal) and early prescribing (before 60 years old) have made these body-identical HRT drugs more protective than risk increasing. Though not everyone who may need it can take HRT, there are many natural remedies and lifestyle changes which can reduce symptoms.

While this transition can be challenging for some women, there are many things you can do to have a healthy menopause. We talk about these in our Menopause Really Matters peer support group at Balmaclellan Smiddy. These are held on the second Monday of each month. Stress reduction, eating well, staying active, adequate sleep and looking after your own needs

Menopause Really Matters

Peer Support Group
The Smiddy, Balmaclellan, DG7 3QE
2nd Monday of each month 7pm - 8pm



Join the conversation, learn from special guests

12th Feb, 11th Mar, 9th April, 13 May

For anyone who may be perimenopausal or post menopause welcome. £2 contribution per session.

Funded by Balmaclellan Community Council

Contact Lesley for details

lesley@thenourishingspace.co.uk

can all help greatly.

Remember, menopause is a natural process, and while it can be challenging there is plenty of support and good information out there to empower you through this phase.

Some links for further information are:

Dumfries menopause services helpline (Thursday mornings only) 01387 241121

www.balance-menopause.com

www.menopausematters.co.uk

<https://www.themenopausecharity.org/>

Lesley Atkins

See above details for the local Menopause Really Matters Peer Support Group

Christmas magic at the CatStrand

The festive season was made even more enchanting for children in the Glenkens in 2023, thanks to a Christmas Wonderland event at the CatStrand in December.

Supported by funding from Tesco's 'Bags of Help' and the Holywood Trust, this event was planned and organised by the talented CatStrand Art Ambassadors - a group of 12 to 21-year-old volunteers that get involved with planning and organising events as part of the CatStrand Young Creatives

programme. It was not only a fantastic way to celebrate the holiday season but also a reminder of the power of community and the impact that a dedicated group of individuals can have, highlighting the importance of nurturing young talent and supporting initiatives that promote creativity and community engagement. We're very proud of our Art Ambassadors and hope that they are too.

If you are 12 years plus and would like to become a CatStrand Art Ambassador or find out more, email Cat on catherine@catstrand.com



The CatStrand Christmas Wonderland's magical team of elves, helpers and even Santa himself

Your community shop needs you!

When we pop into New Galloway Community Shop, we know that we will be greeted with a friendly smile from the hard-working shop team.

However, there is so much more going on behind the scenes when operating a community owned shop and holiday accommodation. To support the smooth running and continued

success, volunteers give their time as board members or assist with various tasks and activities. New Galloway Community Enterprises Ltd (NGCE) are keen to hear from individuals who would like to make a difference in their local community. You may be able to offer regular time to volunteer in the shop, assist with one off maintenance and cleaning jobs in the accommodation or have marketing, bookkeeping, retail, or HR experience, that you could

bring at a more strategic level by becoming a Board member? For information, please contact ngce5000@gmail.com

NGCE would like to say thank you for the continued support through making purchases, volunteering, booking stays in the accommodation or volunteering, which enable us to have such a valuable community asset.

Finally, save the date - see AGM details to the right.

Sam Rushton



NEW GALLOWAY COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES LTD AGM

2022/23 FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS.

DISCUSSIONS OF THE PAST YEAR PLANS AND OUTCOMES AND UPCOMING PLANS FOR 2024.

DRINKS & NIBBLES WILL BE SERVED.

MAR 21 2024 | CatStrand New Galloway

AT 7:30 PM

JUST TURN UP - ALL WELCOME!

A hubbub in New Galloway Town Hall

What's all the Hubbub? Have you heard? There is a lot going on at New Galloway Town Hall lately...

As well as the popular LING Lunches on Tuesdays, Hubbub started last September and is open every Thursday from 11am to 2pm. Funded by Dumfries & Galloway Council, Hubbub aims to help provide a warm, accessible and welcoming space for the community. Transport is available to support accessibility. It's all free of charge, although any donations are welcome, of course, and help us to spin out the funding for longer.

So far, the Hubbub has been a great success. There is a regular

crowd every Thursday with newcomers at every session. Sharing memories, pumpkin carving, jam making as well as crafting Christmas decorations and advent calendars were amongst the weekly activities. Some people like to join in; others just enjoy watching. And there's always lots of chat and banter.

The feedback we get is really positive - some find it quite an important lifeline - and it's lovely to see so much mutual support going on amidst all the fun and laughter.

One of our favourite bits of feedback came from our oldest regular attendee. On being asked how he was finding it, he said, with straight face, "It's been terrible. I'll not be back." It brought the house down! People visibly transform as they become more relaxed with laughter and smiles, lots of mutual teasing and sharing of challenges and experiences.

Alongside Thursday Hubbub, we're introducing Hubbub Exchange on Mondays from 3-6pm, starting 5 February. We hope this may appeal to some as an after-school slot or towards the end of a working day - and some of our regulars may also like to come twice in the week. It will offer a chance to bring and share ideas and skills, learn stuff together, recommend a book, swap a plant - or just to bring yourself and relax. A warm meal will be available at tea time, to eat in or take away. Again no charge, but donations welcome.

Any suggestions, comments or offers of help will be very welcome. We want the newly refurbished Town Hall to feel owned, as it is, by the community and to be as open and accessible as possible - a place for the whole family across the generations. And we want it to play its part in paving the way for

a more resilient and sustainable community in challenging times. To this end, we are forging links with the Galloway Food Hub and have just succeeded in gaining a Biosphere grant to provide a skill sharing event on Saturday 24 February - see information below.

*Bianca Leder,
LING's Hub Host*



LEARN TO BE SELF SUFFICIENT

A Sharing Skills Event

brought to you by the Hub at the Town Hall

A fun filled day of learning at the Town Hall in New Galloway

Saturday 24.02.24
9:30 am - 4 pm

4 workshops making your own creations to take home with time for networking

£10 per person
warm drinks & healthy lunch included

BOOK NOW

In person at the Hubbub or
www.newgallowaytownhall.com

bianca.hubhost.ling@gmail.com

Sewing

Herbal Tinctures

Soap Making

Fermenting

VINEGAR





See what's happening at T

I can hardly believe we are over halfway through The Together in the Glenkens project!

I would like to thank all our deliverers who continue to make all the activities so vibrant and highly beneficial, and of course our attendees, who we hope are benefitting from the programme.

I am delighted that we have nine activities currently on offer for the whole Glenkens

communities to engage in and enjoy. Our aim of providing a varied and inclusive programme that has something for everyone is being fulfilled.

The Beginners Oil Painting Class with Catherine Corfield has produced some amazing art works. The group are planning to hold an exhibition of their artwork at the end of the project in May.

Launching in February, Crafting Connections workshop will explore a variety of skills and themes and promises to help develop your creative crafting potential.

The Dance Classes with Sam Rushton have proved to be a huge amount of fun for all. So, grab your dancing shoes and come along to join Sam on the dance floor! All are welcome,

no dance experience or partner required.

Our monthly Pub Quizzes continue to be highly popular. At just £1 per person this makes for a super entertaining night out in our local inns.

The Tai Chi sessions have moved to New Galloway Town Hall on a Monday evening at 7pm in the wonderful newly refurbished surroundings. All are welcome to come along and benefit from Steve Petch's teachings.

Together in the Glenkens has also joined forces with the CatStrand Open Bar Night on the last Friday of the month. The bar is open from 6-10pm, with food served from 6pm-8pm.

New for this year, we are delighted to be able to

offer free transport to Kirkcudbright Swimming Pool for their Wednesday evening Aquacise class.



TiTG SPRING PROGRAMME

CRAFTING CONNECTIONS IN THE GLENKENS with Little Miss Vaughan

THURSDAYS | 5:30 - 7:30pm
KIRKPATRICK DURHAM VILLAGE HALL

Adult £8 | Child (+7yrs) | £5 drop in

Adult & 2 children (7+yrs) Family Ticket | £16 drop in

4 Week block Adult £28 / Child (+7yrs)

£16

4 Week Block Family Ticket | £52

All materials, tea, coffee, cake & biscuits included



TAI CHI with Steve Petch

MONDAYS 7 - 8pm
NEW GALLOWAY TOWN HALL

New Galloway Town Hall
Adult | £5 drop in
4 week block | £18



OPEN BAR NIGHT CATSTRAND

LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH 6pm - 10pm
FOOD AVAILABLE 6pm - 8pm



GYM & SWIM PACKAGE - FREE TRANSPORT

WEDNESDAYS | 5.00pm | Kirkcudbright Swimming Pool

Aquacise Class: Sauna: Gym & Swim

Pick up locations Mossdale, Laurieston, departing CatStrand 5pm

FRIDAYS | 9.30am Merrick Leisure Centre Newton Stewart - Sauna, Jacuzzi, Gym & Swim

Pick up locations, Dalry, Balmaclellan, New Galloway, departing CatStrand 9.30am



TiTG PUB QUIZ

LAST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH 7 for 7.30 pm start

28th January Ken Bridge Hotel

25th February: Lochinvar Hotel

31st March: Clachan Inn

28th April: Ken Bridge Hotel

26th May: Lochinvar Hotel

£1 per person

Free round of drinks for winning team who also select the charity to receive the quiz takings



Together in The Glenkens...

We are also visiting the Merrick Leisure Centre in Newton Stewart fortnightly on Friday mornings. Departure from New



Galloway but various local pick-up locations can be arranged. We are most grateful to Dalry Community Shop and NHS Small Endowment Fund which have awarded us funding to allow for this free transport.

We're also working with Galloway Community Transport (another GCAT project) to provide transport to the Monthly Dalry Producers Market and the Golden Days Club in Castle Douglas. Do contact me on jo@catstrand.com to find out more.

Our Patchwork Workshop on Thursday afternoons at Crossmichael Church Hall is providing a warm welcoming space with the chance to learn some fascinating hand stitching techniques from seamstress, Penny Smith.

Our St Andrew's Day Ceilidh, a combined project with LING, was a wonderful evening, with a packed house enjoying the superb music of Muckle Spree.

I would also like to thank the generosity of the local businesses that gave us such superb raffle prizes: Loch Ken Activity Centre, Balmaclellan Shop, the CatStrand, Glenkens & Dee Honey Company, Dalry Garage, Dalry Community Shop, the Lochinvar Hotel and the Ken Bridge Hotel. A second Spring Ceilidh is in the planning – watch this space!

We are most thankful to the Scottish Government's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, administered by Third Sector Dumfries & Galloway, for the main funding for this programme. We



would also like to thank Dalry Community Shop, the NHS Small Endowment Fund and the Co-Op for further funding to support.

This project will come to an end in May this year, so do get in touch to find out more and to book onto any of our sessions before the opportunity ends! You can get in touch at jo@catstrand.com or 01644 420 374 or visit www.gcat.scot

*Jo Jackson,
Activity Coordinator*

Pictured are some participants in Sam Rushton's dance classes

2024 

Supporting Mental Health & Wellbeing through welcoming activities

Book in advance to secure your place
Some subsidised tickets available - do get in touch
Info: jo@catstrand.com | CatStrand | 01644 420 374
www.ticketsource.co.uk/together-in-the-glenkens
www.gcat.scot/



TRANSPORT with GCT

EVERY SECOND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH TO
DALRY PRODUCERS MARKET

Departing 9.30am from CatStrand

£1.50

EVERY THURSDAY TO GOLDEN DAYS CLUB CASTLE DOUGLAS

£3.00



STRICTLY GET DANCING with Sam Rushton

MONDAYS Term-time

7pm - 8.30pm

Venues - LOCH KEN ACTIVITY CENTRE,
PARTON VILLAGE HALL

Learn a new Ballroom and Latin Dance,
every 4 weeks!

No need to bring a partner

No dance experience necessary – all
welcome

Adult | £8 drop-in

Adult 4 week block | £28



BEGINNERS PAINTING WITH OILS with Catherine Corfield

WENESDAYS Term-time only

10.00am-12.00pm

THE SMIDDY
BALMACLELLAN

Master painting with oils

tutored by Contemporary Painter Catherine Corfield

Adult | 4 week block | £48

All materials, tea, coffee, cake & biscuits included



PATCHWORK WORKSHOP with Penny Smith

THURSDAYS | 1 - 3pm

Crossmichael Church Hall

Learn hand stitching patchwork with a skilled tutor,
turn scraps of fabric into creative items such as tote
bags, cushion covers, place mats and gifts

Adult | £7.00 drop in

Adult | 4 week block | £26



CONCESSIONS AVAILABLE for all the
activities - contact jo@catstrand.com
for details

Glenkens
Community
& Arts Trust
A GCAT Project

Supported through
THIRD SECTOR
Dumfries and Galloway

Fun and games with the Glenkens Youth Group

There has been a lot of creativity at the Glenkens Youth Group over the past few months.

The members often choose to paint or draw, and they are a very talented group. The space is always filled with music, with their own playlist setting the scene. An informal sing-a-long is a common occurrence!

We are very grateful to the Glenkens Community Centre in Dalry for the

opportunity to use the kitchen facilities. Over the winter the young people baked beautiful fresh crunchy bread, dancing and singing as they baked. An evening of hot chocolate and marshmallows warmed the hands, a great way to stave off the cold dark days. There have also been some epic games of badminton.

The final session of 2023 took place at the CatStrand, where youth group members enjoyed their Christmas party. Delicious food, amazing music and

dancing, and an impromptu karaoke.

We look forward to all that is to come for this wonderful group in 2024. Future immediate plans include orienteering and laser tag. If you are in P7 to S3, why not come and join this fantastic group of young people? They will make you feel most welcome and you can enjoy an environment in which you can be yourself.

Thanks to our funding from the Glenkens and District Community Fund, it's free.



The Glenkens Youth Group meets on Monday evenings in Dalry from 7pm. Find us on Facebook or contact Beata on glenkensyouth@gmail.com for more details.

*Beata,
Youth Group Lead*

Glenkens Cubs and Scouts

Joining Cubs in January we have Pippin, Hannah's daughter, who is an inspiration before she comes to the door.

Pippin and her little bother use Mum and Dad's workshop to make pottery brooches and magnets all year, and sell them at pottery events.

In total, during 2023 they have raised £851 for Stepping Stones Foodbank in Castle Douglas.

Just before Christmas they visited the foodbank to see what was needed and filled four trolleys of essentials and some treats as well for the less fortunate in our society. Sadly but true. Well done both!

The Cubs thoroughly enjoyed Cinderella, the

panto at the CatStrand. Thank you to all involved, each and every one of you. You were amazing.

We would like to wish you all a happy New Year and hope 2024 is good to you. Yours in Scouting,

Heather & Hannah



A thank you to the communities of the Glenkens for their generosity

For many years, St Margaret's church in New Galloway have dedicated their collections at Christmas to a charity chosen by the congregation.

Choosing a worthwhile cause is always difficult when there are so many places and people desperate for help and this year it was decided to share the money raised between two charities - ShelterBox and CHAS. On the international stage, ShelterBox's simple

strategy of sending emergency shelter and tools to where they are most needed is both practical and useful. And closer to home, CHAS (Children's Hospices Across Scotland) offers a full family support service for babies, children and young people with life-shortening conditions.

The St Margaret's Vestry are delighted to report that just under £1,000 was raised from collections at the Carols by Candlelight service held at St Margaret's and from the Christmas Day service. This money will be divided equally between ShelterBox and CHAS. Many thanks to all who gave so generously.



Children's Hospices Across Scotland
Proud supporter



The Covenanters of the Glenkens

A review by Andrew Mellor of the book *The Covenanters of the Glenkens* by David S Bartholomew.

The Reverend Dr. David Bartholomew has written an excellent book that sometimes made me angry - angry at the injustice, intolerance and cruelty it describes rather than because of any shortcomings in authorship, of which there are none. David was the Church of Scotland minister in the Glenkens for 28 years, during which time he carried out extensive research into the history of the seventeenth century Covenanting movement and revived the practice of open-air services or "conventicles."

In the opening chapter he sets out the complicated seventeenth century historical context. Politics and religion came together when Charles I declared that he was the head of the church in Scotland and that henceforth a new prayer book, which Scottish presbyterians believed echoed Catholic practices, should be used in churches. This was resisted and led, in 1638, to the adoption in churches across Scotland of a Covenant pledging to defend the presbyterian way of worship. Those who signed the pledge were known as "Covenanters." Their movement became caught up in some of the

events that led up to the English Civil War but it was with the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II that events took a darker turn. People who refused to attend services using the new prayer book were heavily fined, the money being collected by soldiers billeted locally. The Glenkens was particularly hard hit with £9577 Scots taken from poor people in Dalry Parish between 1663 and 1666. The troops brutalised those who could or would not pay, seizing possessions and burning down houses.

The Pentland Rising of 1666, which should really be called "the Glenkens Rising" because it started in Dalry, marked the beginning of a period of serious violence which included "the killing times" when troops stationed in the Glenkens were given free reign to murder, without trial, anyone who refused to renounce the Covenant.

Each of the following chapters in the book is devoted to places in the Glenkens associated with the Covenanters. The human stories behind the memorials to those who fell are told movingly, albeit the sources from which the accounts are taken may be somewhat partial. In the chapter on Balmaghie we read how Grierson of Lag and his men had captured a group of Covenanters. Their leader, John Bell, asked for a few moments to make his peace with God but Lag refused this and shot him at point blank range before signalling his men to kill the other captives as they knelt on the ground trying to pray. Particularly poignant is the fact that many of the bodies were left where they fell as a warning to others. Some were recovered, buried and later given memorials by "Old Mortality" but others remained where they lay, unmarked to this day. In 1977 Forestry Commission workers uncovered three bodies by the Palfern Burn near Clatteringshaws. One was a soldier, "recognised by his long military boots." Nearby two bodies lay together. One was



David Bartholomew at the 2013 conventicle near the Palfern Burn photographed by Andrew Mellor

small, likely just a lad. Across his body was a perfectly preserved belt with a brass container, probably intended for gunpowder. No doubt the soldiers had removed anything of value from the bodies but the belt had been left because it had a large nick, perhaps caused by a sword blow. The location of the bodies seems not to have been recorded at the time they were discovered but David managed to find the site and held a conventicle there in 2013 at which psalms were sung, prayers were said and a memorial stone was dedicated.

I hope that David's wish, expressed in the foreword, that his book will act as a resource to aid the establishment of a covenanting trail, is granted. Until then it stands as a well-researched and readable account of a shameful episode in our history.

Copies of the book are for sale at the CatStrand and Wright's shop in Dalry, selling for £10 each, or can be ordered direct from David by emailing dsbart92@gmail.com or calling 07762 083 703.

THE COVENANTERS OF THE GLENKENS



David S. Bartholomew

The 1983 Helicopter Crash

Just over forty years ago, a helicopter crashed on Mid Standard Hill near Balmacellan.

It was on 26 September 1983 when a Bell 206 Jet Ranger helicopter took off from Carlisle airport on a navigation exercise. The pilot was a foreign student who was on an extended fixed and rotary wing flying course and was flying solo at the time.

Although only twenty years old, he had over one hundred hours' flying experience.

The aircraft in question was registered G-AVTE and was sixteen years old. It was operating under Visual Flight Rules (VFR) and should not have entered cloud. Several witnesses along the route state that the aircraft was flying as low as 200 feet and was flying in and out of mist or cloud.

The aircraft was reported overdue before midday and a search was carried out by RAF Mountain Rescue, a number of helicopters, and others. The search was hampered by low cloud, mist and fog so the wreckage was not found until the following

day.

The aircraft had struck Mid Standard Hill (near Blackcraig Hill, Balmacellan) at an estimated time of 10.20am the previous day. The pilot was ejected from the helicopter in the crash and killed; the aircraft was totally destroyed. A police presence guarded the crash site until the body and wreckage could be recovered and the Galloway Mountain Rescue team were also involved, although their records have unfortunately not

survived. The estimated speed at impact was 100 knots.

All evidence is that this was Controlled Flight Into Terrain, caused by inadvertent flight into cloud. The name of the pilot is not in the public domain.

My thanks to Trevor Warne for permission to use his photograph of the actual aircraft that crashed.

Paul Goodwin



Northern Lights: The Arctic Scots

A review by Mike Brown of the book *Northern Lights: The Arctic Scots* by Ted Cowan.

Professor Ted Cowan had a life-long interest in the history of the northern world and the role of Scots in its exploration. *Northern Lights: The Arctic Scots* was his definitive book on the subject. He had just completed its full draft when he died, unexpectedly, at his home in the Glenkens in 2022. His widow, fellow historian and research collaborator Dr Lizanne Henderson oversaw the book's

final stages from manuscript to publication last autumn. It is an absorbing and far-reaching study of the Scots who contributed so much to Arctic exploration.

Starting a review by quoting a footnote may be unusual but a reference, in the chapter on 'Scots and the Inuit', is particularly revealing. Ted recalls being in the library in Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet), an Inuit community on Baffin Island, when "someone came in excitedly to tell me that a group of Inuit girls were demonstrating my culture in the neighbouring hall... they were about to perform dances and tunes their ancestors had learned from the Scottish whalers. There followed a cross-cultural concert that was deeply moving." It is a vignette which captures the spirit of the book, its many surprises and Ted's immersive pursuit of history. Those who knew Ted can vividly picture the conviviality - and enquiring - that ensued.

Northern Lights records many familiar names: John Ross from Stranraer, his nephew, James Clark Ross and John Richardson of Dumfries. The role of Orcadian John Rae, independent and unorthodox, has long been celebrated. But

less heralded names abound. William Penny, the Peterhead skipper was typical of many whalers who exchanged knowledge with the Inuit and aided the explorers. His wife Margaret was the first European woman to overwinter on Baffin Island. The journals and letters of surgeons, traders, scientists, seamen and explorers reveal acute observation, wonder at the world they traversed and, for the time, an astonishing empathy with the Inuit - or "Arctic Highlanders" as Ross dubbed them.

Scots in the Arctic were eager to learn and, like the whalers, showed more flexibility and imagination than the rigid thinking of the British Navy, thirled to its traditions. Scots played a key role as traders/explorers in the Hudson Bay Company and this brought further access to the skills and knowledge of the Inuit and First Nations.

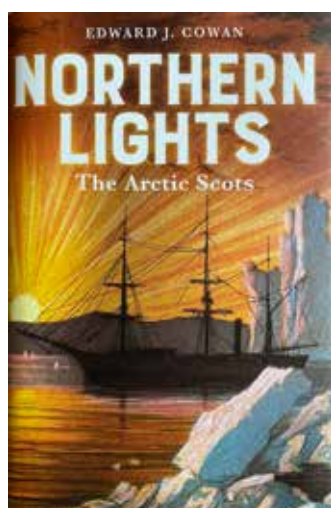
The book scans the centuries, from Scots in 10th century Viking expeditions through to Sir John Franklin's search for



the Northwest Passage in the mid 19th century. Once Franklin disappeared, an international assortment of adventurers, driven by valour or vanity, Scots prominent among them, swarmed north in his pursuit. A rampant media egged them on and the charismatic Lady Jane Franklin led the hue and cry.

Speculation among the Europeans knew no bounds but the Inuit knew the facts. John Rae, who listened to them, brought word of the grisly truth, cannibalism and all. But you would expect as much from an "uncouth Scot" said the London establishment: they never forgave him.

Northern Lights: The Arctic Scots, by Edward J Cowan is published by Birlinn, £30, ISBN 9781780277875.



Blue and the Tranquil Storm

CatStrand hosts the exciting launch of *Swallows, the Hare and the Moon*, the latest album from local singer-songwriter, Blue.

Blue writes from his first instrument, the acoustic guitar, and then aided with a collection of other musicians shapes them into an eclectic mix of songs in a variety of styles; acoustic soul with a bit of bounce, reggae beats, bluesy folk, the occasional heartfelt ballad, and never afraid to add some electric guitar here and there.

As a member of the band Quirkus, the album *Farewell to Treebeard* was recorded in 2001, after

which Blue went on to record a solo album *Sound in your Stride* in 2014.

On 29 February, Blue will be performing songs from his most recent recording (the launch of which was delayed due to Covid restrictions) along with some of the musicians whom he worked with on its production.



Photo of the Issue



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the Stockbridge
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This issue's winner is Susan Currie from Dalry with this beautiful snap of a fly agaric mushroom.

"The photograph was taken in the bottom car park in New Galloway," says Susan. "Maybe there are fairies too!"

Susan wins two portions of mac and cheese from our competition sponsors, the Balmacellan-based Stockbridge Mac & Cheese Co.

Company owner and competition judge, Hannah Gould, said: "The photo of the amanita wins the day this time - he just looks like such a fun guy!"

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

From the Bookroom

In 'From the Bookroom' Glenkens-based author of the novel *The Road From Damascus* and co-author of *Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War*, Robin Yassin-Kassab, takes readers through some of his favourite books. In this edition Robin speaks about author Khaled Khalifa, friendship and the festive season.

What am I reading at the moment? I have a long answer for you...

First there's *The Human Cosmos: A Secret History of the Stars*, by Jo Marchant. This was a Christmas present from my daughter. I've read the prologue and part of the first chapter. It's interesting and engagingly written, so I may well keep going.

And I'm reading *Daemonologie, In Forme of a Dialogue*, by King James I and VI – a text which is either 'of a different age' or just plainly insane, depending on the charity of your outlook. It greatly contributed to the witch burning hysteria that took so many women's lives in previous centuries, particularly in Scotland. It reminds me of poor Elspeth McEwan, the 'witch' of Balmacellan, whose story is told in Alan Temperley's *Tales of Galloway*.

This unusual book was a present from my son. I've read some pages, and it will be good to read some more, if only I find the time.

But time is in short supply. I have too much work. Two half-read books on my desk are related to one of my jobs – I'll tell you more about that in the summer... They are *The Rule of Violence: Subjectivity, Memory and Government in Syria* by Salwa Ismail, and *Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law* by Rudolph Peters. Both are fascinating in their own ways, but they're academic in tone, and the first one is grisly. I can only read a little in one sitting.

I'm reading a book of strange and intricate poetry by Jorge Luis Borges – better known for his strange and intricate short stories. Books of poetry, like academic books, I read slowly and intermittently.

And short stories too. I don't just plough through them. I'm currently reading *The Visiting Privilege*, a collection by Joy Williams. Each story creates an unhinged little world which lives in my head for up to a week, until I need another.

I read one at a time, and let them seep slowly in. A quick injection, then a long effect.

I'm also reading the *Flower Ornament Scripture*. I've been reading it for years, a few pages every now and then. It's so hallucinatory, so infinitely expansive, so enormously superlative, that I couldn't do it otherwise.

I'm reading – or listening to – *Finnegans Wake*. Eternally. But that's another matter. Sometimes I hear a guilty voice telling me that I should read only one book at a time. That I should finish what I start – as if reading a book were like performing an office task, or eating the food on my plate.



The voice states that having five or ten books on the go at once represents some kind of failure.

But I resist that voice. I reject its illogic.

I need plenty of books simultaneously, because books serve plenty of functions. Some are for falling asleep to, and some for waking up. Some to race through, others to slowly savour. Some fit certain rooms, or times of day, or moods.

Keep them at hand, everywhere. That's my advice.

David Tallontire CHIMNEY SWEEP

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CatStrand

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS



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FRI 22 MAR 7:30PM

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Glenkens
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Help secure CatStrand's future

I'm now in my third year at CatStrand and it's been quite the ride!

Since arriving in September 2021 we've staged 284 events and we still have a full programme to look forward to. What a privilege it's been to stage such an amazing array of acts in our small rural venue. I can't imagine a better place to see them in, and count my blessings that this is my job.

On paper, CatStrand shouldn't work. The population of the villages of the Glenkens should not be able to support a thriving arts centre. That it does, therefore, is a special sort of magic. It is a genuine community and a very welcoming space for first-time visitors. I can't take any credit for this, it's been a huge amount of work by many people over the last 22 years, but I appreciate it all the time. The CatStrand is something hugely valuable and worth fighting for. Since shaking off the impact of COVID, we have distilled our work into three distinct strands:

CatStrand Arts

Our amazing touring programme hosting visiting musicians, dancers and theatre.

Cultural Communities

A whole range of Glenkens-based cultural projects that we are very happy to support.

CatStrand Young Creatives

Our programme of hugely popular activities and support for young people.

Each of these strands is

absolutely thriving - ticket sales are the highest we can find record of. However, despite this, there is currently a good deal of uncertainty about the future.

Until this year, the CatStrand Arts programme has relied on an annual application to Creative Scotland's 'Open Fund', and has been successful each year for 16 years. Creative Scotland is very supportive of our work, but the annual model meant that there was always uncertainty about what budget we might have for the next year.

Creative Scotland is now looking to give more long-term security to organisations such as ourselves, first through a 2023-2025 'Extended Fund', followed by a 2025 - 2028 'Multi Year Fund'. This

is a welcome shift - however, the change comes at a time when there is a national constriction in arts funding. Those making funding decisions are clearly left trying to make the 'least bad' decisions under very difficult circumstances.

Our 2023 application to the Extended Fund awarded 50% of our request despite being 'highly recommended for full funding'. There just wasn't enough money

to go around. This award has allowed the retention of my position and that of our part-time marketing officer, but with a considerably reduced marketing and programming budget. This means we are much less able to fund work directly and also makes meeting the core costs of keeping the CatStrand open much harder.

In April, we will submit our Stage 2 application for the Multi Year Fund, which will determine our

funding situation from April 25- April 28. The total applications to this fund are expected to be double the funds available. The other applicants will doubtless be well-established and credible arts organisations who, like us, have a solid track record

of delivery. So while we know Creative Scotland appreciates the value of our work, we cannot have any certainty about the outcome. If the outcome is not what we hope for, it is difficult to imagine how we will sustain an arts programme in quite the same way.

While it is a worrying time, we have plans in place and are working through them. But if you're reading this and wondering how you can help

CatStrand Arts, here are some ways:

- We have an online survey gathering evidence of how people value CatStrand Arts, to support our application. You can find it at www.GCAT.scot/Survey - as many responses as possible will help us a lot.
- If you've benefited from any of CatStrand artistic work in any way and would like to let Creative Scotland know directly through a testimonial or Letter of Support, even just in a few words, please email me on peter@catstrand.com.
- Become a Friend of CatStrand or consider leaving us a legacy. The new Friends scheme will be going live very soon and will be on www.GCAT.scot/support-us
- If you're so inclined you could even write to your MSP, outlining your concerns and requesting an increase in the overall funding for Creative Scotland's Multi Year Fund - this would benefit arts across the region and indeed nationally.

We have every reason to hope for a positive outcome at the end of this process, but we do need to be reacting to the hard times that are out there for everyone at the moment, so your support is very much appreciated. I love this job and what CatStrand delivers for the communities of the Glenkens, and I look forward to it doing so for many years to come!

*Peter Renwick,
CatStrand Creative Director*



Pictured are Battery Park performing at the CatStrand

Poet praises Writers' Cafe

When I first started going to the Writers' Cafe at the CatStrand, I had no idea I would be entering a world of such creativity and imagination.

From the outset the sessions, under the brilliant direction of Jane McBeth, were an inspiration. To be able to talk to other writers, listen to and

appreciate critical comments and thereby inform my own work was a privilege I had not experienced elsewhere. Each evening was collaborative, respectful and productive. So much so that I felt inspired to produce pieces of poetry that I would probably not have contemplated without the understanding and encouragement of my fellow writers.

There can be no doubt that I would never have produced this wee book without the Writers' Cafe evenings and I hope that I will be able to continue to attend sessions seeking further productive liaisons with other writers. It gives me so much pleasure to experience the variety of approaches that different people adopt to the challenges they have set themselves in their writing. And to

help folk find a way through difficulties and problems in a supportive and friendly way is a satisfaction that is rare and valuable. I could not conceive of a better title for my poems to reflect this than Catstrand Connections. "Thank you" to everyone who contributed to making this a reality.

I'd like to offer the book on sale to residents of the Glenkens at the discounted price of £5 per copy - to purchase a copy please email johnpriestley68@btinternet.com

John Priestley



Music-making in the Glenkens

Did you know that traditional ballads were being sung in Galloway until at least the mid 20th century?

...Or that an 18th century fiddler's notebook from Gatehouse ended up in the Glenkens?

...Or that BBC collectors came to Dalry in the 1950s and recorded the fiddling of Jock McCutcheon in Carsphairn, and the singing of William Wallace at Fingland Farm?

There is much to discover about the history of music-making in the Glenkens and the Glenkens Story history group is presenting an afternoon of expert

talks and live and recorded performances at **CatStrand from 2-5pm on Sunday 17 March.**

Dr Jo Miller will provide an insight into the musical culture of the Glenkens, focussing on the period following World War One. She will discuss how it compares with music making in the rest of Scotland at the time and ask who were the musicians, and where and when did they perform.

This is a fragile history, often relying on oral sources. Finding information can also be elusive, since many folk made music at home. However, families have also kept images, as demonstrated in the wonderful selection now appearing on the 'Memories

of the Glenkens' Facebook page. Collections of written music and recordings can also provide resources for further research.

Anna Campbell's overall theme is the joy that music brought into the lives of a remote rural community. Her talk will draw on the letters, diaries, newspapers, photographs and other records held in the archives of Carsphairn Heritage Initiative...and the occasional legend.

Christopher Wright of the School of Scottish Studies will introduce his research interests in Galloway song, illustrated by case studies. He'll discuss larger resources for exploring the music of SW Scotland: what's in 'national' archives such as Tobar an

Dualchais/Kist o Riches, and what don't we know?

The afternoon will conclude with an open discussion among speakers and audience, chaired by historian and singer Dr Lizanne Henderson, on preserving our musical heritage. Following interest in the 'Music of the Glenkens' exhibition staged at CatStrand over recent months it's hoped that local people will share their musical memories, and discuss how best to gather, organise and conserve an archive of local music and dance.

Tickets are available from CatStrand www.gcat.scot or 01644 420374.

A story of hope and desolation

Lost People, the latest novel by Glenkens-based writer Margaret Elphinstone, is set in a fractured dystopic world but amid trauma and desolation, hope is there to be discovered.

Well known as a historical novelist, Margaret returns in *Lost People* to the timeless themes of her early writing when living in Laurieston, some 40 years ago. The narrator of her new book is Rue, a lost child abandoned in the garden of a mysterious community, who is forced on a quest through a desolate, war-torn landscape. This is a story of redemption and reassurance that solace can be found, whatever terrors may have to be confronted in the process.

James Robertson (author of *And the Land Lay Still*) says: "*Lost People* has a meditative, calming mood and pace despite the fact that things have gone so badly wrong. The writing is beautiful, especially the voice of Rue, the troubled, vulnerable, highly intelligent young person who tells the story. Margaret



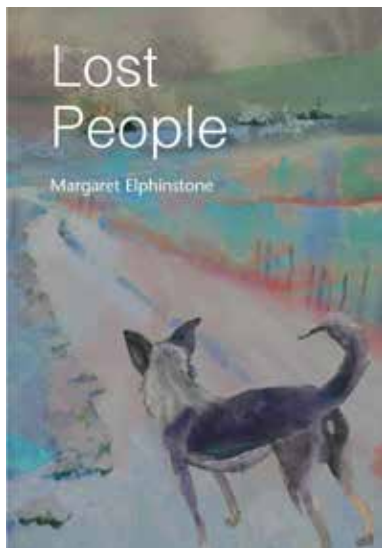
Author Margaret Elphinstone at home in the Glenkens countryside

Elphinstone has created a world simultaneously strange and familiar. It is a novel unlike any I have read for some time."

Poet and essayist, Kathleen Jamie, Scotland's Makar (or poet laureate) says: "Here is a story of trauma, the kindness of strangers and the healing power of animals and plants ... *Lost People* is a gem-like wisdom-tale of perfect clarity and depth."

Lost People will be published on 21 February by Wild Goose, the publishing house of the Iona Community, priced £7.99.

You can hear Margaret read from the book and discuss the ideas underpinning it with writer Tom Pow at CatStrand, New Galloway, at 7.30pm on Thursday 7 March. Tickets £5 from GCAT.scot/arts or 01644 420 374.



Kells primary

Kells had a busy festive period, Christmas concert, singing carols for LING lunches as well as doing Christmas crafts, learning about the story of Christmas and writing poetry around the subject!

This spring term we are looking forward to all things Scottish with the upcoming Robert Burns poetry competition and learning some Country dances.

Good luck to P4 who have made the leap in to the 'big class', and are doing very well.

*Mrs Erin Welsh,
Primary Teacher*



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- Corsock: Julie Garton -

07769 647 702

• Kirkpatrick Durham: Heather - 07551 639 629

• Crossmichael: Richard Middleton - 01556 670 691

• Dalry: Graham West - 01644 430 503

• New Galloway: 07741 656 601

• Parton: Tom - 07835821976

FOOD DELIVERIES

• Galloway Foodbank - 07730 788 335

• Galloway Food Hub - glenkens.scot/local-directory-listing/glenkens-food-hub

• 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: call 07966 103 912 to find out about Glenkens delivery days

• Roan's Dairy - 01556 620 374

• Harris & Co: www.harrisandco.uk

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS/GROUPS

Glenkens Community Shop: Helen Crowther on 0790 467 8599 or drop by the shop on Main Street, Dalry

Glenkens Scout Group: Contact Heather McIntosh on 01644 420 375

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING): Contact newgallowaytownhall@gmail.com

Dalry Communities Properties Trust (DCPT): Contact Michelle Owen at sjtdalrycc@gmail.com

Dalry Town Hall: Contact Lesley Blissett at lesleyblissett52@gmail.com

Glenkens Community Centre: Contact Sarah McAdam on minimac01644@gmail.com

Lagwyne Hall: Contact lagwynehallsecretary@outlook.com for info, or to book email lagwynehallbooking@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 info@catstrand.com or 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 Initiative: Contact Ben Ade at carsphairnhi@gmail.com

Galloway Food Hub: Contact Lesley Atkins on lesley@propagate.org.uk or 07587 122 151

Bairn Banter: Contact Melissa on bairnbanter@outlook.com or 07979 492 791

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.

GLENKENS CHURCH TIMES

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Sunday Services

Balmaclellan: 4 Feb, 3 Mar - 11am

Carsphairn: 4 Feb, 10 Mar - 11am

Kells: 18 Feb, 17 Mar - 11am

Dalry: 25 Feb, 24 Mar - 11am

Special Services & Events

Fri 29 Mar, 7.30pm, Good Friday Service, Carsphairn

Sun 31 Mar, 7.30pm, Dawn Service, Dalry

Sun 31 Mar, 11am, Easter Worship, Kells

For further information contact Rev Pam Bellis on 07751 379 249 or pam@bellisconsultancy.co.uk

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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

Sundays at 10.30am: Holy Communion with refreshments after the service

Tuesdays at 11am: Informal midweek service with refreshments and chat

Thursdays 7.30-8pm: Zoom Evening Prayers. Please contact Dawn for the link

World Day of Prayer, Fri 1 Mar, 2pm, refreshments after the service. Ash Wednesday, 14 Feb, 6pm, Imposition of Ashes service. Maundy Thursday, 28 Mar, 6pm, Holy Communion. Good Friday, 29 Mar 2pm, Reflection and Prayers. Easter Day, 31 Mar, 10.30am, Holy Communion

For further information call Dawn on 01644 420 431 or visit www.stmargaretsnewgalloway.org

Glass Recycling Points

- Balmaclellan Stores, Balmaclellan
- Memorial Hall, St Michael's Road, Crossmichael
- Kirkland Street, St John's Town of Dalry
- New Galloway, Carson's Knowe Car Park
- St David Street, Kirkpatrick Durham

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- Doctor: 01644 420 234
- NHS 24: 08454 24 24 24
- D&G Council: 030 33 33 3000

MINUTES/REPORTS OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT SPENDING

GLENKENS DISTRICT TRUST (GDT)
www.glenkenstrust.org.uk/gdt-corporate-information

CARSPHAIRN RENEWABLE ENERGY FUND LTD (CREFL)
www.carsphairn.org/CREFLArchive

Local Job Vacancies

Up-to-date job and volunteering opportunities can be found online at the Glenkens Hub on www.glenkens.scot

There are some remote working opportunities as Natural Power at the moment; check out their vacancies page - visit www.naturalpower.com/uk/careers



CAB outreach clinics are held fortnightly on a Monday at the Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry, and fortnightly on a Tuesday at CatStrand, New Galloway.

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REGULAR SERVICES: FEBRUARY – MARCH 2024

GK2 Glenkens

Castle Douglas (Tesco) Wednesday Evenings (Registered Route)

Outward

		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 Fortnightly

Tuesday mornings

Outward Pickups: Dalry (Underhill) 09:30

New Galloway (Town Hall) 09:35

CatStrand) 09:37

To Aldi (Return)

Pickup Newton Stewart (Aldi Car Park) 11:30

Return fare £3.50 Advance booking required.

WHAT'S ON February/March

**Turn to centre spread on p16-17
for Together in The Glenkens
Feb/Mar activities...**

FEBRUARY

Thu 8, Ken Words: Writers' Cafe, 7pm, CatStrand

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

Mon 12, Menopause Really Matters Peer Support Group, 7-8pm, Smiddy, Balmaclellan, see p14

Wed 14, Dalry Film Club: *Mission Impossible - Dead Reckoning*, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 17, If Sounds Could Tell: Fay Guiffo & Edyta Mydlowska, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 17, Vika's Ukrainian Buffet, contact vikafiras@gmail.com

Thu 22, FARA, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 24, Learn to be Self-sufficient Skill Sharing Event, 9.30am-4pm, New Galloway Town Hall, see p15

Mon 26, Carsphairn Local Place Plan Drop-in, 2-7pm, **tbc**, visit www.carsphairn.org/LPP for details

Thu 29, Blue and the Tranquil Storm, 7.30pm, CatStrand, see p21

MARCH

March-Sept, Permaculture Design Course with Propagate, both online and in various locations throughout Galloway. visit www.propagate.org.uk/permaculture for more details. Initial meeting is **16 Mar**, The Hidden Mill, Balmaclellan

Fri 1, Song Share, Dalry Town Hall

Wed 6, Dalry Film Club: *She Said*, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Thu 7, *Lost People* Book Launch: Margaret Elphinstone In Conversation with Tom Pow, 7.30pm, CatStrand, see p25

Sat 9, Glenkens Producers Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sun 10, Quiz Night, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall

Mon 11, Menopause Really Matters Peer Support Group, 7-8pm, Smiddy, Balmaclellan, see p14

Thu 14, Ken Words: Writers' Cafe, 7pm, CatStrand

Thu 14, Stewartry Birdwatchers: A wilder, wetter WWT Caerlaverock, 10.30am, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Fri 15, Musclebound, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Fri 15, Carsphairn SWI: A vet's perspective - Bruce Haggarty, 7.30pm, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn

Fri 15, Stewartry Birdwatchers: Warbler identification, 10.30am, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Sun 17, The Glenkens Story: Music-Making - Past, Present

and Future, 2-5pm, CatStrand, see p25

Thu 21, NGCE Ltd AGM, 7.30pm, CatStrand, see p15

Fri 22, Ensemble Hesper: A Gift for your Garden, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 23, Ensemble Hesper: Playing Day, 10.30am, CatStrand

Sat 23, Ensemble Hesper: Playing Day, 1.30pm, CatStrand

Tue 26, Michael McGoldrick, John McCusker and John Doyle, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Wed 27, Dalry Film Club: *Oppenheimer*, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Fri 29, Dallahan, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 30, Easter Egg Hunt with Bairn Banter, 10am, Carsphairn School playground



Glenkens & District Community Councils

Balmaclellan Community Council: Meets last Monday each month, 7.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Carsphairn Community Council: Meets last Monday each month, 7pm, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn - contact carsphairncc@gmail.com or 07531 035 824

Dalry Community Council: Meets first Monday each month, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall - contact sjtdalrycc@gmail.com or 07940 313 445

New Galloway & Kells Community Council: Meets second Monday each month, 7.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall

Corsock & Kirkpatrick Durham Community Council: Meets monthly - contact mcnabblaurie@hotmail.com or 01644 440 200

Balmaghie Community Council: Meets monthly - contact secbalmaghiecc@btinternet.com or 01644 450 621

Parton Community Council: Meets monthly - contact ericaporteous@hotmail.co.uk or 01644 470 277

Crossmichael Community Council: Meets monthly - richardandjane@phonecoop.coop or 01556 670 691

Full minutes of local Community Council meetings can be viewed at Dalry Library or online at www.glenkens.scot

REGULAR EVENTS & OPENING TIMES

Balmaclellan Village Hall

Tuesday Afternoon Teas, 1st Tues each month, to book email warburton.julie@googlemail.com

Glenkens Crafters, Wed 10am-12noon, for info contact julia.higgins55@outlook.com

Books in Balmaclellan Community Library, Wed 10.30-12.30; Fri 6-7pm; Sat 10.30am-2.30pm (tea & coffee available on Sat).

Tai Chi, Wed 2-3pm

Balmaclellan Blether, 3rd Thu each month, contact warburton.julie@googlemail.com

Yoga, Thu, 6pm, kathyr64@hotmail.co.uk

Glenkens Art Workshop, Thu, 2-4pm

Zumba, Fri, 6.30-7.30pm

Men's Shed, Balmaclellan

Opening Times:

Monday, 9.30am - 12.30pm

Wednesday, 9.30am - 12.30pm, Wood Carving, 2-4pm

Thursday, Art Group, 2-4pm

Friday, 9.30am - 12.30pm

Saturday, 9am - 12noon

Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn

Monday Morning Social, 11am-2pm, come along for a blether, or bring a board game/cards, etc. Refreshments available. Call 07710 124 255 or email carsphairn.trust@gmail.com

Carsphairn SWI, 3rd Thu of the month, 7.30pm, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn

Craft Group, Fri 10am-12noon, includes tea & coffee, Lagwyne Hall, contact carsphairncraftgroup@gmail.com

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

CatStrand, New Galloway

Winter opening hours:

11am-4pm Tue-Sat

Art Ambassadors (age 11+), Mon bi-weekly, 4.30-5.30pm

Behind the Scenes, bi-weekly, Mondays 5.30-6pm

Power Yoga, Tue, 9am, kathyr64@hotmail.co.uk

Citizens Advice Drop-ins, every other Tue, 10am-4pm

Weekly Bus Service to Tesco, Wednesday eve 7pm

Dramarama, (age 6-10), Wed 4-5pm

Up Skills: Musical Theatre, (age 15+), Wed 5-5.30pm

Young Writers Cafe, (age 12+), Wed 6-7.30pm, monthly

Piano Lessons, weekly, term time 4pm - 6.30pm

Yoga for all levels, Thu, 9.30am

CatStrand Singers, Thu 11am-12noon

Dance Steps (age 10-18yrs), Sat monthly, 2-5pm

Art Explorers, (age under 10yrs), Sat bi-weekly 10-11am

Art Club, (age 11-16yrs), Sat bi-weekly 11.15am-12.30pm

Youth Players Panto rehearsals, (10 yrs plus), weekly, Sun 3- 5.30pm

The Smiddy, Balmaclellan

Margaret Morris Movement: Health Play (age 5-8), Mon (during term time), 3.45-4.30pm

Margaret Morris Movement: Youth Grade (age 8-15), Mon (during term time), 4.30-5.30pm

Glenkens Ukelele Group, Wed, 6.30-8pm

Taste of Music, monthly, 10-11am (under 10yrs)

Mini Music Makers, family session, montly 11.45pm -12.30pm (under 7yrs)

Weekly Ukuele, guitar & keyboard lessons, 12.30-4pm (6-16 yrs)

Musical Misfits, group singing class, bi-weekly, 10.30 - 11.30pm

New Galloway Town Hall

Men's Monday Morning Coffee, Mon 9.30-11am. Contact rtdglaister@aol.com

Margaret Morris Movement, (adults), Mon 2.20-3.20pm, contact SaraShackleton26@gmail.com

Tai Chi, Mon 7-8pm, contact petchy2@btinternet.com

LING Lunches, (all welcome) Tue 12.30-2pm
Hubbub, Thu 11am-2pm, activities from jam-making to Christmas wreaths (lunch provided)

Sports Evening, Tue 7-9pm, carpet bowls or table tennis, contact raymond.bridgeman@btinternet.com

Zumba, Wed 6.30-7.30pm, contact 07544 700 566

Hubbub, Thu, 11am-2pm

Martial Arts, (children), Thu 7.30-9pm, contact kmabrian@gmail.com or just turn up.

For further info email jackie.

communityinclusion.LING@gmail.com or phone 07749 249781 or visit newgallowaytownhall.com @ Local Initiatives in New Galloway on Facebook

Glenkens Community Centre

Citizens Advice Drop-ins, every other Mon, 10am-4pm

Glenkens Youth Group, Mon, 7-8.30pm

Dalry Good Neighbours Club, Tue, 2-4pm, contact Michelle on 07795 613

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Clachan Crafters, Thu 2-4pm, contact Sarah on 07500 861 041

Kickback Martial Arts, Thu, 7-9pm

Song Share, 1st Friday each month, 8-11pm, contact anne.chaurand@btinternet.com

Yoga For All, Fri 7-9pm, contact Amy on 07733 111 466

Friendship Group, Sat (excluding Glenkens Producers Market days), 10-11.30am, contact Anne on 01644 430 052

Table Tennis/Badminton, available to hire by arrangement, contact Sarah on 07500 861 041

Glenkens Charity Shop

Winter Opening Times:

Mon 10am-1pm

Wed, Fri & Sat 10am-4pm

Dalry Library

Main St, Dalry, Tel: 01644 430 234

Library Opening Times:

Tue, 2-5pm, for books and other walk-in
Fri, 11.30am-12.30pm for NEC Bus Pass and Blue Badge appointments and PCs, and 1-4.30pm for books and other walk-in services: appointments can be booked in the library or on 01387 260 196.

Bookbugs Session, Tue, 10.30-11.30am

Glenkens Book Group, last Friday of each month, 2pm, call June to book on 01644 420 361

Dalry Town Hall

Tai Chi, Mon, 2-3.30pm

Dog Training, Tue, 7-8pm, contact Eric Broadhurst on 07831 590 822

Various

Strictly Get Dancing, Loch Ken Activity Centre, Parton, Mon, 7 -8.30pm

Cosy Corner, Tue, 1-5pm, Crossmichael Church Hall, contact Anne on 07889 016 963

Crossmichael Heritage Centre, Wed & Fri, 1.30-4.30pm

Cub Scouts, Wed 6.15-7.30pm, Scout Hall, New Galloway

Patchwork Workshop, Crossmichael Church Hall, Thu, 1-3pm

Yoga, Mossdale Mossdale Village Hall, Fri, 2.15pm

Dragon Boats on Loch Ken, Sun 9.30am-12.30pm, Galloway Activity Centre, Parton

Knockvennie Hall Heat Bank & Snooker Club, contact Andrew on 01556 690 677

Outdoor Bowls, Dalry, contact Fiona Ramsay on 07500 554 751

Snooker/Indoor Bowls, contact Gary on 01644 430 521

Field Trip

“They always say Ritual Purposes when they haven’t a clue. Anyway we know that right through the Modern Period they kept symbols of time worship on all their major edifices. The reconstruction - look, here it is - suggests it was a tower with four Time Circles, one facing each cardinal point.. Plus the cast-iron bells. And that time capsule thing - bit like burying your ancestors under the hearthstone I suppose.”

“You’re getting muddled. That was 4000 years earlier.”

“Oh let’s leave it, I bet the other three groups have got half their settlements done by now. Come on, this path going north was the main drag apparently. Remember we’re supposed to be thinking about Transitory Settlement Patterns. What was it? Transhumance?”

“No, that’s moving flocks around in summer and making cheese and stuff. This was Transvacance - that means moving people around in summer.”

“I don’t see how that got them anything to eat.”

“Well, people paid a lot of money to go to temporary summer pastures and sheep didn’t. That’s what all these houses were

used for in the end so people couldn’t live in them. Let’s get this straight: first phase Early Modern Clearances: you burn people’s roofs over their heads - incendiary method - and ship them off to colonise someone else’s country so you can run sheep. Second phase, Declining Modern Clearances: make sure they don’t get any roofs over their heads in the first place - laissez faire method - and send them off to anywhere but here. Because no one cares, see?”

“I don’t think that’s exactly what she said.”

“Look, it’s all in the lecture notes she gave us - page 5 Marginal Lands, scroll down to the bottom: ‘Transvacance appears to have died out in the final decades of Declining Modern Civilisation. There is debate as to whether it ceased because fossil-fuel or mined-materials vehicles were no longer available, or because the roads had already become impassable for wheeled vehicles. Current research suggests both factors came into play.’ We were all supposed to read this stuff last night, by the way.”

“Page 1 says, ‘In this glen there were at least five churches, the most salient buildings in every settlement, also 2 to 4 hostleries of some description in each settlement.’

“So they spent all their time praying and carousing. Could be worse.”

“No, you weren’t listening: The evidence



is that all public buildings had fallen into disuse several decades before the settlements were finally abandoned.”

“That Ken Bridge we crossed this morning wasn’t abandoned. It’s still all right, though it says on page 2 it’s nearly 400 years old.”

“What about schools?”

“Didn’t you listen to any of her lecture? Of course there were no schools by the end. That big one - where they found all those concrete slabs - that’s the one she said was in an advanced state of decay even before final abandonment. Anyway the documentary evidence tells us that in the final two censuses the inhabitants were all over 70 so naturally they didn’t need any schools.”

“Life must have been pretty dismal. No wonder they all died out. I’d rather be me.”

M.N.E

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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

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natural power

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