

GLENKENS GAZETTE

December 2024/January 2025

ISSUE 145

FREE

Dalry featured on seasonal special of BBC Landward

Some may have spotted Dalry Librarian, Angela Miller, on TV when she featured on a Halloween special of the *BBC Landward* programme.

The topic was the local Glenkens story of Adam Forrester and Lucky Hare, and how this tale was likely the inspiration behind Robert Burns' famous poem, *Tam o' Shanter*.

Angela hosts the YouTube channel *Galloway Retold*, and had been contacted by the TV show as a result of their team having seen her video 'St John's Town of Dalry and the Witches Sabbat'.

Pictured is Angela Miller with Landward presenter Dougie Vipond by Dalry kirkyard © BBC

Continued in the History section on p25...



INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Gazette joins Indie News Forum in Glasgow

...turn to p3



A new era for the Glenkens Medical Practice

...turn to p7



Moving forward with Glenkens education

...turn to p9



Readers' thoughts on the proposed Galloway National Park

...turn to p17-21

Wright's shop awarded best independent retailer in Galloway



Val, Bill and Tibo at Wright's shop proudly display their D&G Life award for Best Independent Retailer

Congratulations go to Bill and Val from Wright's grocery shop in Dalry as winners of the Best Independent Retailer of the Year at the Dumfries & Galloway Life Awards 2024.

"When we were first nominated, we were really pleased," said Val. "But we didn't think we would win. It feels great to have that recognition from our customers; that they notice and appreciate what we do to provide a service for everyone."

Bill added: "When we bought the village shop and moved here two-and-a-half years ago, we had no idea what lay ahead. We wanted a better life and innocently thought that owning a business like this would be straightforward!

"Little did we know how much hard work it takes to keep a shop like this going. We'll never get rich doing this job and we haven't had a holiday in all the time we've been here, but we love making a difference and helping people."

Continued on p7...

Mystery of New Galloway's phantom gorillas

This year Halloween night in the Glenkens was marked by the appearance of a trio of gorillas loose in New Galloway.

Seeming to originate from the McGaw household, there is speculation that perhaps the creatures had been hiding out after escaping from a zoo or exotic animal collection.

As children made their way through the village guising, the gorillas followed in what generally seemed to be a friendly manner. However, sometimes things took a more sinister turn with the hairy apes egging each other on; in one instance they were seen chasing terrified teens out of the village in the Mossdale direction.

One child said: "At first I was scared but then I gave them sweets and they were friendly," while another young person had had sweets given to them by the curious creatures.

The mystery continues as, after Halloween, the trio of apes seem to have vanished into thin air. Could they perhaps have been just Halloween phantoms?



Spooky fun with Bairn Banter



Children from across the Glenkens joined Carsphairn's Bairn Banter for a haunting Halloween party.

Taking a Halloween twist on the usual party games, there was wrap the 'mummy', musical statues, the 'hanging donut game' (which even the adults couldn't resist) and a tricky to beat piñata. There were also a range of Halloween-themed activities such as gruesome

sensory play, a spooky soft play area, face painting, 'dookin' for apples, pumpkin bowling, black cat hoopla, and a buffet-style feast laid on for everyone.

Bairn Banter founder, Melissa Ade, commented: "It was wonderful to see so many children and adults dressed up in their spooky gear to come together and celebrate with us here in Carsphairn... thank you to everyone who came along and to the very helpful parents whose help and support made this such a spook-tacular event!"

Funds raised at the Carsphairn Community Market in September helped to support this fun, free party for local families to enjoy.

Fundraising and fun with Friends of Dalry School

Friends of Dalry School (FoDS) once again held a fun-filled Halloween party for the children of the Glenkens.

Dalry Town Hall was filled with spooky characters having a ball, dancing and participating in all kinds of games. There were also hotdogs and snacks on offer for all, and a goody-bag to take away that children could use for guising.

Emily Wall, one of the key organisers, said: "Around 80 children turned out, and through donations on the door and towards face painting, a fabulous £172 was raised for FoDS.

"Special thanks go to the

Glenkens Community Shop for their donation of decorations, Mike for DJ-ing and organising the lights and Sarah for face-painting - and so many other people who helped in all kinds of ways which I don't have room to name here; you know who you are - thank you!"

FoDS is a charity which raises money to support Dalry school, both the primary and the secondary. They are members of the Easy Fundraising scheme, which enables a donation to be made each time you shop online with hundreds of well-known high street brands.

Through this scheme you can sign up and raise money for the school without having to spend a penny - visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fodaly to find out more.

On another fundraising note, FoDS has had some **Christmas trees** donated from the local Christmas tree farm outside Dalry, Fir Forestry. If you'd like to buy one please drop into the

primary school - at the time of going to print there were five smallish trees left, selling for £30 each. **Grab a festive bargain and support your local school!**

Friends of Dalry School



Gazette joins Indie News Forum in Glasgow

This October *Gazette* editor, Sarah Ade, attended the two-day Indie News Forum in Glasgow.

The Forum was run by the Public Interest News Foundation (PINF) and held at Glasgow Caledonian University. Around 50 independent news providers attended, from as far afield as South Devon, Shetland and every point in between.

The aim of the event was to forge connections and share ideas with other independent local news outlets, gaining insights into how other publications operate.

Friday involved talks by industry experts such as spokespeople from the BBC's Local Democracy Reporting scheme, Ofcom and philanthropist David Graham who has put £100,000 forward to created the Tenacious Journalist Awards, aiming to

spark original journalism that "makes a difference".

Along with other members of the Scottish Beacon journalism collaborative, the *Gazette* is applying to the award with a topic of 'No Going Back', focusing on how the sell-off of land leaves Scotland's communities short, how corporate 'land grabbing' is irrevocably changing Scotland's communities and how the renewables sector takes from Scotland's communities and leaves too little behind.

On Saturday, the floor was opened up to participants who discussed questions like: How do we encourage people to value journalism? How do we make it pay? How can we raise core funding? How do we stay sane as solo operators?

"All in all it was a highly informative, engaging weekend with lots of useful networking. It was incredibly interesting to meet so many other hyper-local news editors and teams, and to



A few of the attendees at the Indie News Forum in Glasgow, October 2020

hear about the similarities, and the differences, in how people get their message out there," said Sarah.

"One thing which struck a note for me was speaking with a journalism student from Venezuela who is currently studying in Edinburgh. She talked about how independent news in her country is censored,

and it made me realise how lucky we are to have independent news outlets and how much we take for granted with regard to free speech.

"Our grassroots news sources are so undervalued here in the UK, and yet so vital to our local communities and getting people's voices out who may otherwise go unheard."

Coming Soon: The Bodega Social's Wonky Burns Night at New Galloway Town Hall

Galloway is rich in nature, culture and great folk of all types.

Sometimes, though, it takes a trip to the big city to find that winning combination of funky, diverse live music, delicious cocktails and tasty food which come together to make a top night out on the town.

A year ago this thought brought together a bunch of friends from Laurieston

village and Laurieston Hall. Over some smokey chips and even smokier mescal we imagined our perfect night out, and planned how to make it happen on our doorstep.

Luckily, the group came with a whole host of skills. Meredith (long-time event and festival organiser), Tom (DJ with the Desiato Crew and steward of the most colourful PA this side the Tweed), Ewan (bar/cocktail supremo), Willie (graphic design demi-god and member of Samson Sounds), Rosie (Queen of the craft and decor), Larissa (rock solid organiser and top cook), and Ben (bringer of the world food flavours and spreadsheet whizz).

The first theme was Latin. The great psychedelic cumbia band Los Chicanos were booked, tacos were made, margarita recipes trialled and our first night packed-out, sold-out and rocked-out Laurieston Village Hall. The Latino vibe also helped our group get a name; something to reflect the friendly, diverse DIY scene

we're creating...the Bodega Social was born.

Now a year-and-a-half in, we've run top gigs in Kirkpatrick Durham, Laurieston and Moniaive with African, Caribbean and America themes. Not to mention building and hosting our own cabaret cocktail bar, 'The Bodega', at the Eden music festival (we'll be back there next year, come find us!).

We take no profit, but the nights mean hard working bands get a gig and village halls get a solid booking. Any extra money we make has been ploughed back into expanding our collection of colourful decor and elaborate plans for exciting bands and events to come.

Our nights couldn't happen without an amazing crew of volunteers and without all of you for coming along for a dance! It's the love we get back that makes the many hours of work worth it. Some comments from revellers at past events

THE BODEGA SOCIAL

are:
"hHge thank you for another fantastic evening"; "Crazy fun, what amazing food and music!"; "You transformed our village hall! It's never been so lively" and "So great to see everyone out looking so joyous".

Our next event is a Bodega-style Burns night; we'll be transforming New Galloway Town Hall with our usual funk, and welcoming the amazing Yoko Pwno to rock the joint with their renowned folktronica.

Join us on Saturday 25 January in New Galloway Town Hall - tickets available now from www.bodegasocial.co.uk

The Bodega Social Crew



Glenkens charity raising funds for schools in Afghanistan

Afghan Schools

The Afghan Schools Trust is a Glenkens-based charity founded in 2002 by Robin Ade and the late Godfrey Smith.

Set up initially to support education in the remote Afghan province of Nuristan, the Trust has developed over the years and provided support in a variety of ways.

It has built schools, funded teachers, organised women's health programmes, trained teaching staff and health workers, set up women's centres, initiated exchange programmes for educating Afghan girls in

Scotland, funded wells for drinking water, vital repairs to a bridge to a remote community and more.

Today the charity channels funding direct from grassroots donors in Scotland and the wider UK to projects in Afghanistan. No admin costs are taken – the only thing money is spent on is accountant's fees and printing an annual newsletter to keep people up to date with the trust's work.

"The situation in Afghanistan remains difficult and many are struggling to earn a living, with hunger being a key ongoing issue," said Afghan Schools Trust chair, Robin Ade. He continued: "Due lack of funds it has been impossible to provide wages for the teachers so instead we have funded, for three years in a row,

the planting of wheat which the community has overseen and then is given to teachers as their wages.

"We recently opened a new Turkman secondary school in the north of the country for girls, which currently has around 70 pupils. The Taliban are still trying to work out a national curriculum for older girls."

What are the plans for the future?

"Going forward, we will continue to support the Arsari Turkman school, which teaches around 400 students, both boys and girls," said Robin.

"We also support education of women in Lal through our Women's Centre. The facility is

currently unable to open but education continues in homes and mosques for the 50-60 students.

How can you support the charity?

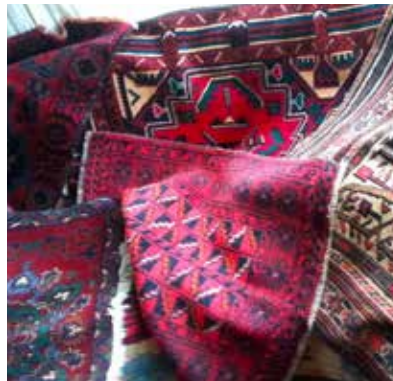
For the last two years

the charity has sold handmade Afghan carpets. The schools' administrator and his family, along with the majority of families of children attending the Asari Turkman school, are from a traditional carpet-making community.

In order to support the local economy, the Trust has bought carpets, providing a vital income stream to local families while offering high quality handmade rugs at very competitive prices here in Scotland while raising much-needed funds for the Trust.

If you would like to buy a carpet, please get in touch - you can view the carpets on the 'Afghan Schools' Facebook page, or arrange a visit to see them in Carsphairn; we have had a new shipment come in recently so have beautiful new designs in larger rugs.

Contact Robin on 07952 280 902 or email trustee Sarah Ade on sarah.ade@gmail.com or, to view the latest newsletter at www.afghanschools.org



Name the Place

In each issue a photograph will be taken somewhere in the Glenkens by local photographer Ted Leeming and readers have to guess where it is.

The answer can be found on p24, with a bit of information and food for thought about that location.

Pamela Young Trust housing update

The Pamela Young Trust (PYT) is a charity providing affordable housing in the Glenkens.

Over the past few years, the Trust has been working on expanding in a sustainable way in order to help address the housing shortage in the area.

The first step has been to change their structure to a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) and this has now been approved by OSCR, the Scottish Charity Regulator.

The new constitution is not markedly different from the

previous one but the way it is set up does reflect the requirements of the modern funding environment. There is plenty of legal paperwork to get it all set up but it should be noted that there will be no change for any of the PYT tenants.

Following a recruitment campaign for a volunteer to join the PYT Board, the trust is now in the process of assuming a new trustee. Allan McMillan, BSc, MRICS, is Managing Partner at GM Thomson & Co, chartered surveyors, valuers and land and estate agents.

Allan comes from a local farming family, and is born and bred in



PAMELA YOUNG TRUST
help with housing in the Glenkens

the Glenkens. Alan Smith, PYT chair, says: "We feel Allan's skill set is a good fit for us, adding to the abilities of the existing trustees - Steve Davie, Nicolette Wise and myself. We are delighted that he is joining us."

Lastly, the Trust is excited to report that the proposed Balmacellan project has moved to the next stage. Collective Architecture, the firm of architects who drew up the plans for the development, have now

been instructed to take the plans to RIBA Stage 3. They estimate that, if all goes to plan, the planning permission application should be determined by July next year.

The PYT still needs to source additional funding for the project and it is hoped that becoming a SCIO will help with funding applications.

Learn bridge at Dalry community cafe

Dalry Community Cafe hosted a special fundraiser for Cancer Research as part of the Festival of Bridge.

The community event was part of the Scottish Bridge Union's week of fundraising which aims to raise funds whilst also raising awareness of the game of bridge. In excess of £300 was donated which was a great achievement.

The Community Cafe is an important part of our community and tables will continue to be

available at the monthly event to play bridge, alongside other residents enjoying the usual friendly chat and refreshments.

Building on this enthusiasm, we hope you will join us for a beginners course starting on Monday 2 December and running weekly. It will be held at the Lochinvar Hotel from 7-9pm, initially playing 'minibridge' before progressing on to bidding skills in the New Year, once we are all up to speed with the jargon and other parts of the game.

To find out more, please email Rosie at rosiemoffat@btinternet.com or call Rebecca on 07979 150 671.

Rebecca Arnold



Dalry Community Cafe Festival of Bridge fundraising session for Cancer Research

Carsphairn becomes a Biosphere Community



Carsphairn joins Dalry as the second designated 'Biosphere Community' in the Glenkens.

Biosphere Communities benefit from a close working relationship with the Galloway & Southern Ayrshire (GSA) Biosphere Partnership and are supported to develop community-led tourism, nature and heritage projects, and low carbon living ideas.

They are also promoted internationally as part of Scotland's UNESCO Trail, the award-winning collaboration between Biospheres, World Heritage Sites, Creative Cities, and Global Geoparks.

The programme for Biosphere Communities includes developing walking trails, adventure itineraries, and outdoor interpretation for landmarks and historic sites. Events led by the Biosphere

team range from ecology walks and wildlife recording to workshops for local enterprise.

The support available for community-led tourism builds on international attention drawn by features in National Geographic Traveller, Rough Guides, Lonely Planet and Wanderlust magazine, all of which acclaimed the Galloway & Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere as a must-see destination in 2024.

Faith Hillier, the Biosphere's Community Officer, said: "We have already created some fantastic connections with people who live and work in and around Carsphairn and are particularly proud to showcase the area's local history.

"Carsphairn has a fascinating past rooted in agriculture and industry which is still being actively explored by the Carsphairn Heritage Initiative. This is one of a wonderful variety of volunteer-run organisations and for a small village with one main street Carsphairn hosts an incredible calendar of events, not least the internationally renowned Knockengoroch Festival of music and arts. We are delighted to be working with so many residents and community groups and look forward to making the most of our partnership with Carsphairn in the months and years to come."

To find out more about the GSA Biosphere visit www.gsabiosphere.org.uk

Busy times at New Galloway Golf Club

New Galloway Golf Club celebrated an excellent season when it held its annual prize presentation.

Prizes were awarded after a social game of golf. Gill Warnock was this year's Ladies Club Champion and Sandy Harvie the Gents Club Champion. Phil Lancaster won the Coronation Cup whilst his father won the Captains Trophy.

Visitor numbers were up on previous years; even though the weather was not particularly good, the course has been in superb condition thanks to the work of the green staff. Visitors have reiterated their pleasure

in playing on such a well-kept course.

A highlight of the year was Captain's Day, which raised over £2,000 split between the Army Benevolent Society and the club. Members will be looking forward to the 2025 Captain's Day and hoping the weather is as good.

The Memorial Bench which was erected by Guy Pumpur has been appreciated by all who have played on the course. The bench is in memory of our long-standing greenkeeper, Brian Porteous, who sadly died in 2023 and is dearly missed by all who knew him.

Social membership has been very successful this year, with residents of New Galloway attending on a Saturday evening for a quiet drink, a game of bingo or quiz evening. There is also a group using the clubhouse to



Memorial bench in memory of greenkeeper Brian Porteous

play bridge on a Wednesday, which has proved very popular.

Winter membership is available from January to the end of March - just contact the Club Secretary on 01644 420737. Individual coaching can also be arranged.

Why not come and try golf out; you never know, you might like it! Or what about membership for a friend or family member as a Christmas gift?

Jeff Sutcliffe, Club Secretary

Get involved with GCAT!

At the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT), volunteers are a core underpinning of what we do.

Some of them cheer up our garden, a lot steward at events, our Galloway Community Transport (GCT) Patient Transport drivers are invaluable, and one volunteer even volunteers to coordinate the other volunteers.

But there's a big group of

volunteers that don't often get seen. They are our board members (also known as directors or trustees), and their contribution is critical to assuring our current path and future success.

We'll be calling for new board members at our AGM on 27 January, so if you live in the Glenkens or surrounding area and have a keen interest in the wide and varied impact that GCAT has on our communities, do get in touch for a chat.

We're looking for people who can commit to quarterly

meetings where they will provide assurance on the work the staff team is doing and determine the strategic direction looking forward.

If you've got a background in strategy or community development, then we'd particularly love to hear from you - but we're also looking for people who are committed to helping the Glenkens be all that it can be, no matter what your life experience (or age) is.

Drop me a note on helen@catstrand.com and myself and Peter Fryer, chair of GCAT, will be

Glenkens Community & Arts Trust AGM

27 January 2025

7pm for 7:30 start at the CatStrand

Come along for a glass of wine and to hear how the year went and future plans.

All welcome!

happy to have a chat about the role of a GCAT board member any time.

Helen Keron, GCAT Executive Manager



Get cosy at the CatStrand café

As the colder months approach, CatStrand is delighted to be able to offer some support for people struggling with bills over the winter.

Thanks to D&G Council's Tackling Poverty Initiative, we're offering a free 'winter warmer' to people who want to come and spend some time in a warm and welcoming space, but can't always afford to eat out. Throughout December, January and February (while funding lasts) head over

to the CatStrand for a free bowl of soup and filled roll between 11.30am and 2pm, Tuesday to Saturday.

CatStrand will also be hosting a Cost of Living Advice Day in January, signposting all the support that is out there, so look out for details of that.

Over the winter months the CatStrand is open 11am to 4pm, Tuesday to Saturday, closing from Friday 20 December to Tuesday 7 January for the Christmas break. However, some planned electrical work may delay the opening by a few days, so please check the website for updates.

Galloway's best independent retailer

Continued from front page...

"We have won some very loyal customers who always come to us first – that feels very satisfying. People living here have embraced us and made us feel welcome, for which we're very grateful," said Bill.

"There are a lot of perhaps less well-known skills needed to run a shop in a rural area like the Glenkens. The shop is a hub of the community, so you're not just a shop keeper; you're a sounding board, sometimes an adviser and a bit of a social worker as well as a manager of staff. And we have to stay neutral about anything contentious.

"So don't ask me about wind farms or the National Park - I'm not going to give

you a view! And at times we end up doing some unusual things to keep customers happy; for instance, as the first shop after Portpatrick for walkers on the Southern Upland Way, I've cut a pack of babywipes in half for a walker who didn't want to carry the extra weight!"

One thing both Bill and Val feel sad about is that, because they work long hours, they haven't yet had time to explore the Glenkens, or go to local events. "We start early and we're usually in bed by 8pm," said Val. "So we don't have a lot of energy at the end of each day. At least Tibo, our Cockapoo, needs a daily walk so that gets us out a wee bit."

When asked what their plans are for the future, Val said: "Although we want to

continue doing what we do well for people, we'd like a better work-life balance. So that's what we're aiming for – a bit more time off." Bill added jokingly: "And, as in the quote from *Jaws*, for all those customers who shop locally, 'we're going to need a bigger fridge!'"

Bill and Val would like to wish all their customers a happy and prosperous festive season. The shop will be open throughout, except on Christmas Day and Boxing Day, when they'll be taking a well earned rest.

As one customer delighted that the award brings the recognition they deserve for contributing so much to our village, I'm sure everyone will join me in wishing them a happy holiday period!

Nikky Wilson

A new era begins at the Glenkens Medical Practice

Dr Robbie Grieve has retired after 20 years at the Glenkens Medical Practice.

He has been a fantastic colleague, a popular and excellent doctor and remains a very good friend.

Dr Grieve qualified at the University of Edinburgh in 1989 and is a fifth generation 'Dr Grieve'. After working in a number hospitals and practices across the country, he joined us in New Galloway in 2004.

He will be very much missed and I would like to take this opportunity to say a very grateful "thank you" to Dr Grieve, from myself and on behalf of the practice and the local community, for his dedication and service and we all wish him well in his retirement.

As well as saying farewell to Dr Grieve, the practice has welcomed a new member of the team, Dr David Svolkinas.

David is a knowledgeable and good-humoured doctor who wanted to work in a rural setting. The Glenkens appears to be an ideal fit for him.

'Dr David' qualified as a pharmacist at Liverpool John

Moore's University in 2011 and after a few years working as a community pharmacist embarked on a career change.

He undertook his medical training at the University of Glasgow and qualified in 2019.

David worked in hospitals in the west of Scotland and undertook his GP training at a practice in Paisley before relocating to Dumfries and Galloway earlier this year.

We are all very happy to have him on board and wish him well for the future at the practice.

Mrs Kelly Lamont has also joined the practice on a permanent basis as our Advanced Practitioner.

Kelly has a background and wealth of experience from Community Nursing. She undertook her Advanced Practice training through the University of Cumbria with a two-year placement at the Glenkens Medical Practice and qualified this year.

Advanced Practitioners are experienced health care professionals who manage complete clinical care for patients. Kelly can diagnose, prescribe and refer patients in a similar way to a GP. She is a valuable asset to the team.

Glenkens
Medical Practice
NEW GALLOWAY



Glenkens Medical Practice welcomes new practice partner, Dr David Svolkinas, and advanced practitioner Kelly Lamont (photographs by Samantha Hunter)

So, we have been fortunate in recruiting two new, excellent colleagues, particularly when set against the challenges with GP recruitment which are widely experienced.

Alongside our relatively new Practice Nurse, Linzi Knowles, and our dedicated reception-dispensary staff, I am proud of the team we have assembled here.

The practice could not ask for a more sound footing on which to continue to provide our services to the Glenkens for future years.

Dr Bernard Jones, Principal GP, Glenkens Medical Practice

To find out more about the Practice you can visit www.glenkensmedicalpractice.co.uk

Glenkens Youth Correspondent

Joshua Wells, aged 15, is our *Gazette* youth correspondent and in each edition he will be writing about topics which interest him. In this issue Joshua discusses the Galloway Levellers.



A couple of months ago I went to the Fullarton to watch a performance about the Galloway Levellers called '1724'.

It could easily engage any audience and was thought-provoking, had brilliant acting and really brought this monumental series of events to life. But I'm not writing this to talk about how great the play was, I am more interested in writing about the crazy legend of the Levellers that holds a place in the history of Dumfries and Galloway.

In the 1700s, many local landowners were interested in removing tenants from their

land to make space for cattle, putting profit above the well-being of another human being. This obviously aggravated the tenants, who began to revolt and literally tore down dykes. The demolition of these dykes allowed the cattle that replaced these tenants to escape.

Tactics became more reckless and violent. After a while, the Levellers began to level every dyke they came across, whether it was owned by the landowner who evicted them or not. The Levellers allegedly also slaughtered nearly 200 cattle.

The Levellers seemed to be just a nuisance to landowners in the beginning, as the landowners could just build the dykes again. However, with multiple dykes

being destroyed every day and cows being killed, landowners began to put guards out to ensure their dykes were safe from destruction.

The Galloway Levellers grew to such numbers as 1,000-2,000 people, which is between two and four times the current population of New Galloway. They had armies of armed tenants marching to level the dykes that marked the borders of the land they once lived on. Even tenants' children took part in the destruction of dykes in Galloway.

One of the few dykes that remained was that of Robert Johnston from Kelton. The reason these dykes were saved from destruction was that the minister reassured tenants that

there would be no eviction taking place.

After years of revolting with no change, the leaders of the Galloway Levellers were taken to court, where they were found guilty and fined or sentenced to imprisonment or being sent to the colonies.

As we say we are going to tear down walls in our society metaphorically, these rebellious groups of men women and children alike tore down walls in their society literally. Even though they did not see success, the Levellers most definitely made a great impact on the history of Dumfries and Galloway, considering we are still interested in them to the extent that we make plays about them.

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INFORMATION

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Mon-Fri 7.30am-5.30pm
Sat 8.30am-5pm
Sun 8.30am-3pm

POST OFFICE

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Sat 9am to 12noon
Sun closed

* closed xmas day & boxing day *

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HENDERSON BUTCHERS
RAMSAY OF CARLUKE
BUTCHERS
SWEET TREATS BAKERY
GLENKENS HONEY
CREAM O' GALLOWAY
GALLOWAY LODGE
IRVINGS BAKERY
COWS & CO CHEESE
THE CRESS COMPANY
BORDER BISCUITS
HAWKSTONE BREWERY
MITCHELLS FRUIT & VEG
SULWATH BREWERY
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POP IN FOR A CHAT AND A BROWSE

Moving forward in education discussions

It finally feels like real progress is finally being made with regard to finding a constructive way forward for Glenkens education.

This comes after months of work from community groups and individuals across the Glenkens – years for some parents and members of the community.

What is so encouraging is that the conversation has grown to more than (although of course including) the future of Dalry Secondary – it is the acknowledgement that a high-quality, accessible educational offering is key to thriving rural communities and their ability to attract and retain families.

Over the past couple of months the Glenkens & District Community Action Plan Steering Group (CAPSG) and the Dalry School Parent Council have met with Gillian Brydson, Executive Director of Education Skills and Community Wellbeing (E,S&CW) at Dumfries & Galloway Council. At the Parent Council meeting, Stephen Foster, the new head teacher for Dalry Secondary and Castle Douglas High School, was also present.

Discussions were constructive and focused on creating the best outcomes for current students whilst also planning for the future. Stephen will be working over the course of this academic year on consulting and planning on possible options, including that of an all-through school running Nursery to S3. (A summary of these meetings can be found on the Glenkens Hub 'Education and Learning' page at www.glenkens.scot/education-and-learning).

Compromise is a natural and necessary part of any process where there is more than one perspective at play and no outcome will be a perfect fit for everyone. However, for the first time it really feels like the community is 'at the table' with regard to decisions being made on the future of our schools.

Much effort continues to be put in both from the communities of the Glenkens and the E,S&CW department to find outcomes that are achievable and that work effectively for our young people and our community, both

now and going forward (to keep up to date with how things are progressing visit the Glenkens Hub Education & Learning page).

In light of the changing situation of Glenkens education, highlighted by the plight of Dalry Secondary, the Glenkens & District Trust (GDT) commissioned a report into 'innovative models of rural education'.

This is now published and it is hoped will help guide current and future plans with regard to rural education.

There will be an online event to discuss the report and ask questions of the authors – keep an eye on social media, the Glenkens Hub and posters for more information.

Expanding upon the topic of Glenkens education, something that has grown out of these discussions is an exciting prospect of a broader education and skills offering being initiated in terms of lifelong learning linked to local need. The CAPSG, through the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust, is pursuing the fledgling idea of a 16+ learning campus in the Glenkens (which would work closely with the new Carsphairn Community Woodland's Rural Skills Centre as well as other partners), offering skills key to industry and employment in the region, such as renewables, forestry, agriculture, social care and hospitality.

This is an extremely ambitious idea but it is hoped that, with the right partners in place, it could be realised – watch this space!

In yet more education-related news, **D&G Council's budget consultation**, www.dumgal.gov.uk/budget, is live now and **will run until Friday 6 December**. Suggested education-related money saving options which are worth noting include cutting the Additional Support Needs (ASN) support in classrooms by 50% and mothballing all schools with a roll of less than 25 – changes which, if implemented, could have huge ramifications for our rural areas.

These sweeping proposals seem to be at odds with the Council's 2023-2028 Vision that "rural

communities are vibrant and thriving" as the school roll criteria will of course be mostly relevant to rural primary schools.

As an aside, and looking as we do through our rural lens, it is interesting to note that none of the cost-saving options reference three of the Dumfries high

Do have a look at the budget consultation if you can – it affects us all and the more rural voices which can be raised, the less urban-centric the outcomes will be (we hope).

Another Council initiative coming soon is a report into the causes of rural depopulation – the

CAPSG have been advocating for the Glenkens to be case study and/or key partner in this work. Most of

the work being done in support of the Glenkens and District Community Action Plan could be boiled down to mitigating rural depopulation, so we will continue to follow this work with interest and will report back.

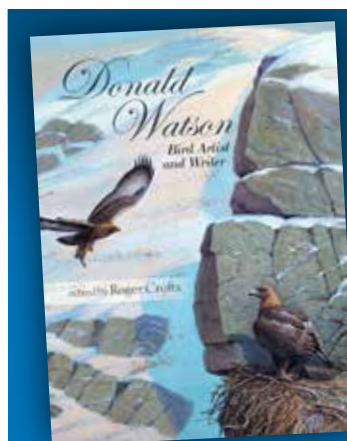
We feel proud that the Glenkens, with our strong community voice, united organisations and our willingness to work together and look to the future, seems to be ahead of the game with regard to issues facing rural areas; we just need to keep beating our drum and make sure that we are both heard and listened to.

Sarah Ade & Helen Keron

...for the first time it really feels like the community is 'at the table' with regard to decisions being made...

schools which are situated no more than a 10 minute drive from each other and all of which have huge recent or ongoing capital investment programmes, plus annual running costs in the £millions, yet run at an average 57% capacity between them (December 2023 figures).

The recent D&G Council's School Model Consultation outcomes stated that a school functioning below 60% capacity was not sustainable. So why is it only our small rural schools that face this scrutiny and a constant risk of closure?



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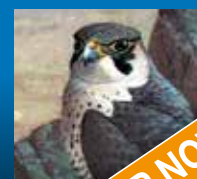
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What's happening at Dalry Secondary

Pupil Council

All of the young people at Dalry contribute to class discussions and set their own agenda, with chosen representatives Piri, Lena, Archie J, Eleanor and Rosa planning to meet with the Head Teacher on a monthly basis.

Youth Awards

Nominations for the Youth Awards 2024 are now open! This night promises to celebrate the achievements and effort of local Youth Groups and Individuals from across Dumfries and Galloway. Youth Work Services are looking for nominations for

11 categories and should really highlight individuals or groups that are recognised for their efforts within their communities and outstanding achievements.

If you would like to put forward a nomination, click on the link below. If you want more information about the nomination categories, please see the attached guidance document.

www.dgyouthawards.wpcomstaging.com/nominate

Wednesday afternoons

Wednesday afternoons sees Dalry S1-3 learners working towards achieving their Dynamic Youth Awards with youth worker Victoria Townsend.

They contributed their ideas and came up with an exciting schedule of activities that they have been enjoying over autumn, from outdoor skills such as camp craft, fire building and

survival tips to creative cooking in the form of 'Ready, Steady, Cook' team challenges and creating their own 'fakeaway' meals; so much tastier and healthier than boring old 'takeaways'!

Dalry Secondary School is now a RRSA Bronze: Rights Committed School

Watch this space as the school starts its journey towards Silver. You can visit the website RRSA for more information.

Using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a guide, the school will be working to embed the school values of Respect, Responsibility and Equality in all aspects of school life, to ensure that everyone is valued and respected.

Exciting visits

Pupils enjoyed welcoming award-winning chef Fraser Cameron, who is head chef at The Globe Inn in Dumfries. Fraser is a former pupil of Dalry School, and first discovered his



love of cooking in the Home Economics department.

As well as inspiring students with a unique and exciting cooking demonstration, Fraser talked about his own pathway to becoming a top chef.

Young people are looking forward to a festive trip to Glasgow on 19 December, which includes visits to the Christmas market, a Spanish tapas restaurant and culminating in a performance of 'The Nutcracker' ballet at the Theatre Royal.



This term we enjoyed going outside and learning outdoor / camping skills.

We had great fun setting up tents in groups, although our tent was on a slope.

On sheets of paper we had to plan for what

we would pack for our "trip". The youth worker Vicky showed us what was inside a survival kit - there was lots of cool stuff like flints for lighting a fire.

We enjoyed it very much. Luckily the sun was shining...

Piri Whitty (S2)



Youth Group

After school on a Monday evening a selection of different people go to youth group.

The youth worker, Sue, waits there for us with the latest fantastic activity.

The last one before the holidays was making apple turnovers with experts, and if you don't want to make an apple turnover there is a selection of board games, friends to play with, and drawings to do.

It's wonderfully fun and definitely brilliant.

Lena Whitty (S3)

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The Optimistic Environmentalist

Reducing your home energy bills - Part Eight *Examples of energy-efficient technology*

Space heating continued

Infra-red heaters radiate the heat down or towards people or surfaces rather than inefficiently heating the air around them. Thus, they are placed on the ceiling or the walls. They can be used in small areas, large open spaces like hotel reception areas, or outside.

Herschel, for instance, try to make them fit into the environment, so as well as flat panel heaters, they make mirrors and picture frame heaters. They even make a candelabra heater, called the halo, often sold to churches.

Having a number of these around the church which can be turned on separately means that the infra-red heating is focused depending upon the size of that day's congregation. They also manufacture some heaters in the UK from British steel and Welsh insulation that are designed so that the component materials are easily recyclable.

Unlike other technologies, any electrician can fit these as they don't need any extra skills. Most of the radiators, though, can be fitted by anyone as they just need plugging in and/or hanging up. Herschel provides up

to a ten-year warranty and no maintenance is necessary, and components like heating elements, are easily changed.

Portable bidirectional heat-pumps that you can move around the house to where you want. They can generate hot or cold air so it can be used in the winter and summer. They output more energy than they use so are very efficient. We have one and I'm afraid it is noisy but when you are bathing in your favourite temperature, you can forgive it. It is quite heavy so you may not want to keep carrying it up and downstairs, but it's on wheels for easier movement on the same level.

For water heating

Mixergy hot water cylinders – these are very efficient because unlike traditional water cylinders which heat the same amount of water whenever they work, the Mixergy tanks heat the amount of water you need, when you need it. For instance, usually it heats a small amount of water for people, to wash their hands after the toilet or to wash up, etc. However, it can be set to heat a larger amount for a bath, say. You can have these set at different times throughout the day so you can set it to suit your lifestyle as

well as for low-priced electricity tariffs, saving you money.

The new Mixergy Cuboid works with a solar diverter and contains a heat pump so that with its ergonomic shape that enables it to fit into a cupboard, efficiently converting energy into hot water at higher temperatures than would be needed for space heating.

Similarly, Quantum makes a 6kw heat pump which heats water to 70°C. This is exciting because it can fit under a sink.

Current and future changes

- Current eco building materials eg straw are enhanced by new materials to reduce carbon input into buildings like recycled bricks and blocks reducing use of new concrete which accounts for 8% of the world's carbon emissions

- New battery designs and materials like sodium help to meet the growing demand for a variety of needs

- Policies and incentives like the boiler upgrade scheme and electricity producers' low-cost EV tariffs will be encouraging people to change their behaviours and tastes

(see Part 9 next issue for income generation)

Denise MacDonald-Kiernan



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Hanging out with bats and a wild goose chase...



Hanging out with the Bats in Crossmichael Community Woodland

Loch Ken Trust was delighted to be involved with Crossmichael Primary School's first ever Bat Walk, held in Crossmichael Community Woodland.

The event was organised by pupils at the school from 'Livingstone House'. To start things off we played a fun game of 'Bat and Moth', a blindfold game representing the bat's echolocation, before heading into the woodland with bat detectors to hear the bats hunting for their prey: moths and midgies!

"Amazing fun – it was a good walk, good exercise and it was interesting to hear the bats and use the bat detectors; I have never used one before."

The weather was extremely kind and there was a great show of local wildlife. We saw, and heard, a range of bats including some of the less common soprano pipistrelles, as well as a hedgehog, two deer and at least one owl calling out in the dark.

It was a fun evening with lots of laughter, full of information and discoveries.

The event was very popular, with over ten families - 40 people in total - attending. Head Ranger Leanne Pumpkin said: "It was fantastic to see so many families outdoors enjoying nature."

We hope to be involved with other community events planned throughout the year.

Some comments from attendees were: "I liked it, it was really, really fun. My favourite part was learning how bats communicate, it's so cool!" and "The best part was seeing a bat. I have walked in the woods with my family before but never in the dark!"

A huge "thank you" to Mrs Stevens and Mrs Glover for inviting us to support with this event.

Wild Goose Festival Event

We were also excited to host our first ever Wild Goose



Above: Greenland white-fronted geese flying overhead, photographed by Gavin Chambers

Below: Crossmichael Primary School's Bat Walk

Festival event, a talk by Jack Barton from the local RSPB, on Greenland white-fronted geese.

Loch Ken is home to a small population of Greenland white-fronted geese, one of only a handful that winter in Scotland. The event was well-attended and Jack Barton gave a fascinating insight into the amazing journey of this endangered species to winter in Galloway, and the work

being done to help support and protect the species.

With the 2024 season ending, it has been nice to reflect on a successful year for the Loch Ken Trust ranger service.

As always, if you are interested in any of our work you can get in touch to find out how you can get involved by emailing office@lochken.org.uk



Eco Feature

Decarbonising CatStrand

sponsored by
natural power



It's an exciting time at CatStrand as we take the next steps on our environmental action plan.

Thanks to funding from Local Energy Scotland through CARES and the Community Led Local Development Fund from the Scottish Government, we are about to replace our oil boiler with a carbon neutral alternative.

Installation will include the replacement of our existing oil boiler with air source heat pumps and solar PV panels mounted on the cafe extension roof to generate electricity for

the new pumps, plus a battery storage system and a new smart heating controller.

The CatStrand is eminently suitable for these modifications, which were highlighted in a 2023 Natural Power feasibility report, as it already has underfloor heating, is well insulated and is often open to the public.

The report calculated that the work will remove nearly 10 tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually, which is excellent news for us all.

We will also be replacing the nearly 20-year old light fittings throughout the CatStrand building with new energy efficient versions, including the very power-hungry ones in the

auditorium - so that's going to make a big difference as well.

On top of the support from funders, two key volunteers have helped hugely with this project: John Crallan and Dave Stewart.

They are both well-versed in delivering extremely high-quality capital projects for the CatStrand, and we are most grateful for the huge amounts of work they have put in, enabling this project to become a reality.

Thanks as well to the planning department of D&G Council for their sensible approach to such important upgrades.

The installation is planned to start in early January, and will result in some days without heating, so we may need to

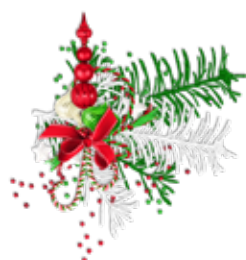
shut the cafe and public spaces briefly at that point, but we will post updates about that as the timetable becomes clear.

We're planning an event, supported by the D&G Climate Hub, to celebrate this energy use moving close to Net Zero. Expect talks, entertainment, and food - keep an eye on our social media channels for details. Here's looking forward to an emission-free CatStrand in 2025!

*Helen Keron,
GCAT Executive Manager*

The Gazette asked Lesley at the Galloway Food Hub if their producers might offer a recipe each issue, linked to seasonal local produce.

Here is the first in what we hope will be a regular feature - a recipe for a perhaps slightly unusual brussels-sprout-centred festive treat.



Galloway Food Hub Christmas canapé



A seasonal treat to tempt the taste buds of even the most adamant sprout nay-sayer!

All the ingredients can be found on the Galloway Food Hub (except the cocktail sticks).

Ingredients

- As many sprouts as you'd need for your guests; allow at least 2-3 sprouts per person
- Block of Ethical Dairy Fleet Valley Blue (or Laganory if you prefer a non-blue), cut into sprout sized mini slices
- Pack of Low Auldirth streaky bacon, cooked and cut into sprout-sized pieces
- Jar of Glenkens and Dee Runny Honey (optional)

Pack of cocktail sticks.

Method

- Pre-heat oven to 180°C
- Parboil the sprouts for 2-3

minutes, depending on size

- remove from water/steamer and halve
- Coat sprout halves in a little oil, place on a baking tray flat side up and roast for 10-15 minutes, till starting to crisp at the edges

- Top the sprouts with a mini slice of Fleet Valley Blue and return to oven for a further few minutes until the cheese starts the melt
- Remove from oven and, taking care to handle if very hot, top with a pre-cooked slice of bacon and skewer with a cocktail stick
- Drizzle with a thin stream of runny honey for a salty, sweet and savoury sensation.

- Serve warm (you can keep these warm

in a low oven for 10-15 minutes before bringing them out)

Thank you to Low Auldirth for the recipe idea. We hope you enjoy your sprouts!

See ad on p11 for how to order from the Galloway Good Hub...



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

FREE

Siemens IQ500 dishwasher. A few years old but works well (just doesn't fit our new kitchen). Contact: 07748 631 820

Kids bike, suitable for child learning to ride a bike – maybe 4-6 years old. Blue, nearly new (a bit dusty from being stored in the shed). Contact: 07727 127 997

Pair of upholstered bar stool chairs, (light wood, with red, removable covers), IKEA. Good condition. Contact: 07748 631820



Toshiba TV, 26" screen with remote control. Contact 07974 026380

32" Samsung TV. Contact: 07908 195 942

Rabbit hutch and all rabbit-related bits to go with it (indoor hutch, litter tray, water bottle, some food and hay and treats. Contact: 07727 127 997



Lakeland food dehydrator. Electric. Good for apples, mushrooms, peppers, etc. Almost new. Contact: 07563 718 011

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Lothlorien nature connection project

Lothlorien is a residential therapeutic community for people experiencing mental health difficulties and is situated near the village of Corsock.

Set in seventeen acres of woodlands, gardens and meadows, it has been a quiet sanctuary for healing for over four decades. Built in 1974 by the Houghton family, it has been run since 1989 by the Rokpa Trust, an international charity founded by Dr Akong Tulku Rinpoche of Samye Ling Tibetan Centre in Dumfriesshire.

Buddhist values of compassion and tolerance are the basis of our approach however we are not a religious community and are open to all.

A recent study, commissioned by Lothlorien and conducted by Propagate, revealed a clear case

for developing complementary projects on the Lothlorien site to offer access to day visitors and the wider community for both green social prescribing activities and nature-based events.

The activities envisaged are not limited to mental health support, but cover a broad range of nature connection, food growing and wellbeing - which can have educational, social and therapeutic outcomes.

Inspired by the enthusiasm highlighted in this study, Lothlorien has secured funding to bring these ideas to life. In September, Lesley Atkins started her new role as Lothlorien outreach coordinator and aims to help foster connections between the community and local groups.

For Lothlorien's vibrant community of residents, volunteers, and staff, this new chapter is an opportunity to broaden their connections and support network, whilst also welcoming others in, to benefit from their tried and trusted therapeutic methods.



Whilst many local community groups working in mental health may already be in contact with Lothlorien, if you work in this area and are interested in connecting, please reach out to Lesley. Nature-based practitioners are also welcome to get in touch should they wish to enquire about running outdoor workshops in this beautiful, peaceful space.

Together a unique, community-centred approach can be created to provide healing and prevention that goes beyond

traditional therapy.

As spring approaches, Lothlorien is preparing to host open days, to which groups and potential partners can experience firsthand the transformative power of nature and all this community has to offer.

To find out more about the open days or to discuss how you might get involved in the community, please get in touch at lesley@lothlorien.tc. You can also follow Lothlorien on Facebook or Instagram or visit www.lothlorien.tc for more information.



Interested in land use in your area? Enter a five-minute online survey for a chance to win a £25 voucher for the Clachan Inn, Dalry.

Hello, my name is Lucy Jenner and I am a PhD student at the University of Edinburgh working with Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere.

My research focuses on environmental land use change.

I am conducting a survey to explore how residents in and around the Glenkens engage with local place planning and land use.

Your insights are valuable and will contribute to a research project focused on different approaches to accessing data and information about land use.

This survey is anonymous and will take approximately five minutes to complete.

Participants will be entered into a competition to win a £25

voucher for the Clachan Inn.

Please use the link below or scan the QR code to take part.

*Thank you!
Lucy Jenner*



Eileen Campbell



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Considering the Galloway National Park proposal for the Glenkens

At the *Gazette* we work hard to ensure that we don't shy away from issues impacting the people living within the communities of the Glenkens, however delicate they may be to navigate.

Currently, the issue of the moment, on the tip of many tongues, is the proposed Galloway National Park. In light of this we felt that in the spirit of sparking discussion, debate and participation in the consultation process regarding this proposal, we would print a selection of readers' submissions on the topic. These submissions range in perspective and will likely inspire strong feelings in some, whether it's agreement or outrage. The *Gazette*, as

always, endeavours to ensure we take no stance on issues which may polarise our communities, and aims always to facilitate discussion in the hope of unifying rather than fragmenting our communities. Sometimes reading about a topic from a perspective which doesn't necessarily gel with our own can in itself be a catalyst to introspection, potentially inspiring research and broadening knowledge bases. So we hope you enjoy the articles and information you

will find on the following pages, and that it inspires thought and provokes discussion.

In light of the ongoing consultation, it's important that as many people as possible who wish to be involved make sure their voices are heard at the consultation stage; please make sure that you have your say - nobody knows our area as well as you, the people who live here, and your opinions are valuable and vital to getting the best outcome for the Glenkens.

General information from the NatureScot consultation hub

Here are a few key statements from the NatureScot information hub for the Galloway National Park proposal.

What are National Parks and what do they do?

The ground rules for all of Scotland's National Parks are provided by the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. This states the four aims of Scottish National Parks as:

- To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area.
- To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area.
- To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public.
- To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's

communities.

The term National Park is used throughout the world to describe protected areas of land or water of outstanding national significance. The title means different things to different people, but all National Parks have some key features in common:

- They are areas of land or water which are of the very highest value to the nation for their scenery and wildlife, and often for their cultural heritage too.
- They are managed in a way that safeguards their special qualities for the long term.
- They are usually highly attractive places to visit, and they provide opportunities for people to enjoy them.

Why is a new National Park being proposed?

Scotland's first two National Parks have performed well as models of sustainable

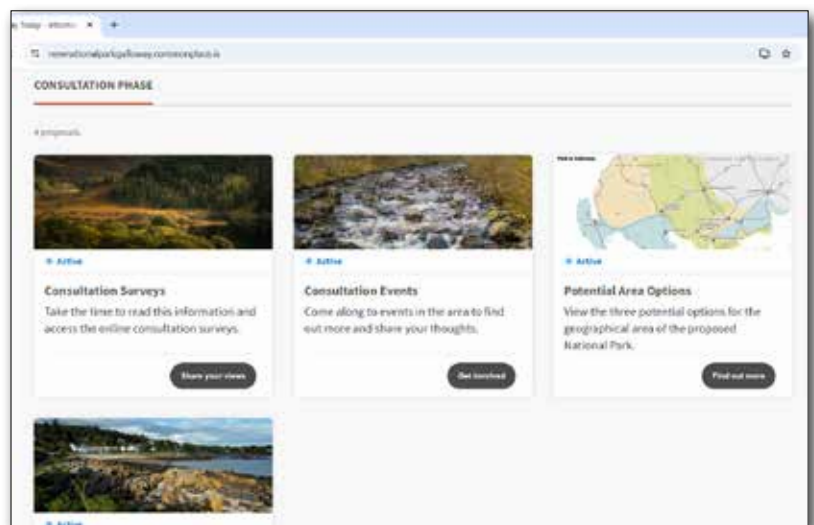
development, delivering conservation alongside rural economic development and recreation.

The Scottish Government considers the time is now right to establish at least one further National Park.

It also wants to see all our National Parks contribute more to tackling climate change and protecting and restoring nature, whilst supporting the local economy, creating jobs and opportunities for local businesses and attracting investment.

Further information can be found at on the 'Consultation Surveys' page at www.newnationalparkgalloway.commonplace.is, considering questions such as: **Would a third National Park be similar to the current ones? What a new National Park Authority could do? What would be the make-up of a National Park Board? What difference could a National Park make?**

On the 'Further Information' page, there are some of the most commonly cited pros and cons listed and NatureScot's response.



A Galloway National Park?

The proposers of a national park in Galloway claim that its establishment will result in a better future for people, communities, economy, culture and the environment in the area.

Is this likely? What are the real issues that need to be addressed during this consultation? Who is best placed to provide the solutions we need? How can the friction and concern in our communities be minimised? And what's the hurry?

All these are legitimate questions to be put in dialogue with NatureScot, the official statutory Reporter on the proposals. And remember, it is just a proposal and our views as communities and individuals in the Glenkens really matter.

What are the real issues in our area?

It is obvious that availability and cost of housing, jobs for young people, continuation of locally provided schools education, access to the vital services that people need, especially health and welfare, as well as continuing concerns about the extent of commercial afforestation and wind farms, and the future of farming, and the lack of effective consultation are all issues concerning us.

What do we expect government bodies to be doing about them?

In the Glenkens a lot of thinking

has been done and action taken about our futures, more than in most rural areas in Scotland. We want to build on these excellent local initiatives, but it needs adequate resources to bring benefits locally.

Dumfries and Galloway Council is responsible for social services, transport, education, housing and more. How can it be more effective in addressing our needs and concerns? For example, we should expect them to work with the NHS for the care services, with Loreburn Housing Association for the provision of affordable homes and with further and higher education providers for training and skills development of locals.

There is a relatively new government agency, South of Scotland Enterprise (SoSE), with its broad remit to support not just the economy but to play a formative role on social provision and environmental care.

They should be challenged to do more given their sizeable budget and remit. The Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere with its locally appointed Partnership Board has passed the 10 year test from UNESCO. However, it is struggling to find guaranteed long-term support to continue and expand its activities. Surely, the Scottish Government directly, or as currently via SoSE, should be helping with the modest sums that are needed for its work.

NatureScot and Forest and Land Scotland are doing a great

deal on state owned land, for example on Cairnsmore of Fleet and in the Galloway Forest Park, respectively to improve the natural environment and promote community interest, so what more is needed? And why can't the agriculture support regime be tweaked to help local farmers more in looking after the land as well as producing

Many people are asking why the rush to complete the consultation on these far ranging proposals.

food?

Do we really need another government body?

Put this way, there is already activity and the potential for more to address our area's problems. So do we really need a separate agency? Even the government group who scrutinised the proposals by the Galloway National Park Association questioned the duplication and confusion that would occur with another authority being established. Furthermore, that group questioned the role of a national park authority compared with the clear mandates that existing bodies should have. All fair questions which need to be addressed.

Who would be in charge?

A national park authority established under an Act of the Scottish Parliament would be a government agency without independence of action as its terms of reference, strategies and funding would all be determined by the Scottish Government.

Although some of its members would be locally elected, the First Minister would appoint others. Is this what the area needs?

What's the rush?

Many people are asking why the rush to complete the consultation on these far ranging proposals. The answer is simple. The Scottish Government has decided it wishes to establish a new national park before

the elections to the Scottish Parliament to be held in May 2026.

To achieve this it plans to update the basic national parks legislation approved in 2000 and to have the Designation Order for the new park approved by the parliament before the elections.

All of this is very worrying to many of us in the area. From my experience of establishing national parks around the world, rushing creates disputes and disagreements within communities that can take many years to repair.

Is there another way forward?

Yes, there is another way. In the early 1990s,

the government in Edinburgh agreed to the establishment of working parties for Loch Lomond and the Trossachs and for the Cairngorms. This allowed time for debate, sharing of common concerns, gradual resolution of disagreements and identifying the most appropriate solutions.

A similar approach could be undertaken in Galloway bringing together the government bodies locally and regionally and nationally – the Council, SoSE, NatureScot, Scottish Forestry, Forest and Land Scotland and the Biosphere Partnership, and most importantly the local interests around this large area, to carefully identify what the issues are and the options for moving forward.

A concerted approach like this would put the communities and the people of the area at the heart of the matter. It is worth a try. Actions and resources to help resolve them are needed, but a single new agency is hardly going to solve them all.

Roger Crofts, Dalry

Roger was CEO for Scottish Natural Heritage leading on the establishment of Scotland's two National Parks, chair for Europe of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas 2000-2008, chair of the Durban Accord World Parks Congress 2003 and a recipient of the Fred M Packard International Parks Merit Award 2016

Pictured is the view over Dalry from the Mulloch Hill by Roger Crofts



Finding the best solution for Galloway

Galloway faces an existential crisis.

A trio of demographic, economic and environmental decline risks turning this jewel of Scotland into little more than a giant power generating facility accompanied by plantations of cheap wood.

Major changes are needed, and - perhaps - one such major change would be the establishment of a national park.

Population loss has been a problem for decades, but only appears to be getting worse. National Records Scotland estimate that the population of Dumfries and Galloway declined by 0.4% year-on-year from 2022 to 2023. In terms of age structure, the region is increasingly a retirement home, with the population of over 75s growing by a relative 49.3 percent since the turn of the century, versus a 25.2 percent decline for those aged 25 to 44.

Indeed, it's with primary schools like that in Carsphairn being 'mothballed', and even successful secondary schools like Dalry under threat or forced to offer reduced programmes, it's no wonder that the critical 25-44 age group - those who want to have children and raise them in the area - have left in droves.

Such difficulties are especially pronounced in remote areas like the Glenkens, while across the

border in Ayrshire the former mining towns are depressed and forgotten, offering little economic incentives for people to build lives.

The factors driving this decline are many, but fundamentally it comes down to economics and

plantation forestry and energy production to tourism and regenerative agriculture - and the increased employment such industries bring. This is the sort of economy many people want to see: a diversity of permanent and temporary

against these global interests working hand in glove with national lawmakers. Galloway's 'forests' destroy peat bogs in the name of carbon capture, obstruct ancient paths, clog up natural springs and turn ecologically diverse hills and moors into monoculture agricultural deserts.

Carsphairn Parish is the most afforested area in the entire UK - almost all of it Sitka, planted dense and harvested by clear felling (rather than continuous cover like they use in Germany). Wind farms, offering owner corporations untold riches, march across the hills, diminishing potential tourism. This has to stop, or it will ruin Galloway forever and drive out its remaining population.

A national park, with a board partially elected by local people who understand these problems, would be a step in the right direction.

I know a national park is not a panacea that will solve the interlinked crises facing Galloway, and I understand that there are concerns about congestion on our fragile, single track roads, about house prices, and about the over-development of key sites, but I firmly believe that a park is the best chance we have to preserve both Galloway's people and nature for the future.

William Dunbar, Carsphairn



William walking the Rhinns of Kells between Carlin's Cairn and Corserine

politics: when the only jobs are in forestry and wind farms, and most of them are temporary, there is just not enough keeping communities together.

When the population starts to decline, an already distant government has still less incentive to invest in the area, and school closure starts to become inevitable. A vicious circle that is hard to break.

A national park could provide the way out. By providing a realignment of the area from

jobs, many opportunities to start a business, that help young people and families make their lives in the area.

As we all know, Galloway is beautiful, a treasure of Scotland and the world. Yet because of its remoteness, low population, and the structure of land ownership, its hills and glens are being slowly ruined by vast non-native Sitka spruce plantations.

Community councils, representing a few hundred people each, are powerless

Considering Cairngorms National Park

Feedback from an Evening with Cairngorms National Park CEO by Ted Leeming

It was great to have at least 150 courteous local people listen to the experiences of Grant Moir, CEO of Cairngorms NP (CNP), and his responses to questions.

The following are my summary (as convener of the meeting) of his thoughts, in no particular

order, which can be debated in the coming months.

Overview

He felt a unique strength of a National Park is that it can give focus to strategies and campaigns to deliver focused objectives, often otherwise performed in a more siloed environment.

He was clear that the CNP is autonomous and has very little Government input on a day-to-day basis.

He stated that every NP is

different and needs to address local issues.

Board Composition and Governance

The CNP has 19 Board members, most of whom live locally. Twenty percent are elected from permanent residents in the regions invested in the CNP. (In the Galloway consultation, it is suggested that the Board should have 12 or 15 members, with 33% elected from the local population and another third nominated by the Regional Councils).

When the CNP was approved, it spent some two years developing the National Park Plan (NP Plan), which decided, following an extensive consultation with the local people, the future strategy for the Park.

The NP Plan is delivered by the CNP staff and is updated every five years. He noted that Scottish National Parks are very different from their neighbours south of the border.

Continued over the page...

On traffic, he noted that this was not within the gift of the CNP but that they worked with the relevant authorities to deliver solutions. However, the CNP is responsible for recreational access.

Turning a blind eye to biodiversity loss

Just how does the Scottish Government's commitment to planting 45,000 acres of forest each year between now and 2050 work to mitigate the biodiversity crisis?

How does planting single species monoculture forest using a non-native, highly invasive tree like Sitka spruce (in the south of Scotland 85% of all trees planted over the last decade were conifers) support our environment and our ecosystems?

These genetically manipulated trees smother out all other forms of plant life, 'invade' peatland areas and acidify our waterways to the extent our burns are left "devoid of life" (Galloway Fisheries Trust, GFT) as electro-fishing surveys frequently record.

These forests also decimate ground nesting bird populations of "international conservation importance" (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, RSPB).

First among these birds is the Eurasian curlew who, along with its other curlew cousins (two species of which are already extinct), were recently described as "the most threatened group of birds on the planet" by one of largest conservation charities in

the world, Birdlife International.

In the UK the eminent conservationist Derek Ratcliffe estimated 5,000 breeding pairs of curlew were lost from the south of Scotland due to the afforestation of the Galloway and Border hills – "in addition many more pairs were lost on surrounding farmland due to forest edge effect". Yet the Scottish Government pays millions of pounds of taxpayers money to the forest/ tax avoidance industry to destroy thousands of acres of breeding habitat every year of this bird dubbed "the panda of UK conservation".

Derek Ratcliffe, described as Britain's finest field naturalist and the man at the forefront of the creation of the Nature Conservation Review (the bible of UK conservation) did much of his fieldwork on the hills around Lochinvar in the Glenkens, an area he loved and frequently visited, and an area he considered had the greatest population density of curlew he'd ever come across.

Ironically, the last significant area of open land around Lochinvar that hasn't been decimated by plantation forestry (yet), and an area still used by curlews, is under imminent threat of afforestation by yet another Sitka plantation at Duchrae farm, Dalry.

The really ironic part is Derek Ratcliffe was an instrumental figure in the setting up of Nature Conservancy, the body that after

devolution became Scottish Natural Heritage and which has subsequently been rebranded as NatureScot.

Yet this supposed public body that Ratcliffe did so much to bring into creation - under the terms of an agreement/ gagging order which it was forced by government to sign with Scottish Forestry - is now essentially forbidden to comment on or raise an objection to any forest project unless the land has a specific designation such as SSSI status.

How can this toothless, gagged and neutered organisation that can neither speak up for the Glenkens' curlews or comment on forestry matters be trusted to run an impartial consultation process on the proposed Galloway National Park? Considering at least a



An eroded water course running through a Sitka spruce plantation outside Dalry - nothing but moss grows in the dim undercanopy and there is an eerie silence and noticeable lack of birdsong

third of Galloway is the very plantation forestry that has so much poisoned our hills and left our burns and rivers "devoid of life" on which NatureScot is forbidden to comment upon, it would seem this role will require of NatureScot, a pretty amazing ability to 'look the other way'. Perhaps they'll just add a blindfold to their consultation kitbag!

Jim Ramsay, Dalry

We hope you have found these articles interesting and thought provoking.

You can find out much more about the proposal at the NatureScot info hub ([www.](http://www.newnationalparkgalloway.commonplace.is)

[newnationalparkgalloway.commonplace.is](http://www.newnationalparkgalloway.commonplace.is)) and by attending the consultations - dates of those can be found on the info hub, along with proposed boundaries, etc.

Whatever your views are, the main thing to get them heard by filling in the survey, which is open until 14 February 2025.

And please remember - let's keep the conversation about this important topic civil, constructive and respectful of differing views.

We've achieved so much in the Glenkens over the years by working together - we don't want to lose all that over one contentious issue.

SEASONS GREETINGS TO EVERYONE AND THEIR DOGS



An update from Border Collie Rescue at Corsock

We progress...

The extent and speed, as always, is dependent on funds and available volunteers. We always need more of both!

We have set up security around the yard so dogs can run free (but not too free) and there is double height stock fence around the exercise paddock and the assessment paddock.



Sheep we keep for working dog assessments are doing well and as a side-line also mowing the grass for us!

We are working on a small scale at the moment. 'Steady away' as they say in Yorkshire but we are talking to architects and builders about developing some of the outbuildings to provide a wider range of accommodation for dogs with different needs.

A big project – did we say volunteers needed?

The facility at Corsock is not intended for re-homing with people coming to look at and take away dogs. It's for dogs we take in from Scotland to come through for various assessments, particularly around livestock, and also for recovery after surgery, trauma or behavioural problems. Somewhere they can have fun and peace and quiet!

It's working well. No sound of fireworks here for the sound sensitive. There is nothing like a quiet environment to allow a hyped-up dog to relax or an injured one to recover.

The process we use has proved to be healing for many years. Then, when ready, dogs go south of the border, mainly to Yorkshire but also to foster homes in other parts of the country for further assessment before matches to new homes are made.

We have also finished moving up our library of books on Border Collies, shepherds, sheep husbandry and care and animal welfare. We have some rare and interesting books on a range of subjects.



Fresh hay – come on girls, form an orderly queue and let's hope this year Santa doesn't leave anything else behind...



**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.
Our thanks to the volunteers and
supporters who have helped at Corsock.
May 2025 be a good year for everyone
and their dogs.**

Border Collie Rescue. Reg' charity SC040796 and 1128983

www.bordercollierescue.org





LING

Local Initiatives in New Galloway

...People, Places and Outdoor Spaces...



All change for LING Lunches

LING Lunches has been a part of the New Galloway community for some time, and we thought it was time for an update...

We now have a **new name** – the name Community Café lets everyone know it's open for all, whether Glenkens resident, visitor to the area, or passer-by.

We also have a **new day**, moving to Monday instead of Tuesday means that there is somewhere open for a meal when the CatStrand is closed for the day. Lunches are served from 12.30pm until 2pm

Finally, we also have a **new menu**! A new, more varied menu is being introduced, with different soups, mains and desserts each week. Follow the LING Facebook page to see what's on offer, or pop by and see the poster outside New Galloway Town Hall.

There'll be a special Christmas-themed lunch on Monday 16 Dec - we hope you'll join us!



What is a community larder?

Have you heard about the larder yet? Have you been to see it? You may wonder what it is all about...

In September Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING) opened the Glenkens' first Community Larder in the Town Hall.

Helping the climate and reducing waste is at the heart of our idea of a place where the community will share with each other what is not needed to stop waste going into landfill.

One of the larder's users is Catrin who shared her experience:

"I went to visit the Community Larder on Thursday. I took frozen fresh tomatoes and bread rolls from the freezer and made 18 portions of roasted tomato and lentil soup and eight portions of bread and butter pudding. I also made croutons for the soup and breadcrumbs to top pasta bakes. The total cost for making all this was less than £7. I am very pleased with it!"

Catrin also volunteers and bakes crumbles and other bakes, even making jams for the community larder.

Do you like cooking, baking? Or do you have

excess fruit eg fruit trees you cannot pick yourself? If so, we would love to hear from you! Any fresh food donations are currently being cooked and baked into delicious meals to be shared with the community during our Thursday Hubbub lunches as well as being made available in the community freezer.

No time to cook healthy meals? Can't be bothered cooking? Always eating ready meals? Forgot to get stuff in? Like to try new food you have never tasted? Just fancy some nice food? Or, like Catrin, want to pick up some ingredients that would otherwise be going to waste and make something yourself?

It's not like a food bank; the idea is that this is for everyone to share! The larder is from the community, for the community. It will only work if we use it both ways. So do, please, donate spares and surpluses, but also please help yourself to some of what's on offer. Give and take! We would love to hear from you so please be in touch with what you would like to see and eat from the larder.

We are open Mon 9am–4pm, Tue 7-9pm, Wed 6.30-8pm, Thu 9.30am-6pm

Your Hubbub Team

Welcoming a new Trustee

Many Glenkens residents may Carol Salisbury, at least by sight.

Carol is pictured here celebrating her win at our recent Cheese & Wine event – a red squirrel going by the unlikely name of Rosemary!

We are delighted that Carol has agreed to be co-opted onto the LING Board, bringing, as she does, a wide range of skills – along with great enthusiasm and good cheer. Below is her personal statement for the Board.

I have lived in New Galloway since 1998, and feel privileged to call it home. The community spirit I find here is second to none, and I want to be able to contribute in whatever way I'm able.

Before moving to Scotland, I lived in Nottingham with my family, now grown with families of their own. I was a teacher of Religious Education (I have also collaborated in writing a series of RE textbooks), was responsible for Personal & Social Education, and operated as School Counsellor.

On being made redundant, I helped to set



up and run a city centre restaurant and discovered my true passion – cooking and presenting my food to others. Due to several dietary restrictions in my children, I undertook extensive personal research in nutrition, something that I continue to this day.

I feel that LING is in the best position to make sure our residents are catered for in every sense of the word, and would welcome the opportunity to aid the delivery of the many and varied ways that this is achieved.

Carsphairn Burns night

Carsphairn will host its Annual Burns Supper on Friday 17 January 2025.

This cultural event has taken place within the village's iconic hall for 54 years and is well-attended by visitors from both near and far.

Last year's attendees enjoyed a splendid evening of fine foods brought to us by

the local catering company Caterbirds, accompanied by some renowned entertainment from local speakers. There is also a well-stocked bar to help you raise a glass 'tae a haggis!'

Book your tickets now to save disappointment by emailing lagwynehallbooking@gmail.com



An update from the Glenkens scouts

After the summer holiday we ran the Cub Scout disability activity badge alongside the Paralympics.

The activities we tried included making a sandwich using one hand. Hamish ended up with quite a lot of butter on his. We also tried foot and mouth painting, with good results. A parent helper gave a talk on her work; she helps other people with different disabilities. We held discussion groups on physical disabilities, deaf and sight awareness.

Our Halloween party was full of fun; the Cubs were dressed up. First prize went to Elliot, Second to Dylan and Third to Pippin. We then played all the usual party games. Dylan and his dad brought in two fantastic cakes they had made – the Cubs weren't long demolishing them.

We wish Freya all the best in her role at a Glasgow Panto – she is playing a monkey in *The Wizard of Oz* – and also Caitlin, who is in the choir at the CatStrand panto, *King Arthur*. Good luck to both. The Cubs are looking forward to visiting the CatStrand panto.

The Cub Scout Pack will be attending the Remembrance Day parade and church service at St Margaret's, New Galloway. We

have been learning about 'From Flax to Flight', the importance of seed.

Scouts started in 1907 and seven years later, when the First World War broke out, the skills the youngsters learned through their activities and badge programme were tested like never before. They were called upon to help in many areas on the Home Front, including coast watching, carrying messages and working on the land.

During the war, the need for help increased. Many Scouts converted their traditional summer break into assisting local farmers. Farmers were asked to grow flax, a plant vital to the war effort. Flax is also known

as linseed, and is a flowering plant cultivated as a food and a fibre crop. As a fibre crop, flax fibres are used to produce linen which was then stretched and treated with chemicals and used to construct the wings of fighter planes.

We are so proud of Hannah and Doug, who have recently had two of their pieces of pottery in no other than the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, where they are now on display. What a wonderful accolade, and so well deserved. Congratulations!

The Cub Scout Pack and Leaders would like to wish everyone in the Glenkens a happy Christmas and a good New Year.

Yours in Scouting, Heather

Name the place

(from page 4)

Site Name - Balmaclellan

Location - The Glenkens

Description - Nestled in the heart of the Galloway Hills, Balmaclellan is a charming village that embodies the serene beauty and rich history of Scotland." The village is rich in local culture and traditions that reflect deep historical roots. Known for its strong connections to the Covenanter movement, it has several historical sites commemorating this period, including the Parish Church and the grave of Robert Paterson, commemorated by Sir Walter Scott as "Old Mortality". Paterson dedicated much of his life to restoring maintaining the graves of Covenanters, who in the 17th century played a crucial role during the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, aligning with the English Parliament against the Royalists. Their commitment to Presbyterianism led to severe persecution, especially during the reigns of Charles I and Charles II. Many Covenanters faced imprisonment, torture, and execution for their beliefs. The churchyard also contains the only civic Crimean War Memorial in Scotland, honouring five soldiers who died in that war. With the Smiddy, a Men's Shed, community hall and shop, the village lies at the core of Glenkens identity.

Interesting fact - A statue of 'Old Mortality' is also carved into the Scott Monument in Edinburgh.



Whilst fairly easy to grow and tolerant to the Galloway climate, watering can present a few problems during dry spells. Fortunately it has not been necessary this year.

Sue Wiseman

Robert Burns and the tale of Adam Forrester

Continued from front page...

"It was a bit of a whirlwind!" said Angela. "I was contacted on the Tuesday about doing the filming on Friday that week.

"It wouldn't have been possible without the support of my colleagues at D & G Libraries, and Laura and Phil at the Clachan Inn for the use of the bar for some of the filming, so a big thank you to them!"

Angela will be featuring a Glenkens story in each upcoming edition of the Gazette, taken from her Galloway Retold YouTube channel.

The first of these is included here, and is the tale of Adam Forrester which featured on the BBC Landward Halloween Special (to watch the show, visit BBC iPlayer, and look for Episode 20).

If you were lucky enough to be at Dalry Secondary during David Brown's tenure as English teacher at the school, you will probably recall comparing and contrasting the story of Adam Forrester with that of Tam o' Shanter.

Mr Brown would also take his English classes on a walk over to see the Witch's Score, on the far side of Waterside Hill, a very effective tool for encouraging students to remember the story. For those unfamiliar with the tale, let me recount it for you...

Adam was the farmer at Knocksheen some time in the late 1600s. He had a great fondness for the inn keeper of the Inn in Midtown at that time, who went by the name Lucky Hare (which might be a little bit of a clue...) and frequented her Inn regularly.

One evening, Lucky Hare slipped out early, while he continued drinking quite heavily until it was

time for the inn doors to close for the night. Hopping on the back of his faithful (and tolerant) steed, Adam made his way down through the kirkyard towards the old ford in the River Ken.

However, on his way past the kirk he stopped to peer into the windows, as they were blazing with light and the sound of music and revelry was pouring out into the night. As he looked in, Adam spotted Lucky Hare among the revellers, dancing with the Devil himself. So shocked was he that he forgot all caution and shouted in through the Kirk window, "You'll no' deny this the morn, Lucky Hare!"

As his words rung out, the music stopped and the kirk was plunged into darkness. With howls and screeches, the erstwhile revellers from inside the Kirk came flooding out to tackle the intruder.

Adam was chased over the ford, then up the side of Waterside Hill.

The poor horse (whose name I haven't been able to find) was blown by the time Adam got over the summit, heading for Knocksheen, and Adam had to make a desperate choice. Leaping off his horse's back, he took out his sword and cut a circle around them both, declaring by God Almighty that the witches would not cross it - which they could not.

Lucky Hare is said to have got a hand onto the back haunches of the horse, leaving a white print on it that remained for the rest of its life, but no further damage was done to either man or horse, and when the dawn came, the witches were forced to leave Adam.

This story was passed on to Robert Burns by the doctor in New Galloway, Dr Trotter, who was the famous Muir Doctor and also a keen antiquarian. Most likely this story was told when he made his visit to Kenmure Castle. Not being terribly familiar with the area, Robert made the decision to transpose the tale to Alloway in Ayrshire, an area he knew far better as it was where he grew up.

Now, interestingly, according to David Bartholomew, author of *The Covenanters of the Glenkens* and former Glenkens Church of Scotland minister, Grierson of Lagg stabled horses in the Dalry kirk during the Covenanting times, and he was referred to often as 'the Devil' by locals. It's not inconceivable that he might



have thrown parties in the Kirk, out of sheer disrespect to the Presbyterian locals.

Dalry was also famed at the time not only for its history of 'witches', like the Witch of Hanniston, and the Witch of Drouth (a hamlet that used to exist near Lochinvar) but also for hosting Witches Sabbats, so there is definitely plenty of opportunity for Adam's tale to have more than a wee grain of truth in it.

The fact that the Forrester grave is actually placed where he would have been peering in the window of the old kirk also gives a wee bit more credence to the veracity of the tale.

It is clear that the folk of Dalry still believed in the power of witches until comparatively late on, as Elspeth McEwen of Cubbox was sent by the kirk session of Dalry to the Tolbooth in Kirkcudbright as a witch, becoming one of the last women in Scotland to be executed for this 'crime' two years later, in 1698.

Angela Miller is the librarian at Dalry Library and a keen local historian. You can view her YouTube channel by searching YouTube or Google for 'Galloway Retold'.

Dalry kirkyard headstone repairs



Readers will remember the previous features on the Carson, Mather and Keenlyside headstones in Dalry kirkyard.

Attached is a picture of the cleaned Mather's headstone that stands proudly opposite the church entrance door.

This has been another great project brought to completion, especially as family came forward having read earlier articles about the headstone in the Gazette.

The small cross is the repaired Keenlyside infant grave which is on the path that leads to the suspension bridge. This wee

grave has been adopted now by a member of the community and bulbs have been planted for the spring.

The Gazette reached out to local amateur historian and regular Gazette contributor, Paul Goodwin, to see if he could find out a bit more information about this grave.

Paul said: "Jacob and Rebecca Keenlyside lived on Main St, Dalry, in 1921, and were the grandparents of the infant in question.

"Their son, Tom Hall Keenlyside, was the father of the child and in 1911 was living with his mother in Blyth, Northumberland. Tom married the child's mother, Eva W Keenlyside (nee Robertson), in Pickering in 1918."



CatStrand nominated venue of the year

CatStrand has been nominated as Venue of the Year, in the MG Alba Scots Trad Music Awards.

It's great to be recognised, it says a lot about the warm welcome CatStrand audiences give to artists performing here that we have been considered in the same category as some much bigger venues. The winner will be announced at the end of November, after this edition of the Gazette has gone to print, so keep your eyes peeled on the next issue for an update!

Along with 281 other Scottish cultural organisations, we are still waiting on the result of Creative Scotland's Multi Year Fund. Our future ability to sustain a live arts programme is very much dependent on this decision.

This decision has been delayed from October until the end of January, to allow for more certainty on the national funding available. The good news is that the delay is primarily to allow the Scottish Government time to meet its public promises to put more money into the system.

The bad news is that there is still no certainty over the funds available to Creative Scotland to distribute, and so no certainty about the decisions they will make with this funding. In light of this, although we expect and hope for positive news, there is no real certainty over the future programme until at least the end of January.

We have applied to the Creative Scotland Open Fund for some additional funding to tide us over to April 25, and we will shortly be re-applying to the Heritage Lottery for

some more support for our amazing Cultural Glenkens projects, but we will have to wait and see with those as well. They're all very over-subscribed.

Despite the funding challenges, 2024 has been a very successful year for CatStrand Arts.

We've maintained ticket sales, matching the best we have on record, and have presented a solid mix of live music, theatre, touring work and representation of regional artists.

We've got some excellent December concerts lined up: Mercury nominated jazz



pianist Fergus McCreadie returns with an international quartet on 1 December and there are festive frolics from two foremost folkies, Anna Massie and Hannah Rarity, on 13 December.

We hope to see you at some of these events - thanks very much to everyone for your support through 2024 and here's to a successful 2025!

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News from the CatStrand Young Creatives

CatStrand Young Creatives (CYC) has had a great few months, and we're excited to be able to share lots of good news with you.

We were delighted to be nominated by supporters as both Culture Champions and Community Project at the D&G Life Awards. While we didn't win, it was an honour to be in the company of so many amazing projects from across the region, and a huge "thank you" to the people who nominated us.

Some really excellent news is that the Hollywood Trust has renewed their support of us, meaning that we will definitely be able to carry on the Young Creatives work until at least

March 2027.

This is fantastic news and we are so appreciative of all their support - it's so exciting to know we will be able to continue supporting our young people into the future. The Hollywood Trust primarily supports young people aged over 12, so you will see that reflected in the programme, but it does mean lots of opportunities coming up for young people looking to make their career in the Arts - watch this space!

We held our annual Musical Showcase in November, expertly hosted by CatStrand intern Ella Campbell. As ever, it was a fantastic evening highlighting the breadth and depth of talent in our young people.

The performers from our Make Some Noise inclusive music sessions with Paragon were

a particular highlight, and it was just great to see the older performers growing in confidence and skills.

Some of them have been on the CatStrand Young Creatives stages since they were little, so to see the whole age range represented was fantastic. Creative Scotland supports our music lessons through their Youth Music Initiative, and you can see it is really paying off. Speaking of the CYC stage, we're very much looking forward to the Youth Players Christmas panto in early December - hope



Paragon performing at the CYC Musical Showcase

you've already got your tickets. It's always a highlight of the CatStrand year - oh yes it is!

Thanks as ever to all the funders, deliverers, volunteers, families and of course the young people who make CatStrand Young Creatives what it is.

*Cat Campbell,
Young Creatives Project Lead*

Young writers' short story competition

Young writers in Dumfries and Galloway are again being given the opportunity to show their talent by entering a short story competition.

The competition, which is running for the second year, is one of the events for young writers and readers linked to the annual Kirkcudbright Book Week which runs between 3 and 9 March 2025.

Entries close on February 10, 2025,



and entrants between the ages of nine and 15 are asked to provide examples of 'flash fiction', a style of short fiction writing.

The competition is being run jointly by book week organisers the Kirkcudbright Book Week Society and Kirkcudbright Library, which is operated by Dumfries and Galloway Council. There is no entry fee.

The judges are Lesley Garbutt, of Kirkcudbright Library, and crime writer John Dean, both of whom are on the Society's committee.

John said: "We ran the inaugural competition for young writers last year and were impressed by the enthusiasm and energy with which the stories were told. Combined with the terrific imagination and skills which the entrants displayed, judging the stories was a sheer delight. I suspect that this year's competition will be the same."

You can read the rules and conditions, and more about Flash Fiction, at the Book Week website at www.kirkcudbrightbookweek.org



Invitation to Screen Your Work

Galloway Shorts is a celebration of films made by amateur and emerging filmmakers, hosted by CatStrand and Dalry Film Club. It will be a chance to see work by others and meet other filmmakers.

Galloway Shorts welcomes participants of all ages and levels of experience. Regrettably, there is no financial incentive to take part. Films can be as simple or as complicated as you want to make them, but should fit within the time limits set out below.

Submissions are invited from any filmmaker aged 12+ in the following categories: Drama (5-10 mins), Documentary (3-5 mins), Digital Animation (1-4 mins), Stop Animation (1-2 mins).

Deadline to Register Interest: January 6th, 2025. Films should be sent by: February 20th, 2025

Galloway Shorts Screenings will take place on 19 March 2025 at Dalry Town Hall

See gcat.scot/Galloway-shorts/ for full details and the registration form.

Songs for the turning of the year

Glenkens audiences are in for a treat as SongWave Community Choir brings their winter concert series, 'Wassail! Songs for the Turning of the Year' to local venues.

Led by musical director Kate Howard, SongWave is a Castle Douglas based community choir which is known for its joyous acapella renditions of a varied repertoire of songs.

This winter, the choir will focus on the Wassail, which is the Anglo-Saxon word to wish someone good health.

The group will perform carols from around the British Isles and through the centuries. From a 14th Century Hogmanay song 'Hagman Heigh' from West Yorkshire to Sheffield pub carols; a rediscovered bell carol from Barnsley to luck visiting songs from Somerset, SongWave offers good cheer and plenty of good luck for the year ahead.

"We're looking forward to bringing Wassail! to the Stewartry," said the

choir's chairperson, Jo Gallant. "The choir has been working hard to prepare for these concerts, and we're excited to share our passion for singing with the local community".

Performances in and around the Glenkens and district are **Kirkpatrick Durham Village Hall on Saturday 14 December** at 4pm and **New Galloway Town Hall on Sunday 15 December** at 4pm.

To find out more and book tickets please visit songwavechoir.org.uk. Tickets are £10, or £5 for those aged under 26, with refreshments being served in the interval.

Don't miss this unforgettable musical experience that celebrates songs marking the turning of the year.

SongWave
presents

Wassail!

Songs from down the ages to celebrate the turning of the year, led by musical director **Kate Howard**.

Friday 13th December 2024
Twynholm Village Hall 7.00 pm

Saturday 14th December 2024
Kirkpatrick Durham Village Hall 4.00 pm

Sunday 15th December 2024
New Galloway Town Hall 4.00 pm



Tickets: £10, £5 under 26s, including refreshments, from www.songwavechoir.org.uk 07747 623036



SongWave
community choir

FINLAY CARSON MSP Member of the Scottish Parliament for Galloway and West Dumfries



If you would like an appointment,
please get in touch

Write to:

107 King Street, Castle Douglas, DG7 1LZ

Email: Finlay.Carson.MSP@parliament.scot

Phone: 01556 504991

Facebook: [FinlayCarsonMSP](https://www.facebook.com/FinlayCarsonMSP)

Twitter: [fincarson](https://twitter.com/fincarson)



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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 takes a look at some Palestinian writing...

It isn't surprising that the Palestinian people have an enormously rich culture, given that they've inhabited the fertile and well-travelled bridge between Africa, Asia and Europe since long before human history began.

Inheritors of three religions, and of Canaanite, Aramaic, Israelite, and Arab civilizations (among others), their culture is manifested in embroidery, jokes and oral history, music and dance, films, poetry and novels.

I immersed myself in all of these forms during two visits to Palestine – once to teach a writing workshop at al-Najah University in Nablus, and once with the Palestine Festival of Literature, or Palfest. Michael Palin was with me on that one. He and I and a group of other writers went for a beautiful (surrounded by rolling hills and olive trees) and frightening (surrounded too by checkpoints, watchtowers and soldiers) walk with Raja Shehadeh, author

of *Palestinian Walks*. A lawyer, human rights activist, and prize-winning writer, Raja has produced a string of works of creative non-fiction, which I highly recommend.

I also recommend *Minor Detail* by Adania Shibli, which I've just finished reading. It's a novella of two parts. The first is narrated by an Israeli officer stationed in the Naqab desert shortly after the Nakba, or Catastrophe, of 1948, when Palestinian society was razed and uprooted to make way for the new Jewish State.

He and his troops are stationed there to apprehend 'infiltrators'. They come across a Bedouin family, and kill the men. Then, after a period of indecision, they rape and kill the surviving young woman.

The officer, meanwhile, is tormented by a spider's bite, which provokes him to repeated Lady Macbeth-style washing around the edges of the wound. In his narration, what is left unsaid and unexamined is as impactful as what he chooses to notice.

The second part of the novella is narrated by a woman who appears to stand at some point on the autism scale. Fascinated by the date of the crime, exactly 25 years before her birth, she

borrowed a car with a registration plate that allows her to travel beyond the West Bank, and journeys in search of further information to the scene of the crime. As she drives, the reader learns a great deal about maps and boundaries, about the architecture of oppression and the geography of domination.

Further connections than the crime itself link the two parts of the story – spiders, barking dogs, the smell of petrol – and these collapse time, creating a sense of eternal recurrence for those trapped in the nightmarish web. The end of the story is abrupt and unexpected. Adania Shibli's curt, forensically precise, emotionally devastating prose is reminiscent of JM Coetzee at his best.



For a larger novel, I recommend British-Palestinian writer Isabella Hamad's highly accomplished *The Parisian*. (Isabella has also written a more recent book – *Enter Ghost* – which I haven't yet read.)

Poetry fans should look for work by the late Mahmoud Darwish, called 'the national poet of Palestine', and by the contemporary young poet Mosab Abu Toha, recently escaped from Gaza.

David Tallontire CHIMNEY SWEEP

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FRI 13 DEC 7:30PM

A seasonal shindig with two of the best. "Absolutely sensational" Radio Scotland.



SongWave Choir: Wassail!

SUN 15 DEC 4:00PM

Songs for the turning of the year at New Galloway Town Hall.



Boo Hewerdine & Brooks Williams

THU 13 FEB 2025 7:30PM

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USEFUL GLENKENS CONTACTS

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Glenkens Medical Practice
- 01644 420 234

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

- Balmaclellan: Martin Warnock - 07939 261 391
- Carsphairn: Liz Holmes - 07718 358 160
- Corsock: Julie Garton -

07769 647 702

• Kirkpatrick Durham: Heather - 07551 639 629

• Crossmichael: Richard Middleton - 01556 670 691

• Dalry: Michele Owen - 07940 313 445

• New Galloway: 07741 656 601

• Parton: Tom - 07835 821 976

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 info@ling.org.uk

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: 1 Dec (11am service and also the vote on the new Union and Linkage), 5 Jan, 2 Feb - 11am

Carsphairn: 8 Dec (morning worship & communion), 25 Dec (Christmas day service), 12 Jan, 9 Feb - 11am

Kells: 8 Dec (6.30pm Carols by Candlelight), 15 Dec, 24 Dec (11.30pm Watchnight service), 19 Jan - 11am

Dalry: 29 Dec (songs of praise), 26 Jan - 11am

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

The Rev Dawn Matthew

Sundays: 10.30am, Holy Communion with refreshments after the service. **Tuesdays:** 10am-12noon, look for the 'church is open' sign and pop in for private prayer or to chat with Dawn. **Thursdays:** 7.30-8pm, evening prayers via Zoom shared with our sister church, All Saints' Challoch. Please contact Dawn for the link.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES: Sun 22 Dec, 4pm, Community Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies. Tue 24 Dec, 4-4.30pm, Family Nativity: come dressed as your favourite nativity character and hear the Christmas story told in rhyme! Wed 25 Dec, 10.30am, Christmas Day service with 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

USEFUL NUMBERS

- **Pothole Hotline:** 0845 276 0000
- **Police, non-emergency:** 101 or email stewartryCPT@scotland.police.uk
- **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

SEE AD ON PAGE 16...

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



The *Glenkens Gazette* is a member of independent UK press regulator, Impress. To find out more about our complaints process you can visit www.glenkens.scot/complaints-and-corrections or scan the QR code here.



GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE

You can now apply for a Garden Waste Collection Service permit at £40 per bin, for regular collections from March to November 2025.

Apply online at www.dumgal.gov.uk/wasterecycling or in person at a customer service centre such as Dalry Library.

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GALLOWAY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

www.galloway-community-transport.org

email: gct@catstrand.com / gctadmin@catstrand.com

phone: Jon 07841 512449 / Jason 07704 662925

**DECEMBER 2024 – JANUARY 2025****REGULAR SERVICES**

We are pleased to announce a change to our GK2 service. From Wednesday 4th December the service will run during the day instead of the evening, with more calling points in Castle Douglas. New timetable as per below:

GK2 Glenkens > Castle Douglas
Every Wednesday (Registered Route)

Outward		Return
0925	Kendoon	1513
0945	Dalry (Underhill)	1453
0950	Balmaclellan	1448
0955	New Galloway	1443
1005	Mossdale	1433
1013	Laurieston	1425
1030	Ringford	1408
1048	Castle Douglas	1350

(with drop-offs at CoOp/B&M/Tesco/Aldi)

Booking not required

MINIBUS DRIVING

Minibus drivers are needed to do volunteer and paid driving for our wide range of member community groups, as well as for our contracted school services. MIDAS training will be provided. Not got a D1 on your licence? Not a problem, we have a couple of buses that do not require D1. Ask us for more details.

PATIENT TRANSPORT

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

Interested?

Email gct@catstrand.com or phone 07841 512449 / 07704 662925

EXCURSIONS

GCT EXCURSION
CHRISTMAS SHOPPING TRIP

Tuesday 10th December 2024



Join us for a Christmas shopping day out, travelling in our comfortable heated excursion minibus. We will call at Gretna Caledonia Park for shopping (and refreshments), with plenty of name brand stores to browse.

We shall then continue on to Carlisle where you can explore the Christmas market with its many seasonal stalls, and also all the regular high street shops.



BUS FARE: £18.00

Itinerary:

0845 Dalry Underhill
0850 Balmaclellan The Smiddy
0855 New Galloway CatStrand
0915 Crossmichael Shop
0940 Kirkcudbright Harbour Square
1005 Castle Douglas Market Hill
1020 Dalbeattie (opposite Esso Station)
1130 Arrive Gretna Caledonia Park
1330 Depart Gretna for Carlisle
1630 Depart Carlisle for return journey home

MOBILE:
07841 512449

EMAIL:
[GCT@CATSTRAND.COM](mailto:gct@catstrand.com)

FURTHER INFO:
WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/GALLOWAY-COMMUNITY-TRANSPORT

WEBSITE: WWW.GALLOWAY-COMMUNITY-TRANSPORT.ORG

2025 EXCURSIONS

We will be running our successful Gardens of Excellence programme again next year. Watch this space for further details!

MEMBERSHIP HIRE

We have 3 x 16 seat buses, a 15 seat, an 8 seat minibus and a fully wheelchair accessible electric car available (and minibus) for hire by community organisations.

For information about membership and terms and conditions of hire see the GCT website or phone 07841 512449 / 07704 662925

www.galloway-community-transport.org

WHAT'S ON December/January

DECEMBER

The Food Hub is running weekly throughout December, (see ad on p7 for QR code to shop).

Galloway National Park consultation open until 14 February - www.newnationalparkgalloway.commonplace.is

Sun 1, New Galloway Christmas Lights-on with mince pies and mulled wine, walk down from golf club car park to CatStrand

Sun 1, Fergus McCreadie: From Scotland to Italy to Lithuania, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Mon 2, Beginners Bridge Class starts, runs weekly, 7-9pm, Lochinvar Hotel

Wed 4, Joint Guild Christmas Coffee Morning, 10.30am-12noon, Dalry Town Hall

Wed 4, Film: Billy Connolly Big Banana Feet, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall

Thu 5, Carsphairn SWI, 7.30pm, Lagwyne Hall

Fri 6 & Sat 7 at 7.30pm, **Sat 7 & Sun 8** at 3pm, CatStrand Players Panto: King Arthur, CatStrand

Fri 6, New Galloway & Kells Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch, 12noon, New Galloway Town Hall

Sat 7, Kirkpatrick Durham Christmas Fair, 10am-4pm, KPD Village Hall

Sat 7, Carsphairn Community Woodland volunteer day, 10am-3pm, Muirdrochwood forest

Sat 7, Dalry Community Café, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 7, Mossdale Xmas Craft Fair, 11am-3pm, Mossdale Village Hall

Sat 7, Dragon Boats fundraising Party Night & Supper, 7.30-11pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sun 8, Christmas Craft Fair, 11am-2.30pm,

New Galloway Town Hall

Tue 10, GCT Bus Trip: Christmas Shopping, 8.45am-8.45pm, see p33

Wed 11, Make Do and Mend, 7-9pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Wed 11, POSTPONED National Theatre Live - Prima Facie, CatStrand

Fri 13, Hannah Rarity & Anna Massie, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Fri 13, Quiz Night, 7-9pm, Balmaghie Public Hall

Sat 14, Glenkens Children's Christmas Party, 2-4.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Sat 14, Christmas Family Bingo, 4-5.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall

Sat 14, Wassail! Songs for the Turning of the Year, 4-6pm, New Galloway Town Hall

Sat 14, Mix Tape Dance Night, 8-11pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sun 15, Christmas Quiz, 6-9pm, Dalry Town Hall

Mon 16, Community Café Christmas-themed lunch, 12noon-2pm, New Galloway Town Hall

Tue 17, Carsphairn Music Concert, 8-10pm, Lagwyne Hall

Wed 18, Film: Wonka, 7-9.30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sun 19, National Theatre Live: Nye, 3pm, CatStrand

Sat 21, Christmas Carols at Barwhillanty, 6.30-10pm, Barwhillanty Estate, Parton

Tue 31, Community Hogmanay Ceilidh, 7pm-12.30am, New Galloway Town Hall

JANUARY

Throughout December, January and February (while funding lasts) head over to the

CatStrand for a free bowl of soup and filled roll between 11.30am and 2pm, Tuesday to Saturday. See p6

Sat 11, Risto's Pop-up Restaurant - A Finnish Smorgasbord Feast, NG Town Hall

Wed 15, Film: The Holdovers, 7-9.30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Fri 17, Carsphairn Burns Supper, 7-11pm, Lagwyne Hall

Sat 18, Community Garden Consultation, 12noon-3pm, New Galloway Town Hall

Sat 18, Family Bingo, 4-5.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall, all ages welcome.

Sat 25, Bodega Social's Wonky Burns Night, New Galloway Town Hall, see p3

Mon 27, GCAT AGM, 7pm, CatStrand

Sat 1 Feb, CatStrand Burns Supper, 7.30pm, CatStrand

HOUSE TO LET AND CARETAKER VACANCY - see p14 for details



Glenkens & District Community Councils

Balmaclellan Community Council: Bi-monthly, 7.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall - contact Martin on 07939 261 391

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

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

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

Corsock & Kirkpatrick Durham Community Council: contact mcnaablaurie@hotmail.com or 01644 440 200

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

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

Crossmichael Community Council: Second Wednesday every month - contact 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, 2.30-4pm, warburton.julie@googlemail.com

Exercise Class, Tue, 6-7pm

Tai Chi, Wed, 2-3pm

Zumba, Fri, 6.30-7.30pm

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

Community Library, Wed, 10.30am-12.30pm; Sat, 10am-12noon

Make Do & Mend, fortnightly from 14 Feb, 7-9pm

Stewartry Birdwatchers, 2nd Thu each month Sep to Apr (Sep & Apr, 7.30pm; Oct-Mar, 2.30pm)

Soup & Sandwich, Sat, 12noon-2pm, Oct-Mar

Men's Shed, Balmaclellan

General Opening Times: Mon, Wedn & Fri, 9.30am-12noon

Stick Making - Mon, 7-9pm

Art Group, Thu, 2-4pm

Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn

Monday Morning Social, 11am-2pm, 07710 124 255

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

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

Bairn Banter; family stay & play session, Sat, 10am

CatStrand, New Galloway

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

Behind the Scenes, bi-weekly, Mon, 5.30pm

Energising Yoga Flow, Tue, 9.30am, booking essential, 07733 111 466

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

Weekly Bus Service to Tesco, Wed, 7pm

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

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

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

Piano Lessons, weekly, term time 4-6.30pm

Morning Flow Yoga, Thu, 9.30am, booking essential, 07733 111 466

CatStrand Singers, Thu, 11am

Dance Steps (age 10-18yrs), Sat, monthly, 12.30-3.30pm

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

Art Club, (age 11-16yrs), Sat, bi-weekly

11.30am

Musical Misfits, Sat, bi-weekly, 10am

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

The Smiddy, Balmaclellan

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

Mini Music Makers, family session, monthly 11.45am (under 7yrs)

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

Art Explorers, Sat, 10.30am, fortnightly

New Galloway Town Hall

Community Larder, side door open for access Mon 9am-4.30pm; Tue 7-9pm; Wed 6.30-8pm; Thu 9.30am-6pm

Men's Monday Morning Coffee, Mon 9.30-11am

Dance for Wellbeing (adults), Mon 2.30pm

Creative Movement for Children, 4pm

LING Community Cafe, Tue, 12.30-2pm

Sports Evening, Tue, 7-9pm, carpet bowls or table tennis

Zumba, Wed, 6.30pm

Ukulele Group, Wed, 6.30pm

Hubbub, Thu, 12noon-5.30pm, drop-in

Martial Arts, Thu, 7.30pm

Babies & Toddlers, Fri, 10am

For further info email info@ling.org.uk, phone 07749 249 781

Glenkens Community Centre

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

Glenkens Youth Group, Mon, 7-8.30pm

Dalry Good Neighbours Club, Tue, 2pm, 07795 613 148

Wee Wonders, Thu, 9-10am

Clachan Crafters, Thu, 2pm, 07500 861 041

Kickback Martial Arts, Thu, 5.30-7pm, kmabrian@gmail.com or drop-in

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

Yoga For All, Fri 9.30am, drop-in, 07733 111 466

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

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

Glenkens Charity Shop

Opening Times:

Mon 10am-1pm, Tue 6-8pm, Wed, Fri & Sat 10am-4pm

Dalry Library

Main St, Dalry - 01644 430 234

Library Opening Times:

Tue 2-5pm, Fri 12noon-5pm with the first hour for NEC Bus Pass & Blue Badge appointments, etc. Book at the library or call 01387 260 196.

Bookbug and Parent & Toddler Session, Tue, 10.30-11.30am

Glenkens Book Group, last Fri each month, 2pm, 01644 420 361

Lego Stay N' Play, every 3rd Sat of the month, 1-3pm, contact Michele Owen on Facebook

Dalry Town Hall

Tai Chi, Mon, 2pm

Dog Training, Tue, 7pm, 07831 590 822

Song Share, 1st Fri each month, 7.30-10.30pm

Mossdale Village Hall

Mossdale Painters, Wed, 9.30-11.30am

Yoga, Fri, 2.15pm

Soup Saturday, last Sat each month, 1-3pm

Various

Bumps, Babies & Beyond, every 2nd Mon, 10.30am, Kirkpatrick Durham Village Hall

Learn to Play Bridge, Mon, 7-9pm, Lochinvar Hotel

Keep Fit with Alex, 7.15-8.15pm, KPD Village Hall

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

Spalding Bowling Club Sweep Nights, Mon, 7pm, shazfish1@gmail.com

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

Glenkens Oil Painters, Wed, 10am, Corfield House Art Studio

Crossmichael Heritage Centre, Wed 2-4.30pm

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

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

Dragon Boats on Loch Ken, Sun 9.30am, Galloway Activity Centre

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

Outdoor Bowls, Dalry, contact Fiona on 07500 554 751

Snooker/Indoor Bowls, contact Gary on 01644 430 521

Mum & Baby Movement Thu, 9.30-11.30am, Laurieston Village Hall

Crossmichael Youth Club, Fri, Crossmichael Memorial Hall

Community membership model for Galloway Food Hub

The Galloway Food Hub, which gives people the on-line opportunity to buy local produce from local farmers, growers and producers, is set to become a membership organisation.

In its first thirty months of operation the Food Hub has grown rapidly and boasts widespread support. Food Hub co-ordinator Lesley said: "We feel very supported by our customers and producers who tell us they love what we do. They appreciate the connection to farmers, growers and makers who produce food in a nature-

friendly way in our region. Offering membership to our customers, producers, and anyone else who wants to support us, will allow them to have a say in how we run. We hope to have the membership scheme in place in January 2025 when we'll be inviting people to join."

The Galloway Food Hub started as a project of Propagate (Scotland), a Community Interest Company (CIC) to fulfil a need in the local Glenkens economy for a hyper-local online marketplace, connecting communities to local producers.

Now the Food Hub has branched out on their own to become incorporated as an independent CIC, limited by guarantee.

The previous steering committee is now a board of nine directors, comprised of producers, customers, volunteers and staff members. The connection to Propagate remains strong.

If you want to find out more about the Food Hub, or start to purchase the range of delicious, ethically produced, mostly locally sourced produce then visit www.gallowayfoodhub.org.uk, email hello@gallowayfoodhub.org.uk or call Lesley on 07587 122 151.

The Food Hub is running weekly throughout December - order one week



Food Hub volunteers modelling some of the local veg on offer

for collection or delivery the next. The last order window before Christmas is 13-17 December for collection on Friday the 20 December.

Taking a break over Christmas and the New Year, the Food Hub reopens on its usual fortnightly cycle from the 10 January with the first collection date being Friday 17 January 2025 (**see ad on p7 for QR code to shop**).

Photo of the Issue

Sponsored by

This issue's winner is Jackie Wells with a stunning shot of the Northern Lights photographed from Balmaclellan church

Jackie wins two portions of mac 'n' cheese from our competition sponsors, the Balmaclellan-based Stockbridge Mac & Cheese Co. Company owner and competition judge, Hannah Gould, said: "We just really love the Northern Lights!"



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

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

FEB/MAR COPY DEADLINE: 5 JAN



Editing & Design:
sarah.ade@gmail.com

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The role of the Gazette is to represent the voice of the community and does not represent the views of GCAT.