



ISSUE 45

WINTER 2019

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Noticeboard

18 Nov	<p>Just do Pilates Village Hall, 9.30am–10.30am, thereafter every Monday. Also Wednesdays, 7.30pm–8.30pm and Thursdays, 11am–12noon. All levels welcome. Contact Willie McIntosh (williemac.justdopilates@gmail.com; 07733 406464).</p> <p>Monday Club every Monday afternoon, Village Hall, Main Hall and Garden Room.</p> <p>Stillness Moves – Meditation and Mindful Movement Village Hall, 6.45pm–8pm, thereafter every Monday. Best for those with some meditation and yoga experience. Contact Adele (ashalhope@stillnessmoves.com; 07809 469572).</p>	23 Nov	<p>Killearn Primary School Fundraising Group Christmas Fair. Kirk Hall, 2.30pm–5pm.</p>
19 Nov	<p>Yoga class Village Hall, 10.30am, thereafter every Tuesday. Also Thursdays, 7pm. Contact Craig Buchanan (craig@insideyoga.net).</p> <p>Embroiderers’ Guild Strathendrick Branch workshop and Christmas Sales Table. Kirk Hall, 10.30am–3.30pm. Talk at 2pm by Margaret Milligan, ‘My Lace Journey’. Guild folios will be on display. Visitors welcome. £3 half day; £4 full day.</p> <p>Tai Chi for Health Village Hall Main Hall, 10.45am–11.45am, thereafter every Tuesday. Contact Sukyee (sukyee.tai@gmail.com).</p> <p>DIY Circuits Village Hall, 6.30pm–7.30pm, thereafter every Tuesday. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com) or Nick (07860 700928).</p> <p>Killearn Bridge Club Village Hall, 7pm–10.30pm, thereafter every Tuesday. Contact Arthur Whittaker (07748 636312). www.bridgewebs.com/killearn.</p> <p>Killearn Kirk Guild meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Project – Sailors’ Society.</p>	24 Nov	<p>Youth Club Village Hall 3pm–4pm, thereafter every Sunday. One hour of activities for children aged 7–9 years. Contact Archie Wilson (07786 913573; archie@treesurgery.com).</p>
20 Nov	<p>Yoga class Village Hall, 9.30am–10.30am, thereafter every Wednesday. Suitable for all. Contact Sarah Fleming (sarahfleming99@yahoo.com).</p> <p>Monaghan Tae Kwon Do children’s classes. Village Hall, 6pm–9pm, thereafter every Wednesday. Contact David Monaghan (monaghantaekwondo@outlook.com; 07472 210735).</p> <p>Killearn Community Council meeting. Killearn Primary School, 8pm.</p>	28 Nov	<p>Drymen & District Local History Society Illustrated talk by Alan McBride, ‘The Elephant, the Marquis and the Castle’. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door. www.drymen-history.org.uk.</p>
21 Nov	<p>Lynda Turner School of Dancing dance classes for children of all ages. Village Hall, 3pm–5pm. Contact Lynda (geolyn2000@hotmail.com; 770390).</p>	28-30 Nov	<p>FADs pantomime <i>Mother Goose</i>. Menzies Hall, Fintry, Thurs.–Sat., 7.30pm and matinee Sat., 2pm. More information and tickets at tickets@fintrydrama.org.uk.</p>
22 Nov	<p>Dancercise Village Hall, 10am–11am, thereafter every Friday. Low impact dance-based exercise and routines for the over 50s. Contact Yasmin (yasmin@throthegrapevine.co.uk; 07979 856837).</p> <p>Taiji and Qigong Village Hall Garden Room, 10.30am–11.45am, thereafter every Friday. Contact Susanne Lin Jesem (Susanne@dragonspringtaiji.co.uk; 07979 860754).</p> <p>Buchanan Castle Bridge Club Village Hall Garden Room, 2pm–5pm, thereafter every Friday. Contact Lesley Nicholl (lesleynic7@icloud.com; 07720 978998).</p>	1 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Communion Service, 10.30am.</p>
		3 Dec	<p>Town Break Friendship Group meeting. Village Hall Garden Room, 1.30pm–3.30pm, thereafter first Tuesday of each month. www.townbreakstirling.org.</p> <p>Killearn Kirk Guild meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Christmas fun.</p>
		5-7 Dec	<p>FADs pantomime <i>Mother Goose</i>. Menzies Hall, Fintry, Thurs.–Sat., 7.30pm and matinee Sat., 2pm. More information and tickets at tickets@fintrydrama.org.uk.</p>
		6 Dec	<p>Strathendrick Film Society showing <i>Matriarch</i>. Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £4 entry.</p> <p>Killearn Primary School Fundraising Group Banksy’s Festive Fundraising Quiz. Village Hall, 7.30pm.</p>
		7 Dec	<p>Colourful Killearn putting up the Christmas tree. Killearn Kirk, 10am. Helpers welcome!</p> <p>Killearn Kirk Guild Christmas Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12 noon. Baking stall and sales table.</p>
		8 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Christmas Gift Service, 10.30am. Donations to Salvation Army.</p>
		12 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Guild Christmas lunch with Thursday Club. Fintry Sports Club, 2.30pm.</p>
		15 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk service 10.30am. Behold he comes to lift us up!</p> <p>Strathendrick Singers Christmas Concert. Killearn Kirk, 7pm. Britten’s <i>Ceremony of Carols</i> as well as the usual favourites. Tickets at the door or from choir members. Refreshments provided. Contact Amy Anderson (secretary@strathendricksingers.org.uk).</p>
		18 Dec	<p>Killearn Community Council meeting. Killearn Primary School, 8pm.</p>
		22 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk service. 10.30am. A Christmas Cracker – Kirk Kids take on Christmas.</p>
		24 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk Christmas Eve service, 11pm. Carol singing followed by watchnight service.</p>
		25 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk family Christmas Day service, 10.30am.</p>
		25–26	<p>Killearn Health Centre closed. For help or advice contact NHS 24 on 111.</p>
		29 Dec	<p>Killearn Kirk service 10.30am. Songs of Praise.</p>

Noticeboard continued

2020

- 1–2 Jan** **Killearn Health Centre** closed.
- 4 Jan **Colourful Killearn** dismantling the Christmas tree. Killearn Kirk, 10am. Helpers welcome!
- 15 Jan **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Killearn Primary School, 8pm.
- 17 Jan **Strathendrick Film Society** showing *Hot Fuzz*. Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £4 entry.
- 21 Jan **Embroiderers' Guild** all-day workshop. Kirk Hall, 10.30am–3.30pm. Guild folios will be on display. Visitors welcome. £3 half day; £4 full day.
- Killearn Kirk Guild** meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. 'Traveller's Tales' by Ann Roy. Bring and Buy table.
- 23 Jan **Drymen & District Local History Society** talk by Bob Will, 'Ongoing research on St Kilda'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door.
- 4 Feb** **Killearn Kirk Guild** meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Project – Free to Live Trust.
- 7 Feb **Strathendrick Film Society** showing *Chocolat*. Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £4 entry.
- 18 Feb **Embroiderers' Guild** morning workshop. Kirk Hall, 10.30am–3.30pm. Talk at 2pm by Katie McDonald, 'The Singer Archive'. Guild folios will be on display. Visitors welcome. £3 half day; £4 full day.
- 19 Feb **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Killearn Primary School, 8pm.
- 20 Feb **Killearn Kirk Guild and Thursday Club** joint meeting. Kirk Hall, 2pm. Playlist for Life.
- 22 Feb **Strathendrick Singers** Musical Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12 noon. Home baking, musical entertainment and much more. Contact Amy Anderson (secretary@strathendricksingers.org.uk).
- 27 Feb **Drymen & District Local History Society** talk by Robert Reynolds, 'The Story of Culcreuch Castle'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door.
- 28 Feb **Strathendrick Film Society** showing *Manon des Sources*. Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £4 entry.
- 3 Mar** **Killearn Kirk Guild** meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Dancing with Yasmin.
- 6 Mar **Killearn Horticultural Society** Whist Drive. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Entry £2 at the door, including refreshments. Raffle.
- 14 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** Spring Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10–12 noon.
- 17 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** AGM and light supper with Ros McGowan. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm.
- 18 Mar **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Killearn Primary School, 8pm.

If you have dates of events for the spring issue of the Noticeboard (mid March to end August), please contact Heather McArthur (07985 082678; heather.mcarthur@virgin.net).

Editorial

Give not Take

By the time you read this, we will not be far away from the end of 2019, which has been an interesting year not just for the country as a whole, but for Killearn as well, particularly in terms of population growth. We've seen a whole new estate being developed and occupied at Blaressan (Buchanan Views); plans are afoot to develop the Killearn Hotel into 16 flats; discussions are ongoing relative to extensive building on the old hospital site; and let's not forget potential building in Lampson Road (see page 19 for full report from the Community Council). One wonders if we have the facilities and infrastructure to support all the consequences of these proposals. Pity the bank, post office, Spar and butchers didn't have crystal balls. Not that this concern is new: Killearnites probably worried about the impact on infrastructure and community spirit of the village when the Tree houses and Branziert were being built.

Buchanan Views is pretty much fully occupied by now and many of the residents will be having their first Christmas in our village. I hope they have become part of our community and have no regrets about moving here. After all, the village is what we make it and we only get out what we put in.

Christmas is the season of goodwill, of families being together and of giving. An example of community spirit, of giving and of goodwill is to be found on page 17, which details what Turnip the Beet is doing on Christmas Day. Can you help in any way?

Many of our organisations in the village are in need of more support if they are to remain viable so what about giving the most precious gift of all – your time?

How many of you have paid £1 – yes, only £1 – for membership of KCFC (see page 14)? Currently, membership stands at just over 200, which is embarrassing given everything the Company does for Killearn. In a community with over 1,000 eligible adults, I sincerely hope you are one of the 200 – if not, joining is as easy as downloading a form from their website.

Once again, my thanks go to our advertisers who have supported us throughout the year and to all the people who have given of their time to ensure the *Courier* continues as a regular community magazine.

From all at the *Courier* have a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous and Happy 2020.

Ian

Cover Image

The cover photo was taken by Paul Searle and remains his copyright. It was taken on the banks of the river Endrick, opposite Carbeth House.

Our thanks to Paul for permission to use his image.

Could you provide the cover image for our next issue? Send us your spring photos and we'll feature our favourite.



Letters to the Editor

We welcome your letters and emails. Please include your full address (not for publication). We reserve the right to edit letters and emails.

Dear Sir

Researching my family tree brings me to Killearn. My great-uncle, Peter Gordon, is commemorated on your War Memorial. He served in the Scots Guards in WW1 and died in France towards the end of the war. His brothers and sisters resided there – Mary, William, Nathaniel and Anne. Anne was my grandmother who married George Taylor, and lived and died in Helensburgh. I know her sister, Mary, married a George Russell and continued to live in Killearn for some time, as did their children, Mary and Nathaniel Russell.

I was not brought up by my birth mother and, although very happy in my adopted family, I have in later life been tracing my roots, compiling an extensive family tree on *Ancestry*. Then I found your magazine!

So here is my plea. I'd love to make contact with members of Anne's family and receive copies of any family photographs. Having no children, I just long to see someone who looks like me.

Thanks in advance.

Sheila Ash

(If anyone has information that may be helpful to Sheila, please contact me through the usual *Courier* channels. *Ed.*)

Dear Sir

When I lifted my summer issue of the *Courier*, I was overtaken by the photograph on the front page of the obelisk raised in the name of Alexander Buchanan as a tribute to a wonderful benefactor to our village in the 19th century. The obelisk was vandalised in around 2000 and Killearn Trust had it reinstated and cleaned.

Alexander was a clever merchant both in Glasgow and in the West Indies, with the nickname of 'Sweetie', a reference to his family's confectionary business. He purchased Achadhu House on Main Street, but when he moved to Killearn, cholera had broken out among the villagers, caused by contaminated water from the well at the Well Green.

Buchanan tested all the burns running off our hill and it was found that a burn on the Lettre Farm had lovely water – clean and pure. He then had constructed a pipeline from this source to 11 wells within the village, supplying water to Gartaneaglais, Little Blackland, the Well Green, the Old School, Lomond Lodge, the Old Mill, both Greenend (house) and Greenend Lane, and two other sites.

During the 1920s and early '30s, the original tank was enlarged as more houses were built. This stopped the water supply of people living in the area of the Black Bull and the church running dry,

In recognition of his service to the village, a silver tray was presented to him in 1881. This is now in the safekeeping of the Killearn Trust, following a presentation by the American Buchanan Society in July 1985.

Jim Fallas, Buchanan Rd

Dear Sir

I have been resident in Killearn for many years and have witnessed many changes – not just the loss of various businesses, but also the growth in population. The latter circumstance can only be good for the village, but perhaps the downside of this is that we now have more cars on the road.

There's been a noticeable increase in traffic passing through Killearn from our neighbours in Balfron, for example. Not just commuters, but heavy lorries and tankers heading down Balfron Road and Main Street or turning down Station Road to get to the A81, and speeding through the village has become an issue.

Unfortunately, speeding in Killearn is not confined to through traffic, but includes some residents who should know better.

The increase in population has brought more children to Killearn, which is wonderful, and this situation ought to result in drivers taking more care, both while driving through on the main roads and on many of our side streets where children live.

Our local police do not have the resources to be able to address this situation, so it is up to us to take steps which may ameliorate the circumstances.

Stirling District recently publicised a list of communities where a 20 mile-per-hour speed limit has been imposed. Not only would this reduce the possibility of accidents, but it would help the environment. Perhaps this is something we should pursue?

Concerned, Main Street

Dear Sir

You kindly printed my letter in your spring issue regarding the tarmac 'wedge' on Station Road. Since then, the wedge has been removed from the 'site' side to the side nearest the Glebe; so far so good.

However, the signage indicates that traffic coming up Station Road has the right of way, and I wonder if the people responsible for this daftness considered the implications? For example, vehicles coming up Station Road are accelerating up the hill, while traffic coming downhill is obviously travelling that wee bit faster.

When a driver coming down Station Road sees a clear passage ahead, they naturally move to the other side of the road in order to negotiate the wedge and are met with traffic coming up on the same side of the road.

I am not aware of any head-on collisions as yet, but several incidents have involved a screeching of brakes and the irate sounding of horns. I suspect it will not be long before there is a serious accident.

While I accept that our Traffic Planners have their job to do, I fail to see the advantage of this hazard to the free flow of traffic. Perhaps this letter will provoke a response from those responsible for this silly situation.

Fair Scunnered, Station Road

Kellner – Beck



Maxi Kellner and Andrew Beck were married on 20 July 2019 at Irghof, Austria, a short distance from the bride's home in Bavaria. Family and friends travelled from near and far to celebrate the day with them. The ceremony and reception was held outside, with a ceilidh in the barn in the evening. The couple live and work in the Glasgow area.

Macintosh – Edwards



Cairi Macintosh and Ashley Cameron Edwards were married in Killearn Kirk on 8 August 2019, with the reception following at Boturich Castle, Loch Lomond. They were blessed with sunny weather on the afternoon, with the guests having stunning views of the loch. Cairi, who grew up in Killearn, is teaching music at Balfron High School, whilst Ashley, from the Edinburgh area, is teaching music at Bearsden Academy and is hoping to undertake a Masters in conducting. The couple are house hunting in the local area.

News in brief

The A821 between the Achary Hotel and David Marshall Lodge (Duke's Pass) has been upgraded to a Priority 1 gritting route by Stirling Council. The new classification will ensure treatment can be carried out along the entire length of the road and will significantly reduce the number of times the A821 is closed due to severe winter weather.

Two local groups are benefiting from a share of £2-million Forth Valley and Lomond LEADER funding – Art4You, job creation, and Our Little Outdoor Classroom, for setting up the business.

Congratulations to Nicola Reith of the Three Sisters Bake, who is wowing the nation as the baking judge on BBC 1's prime-time Saturday morning show *Flour Power*.

Do you have trouble seeing to read newspapers? Would a talking newspaper help? Rocktalk is a free service, with 40 volunteers editing and recording a broad selection of articles from the *Stirling Observer* each week. The results are distributed using returnable memory sticks. If this is of interest to you, please contact Marilyn and Steve Willett (enquiries@rocktalk.org.uk; 01786 8166730).

Have you registered to vote? If you want to vote in the up-coming UK Parliamentary election, you need to have registered. You can find all the information and details about registering to vote at www.mygov.scot/register-to-vote-scotland/. You can also apply for a postal ballot – maybe a good idea for a 12 December election? – either by downloading the form (www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote) or contacting Stirling Council (01786 892289).

Come and Sing Day

It was with some trepidation that I found myself in the atrium of Balfour High School wondering what I had signed up to... or let myself in for. The Strathendrick Singers, together with Balfour High School Choir had invited anyone to 'Come and Sing!', no previous singing experience required. Under the guidance of Mark, Strathendrick Singers' choirmaster, we would learn and sing a number of choral classics, followed by a concert for anyone brave enough to come and hear us.

I had sung in a choir before, but it was a choir formed in Glasgow's Year of Culture for people who couldn't sing! *Call That Singing* was a singing audience, performing pop classics, songs from the shows and golden oldies. You didn't have to be able to read music; our song sheets had the words going up and down with the music. Today, however, would be different, as became apparent when we were handed the scores of the pieces we were going to learn. Real music, with soprano, alto, tenor and bass lines and lots of notes swimming before my eyes. Too late now to retreat. I declared myself to be a bass,



and found myself sitting in among Strathendrick choir members who definitely could sing.

The first surprise was half an hour of exercises, both physical and vocal. Arms up and down, breathe in and out, sing nonsense verses again and again. By the time we completed our final exercise, my fears had miraculously lessened, and we were into to our first piece of music, Vivaldi's *Gloria*. I was beginning to enjoy myself, and despite the words being in a straight line, I found to my amazement I could follow the score. Mark rehearsed it until he was satisfied, although I am sure it was far from his usual standard.

For the whole day, with just a break to eat our sandwiches in the glorious sunshine, we rehearsed until we had eight works under our belt. It including one of my favourites, the *Benedictus* from the *Armed Man Mass*, which was accompanied by a

lovely cello solo performed by one of the pupils from Mark's school.

Another run-through of all eight works, some last-minute tweaks, and we were ready for our concert. As the audience arrived, I experienced the same frisson of excitement that I remembered from my days of *Call That Singing*. The concert over, the applause still ringing in our ears, we came out into the late sunshine with that glow of satisfaction that singing can give you.

The Strathendrick Singers recruited some new members, which was one reason for holding the event, but it also gave a chance for those who don't want to commit to the discipline of choir membership, or like me, really cannot sing that well, to experience what it's like to sing in a choir. If there is another chance to 'Come and Sing!', I strongly recommend you take it.

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Another Successful Horti Show

Fortunately, the weather did not deter our exhibitors on the day of the annual Killearn Cottagers' Horticultural Society Show. This year's entries (917, not including the children's paintings) was the second highest in the last 15 years – a great effort from all.

Chairman Heather Wright welcomed all those in attendance, in particular Killearn resident Joyce Begg, who shared her experiences of previous Shows before declaring the Show officially open.

This year's exhibitors came not only from Killearn and surrounding villages of west Stirlingshire, but also from as far as field as Kirkintilloch, Milngavie and Grangemouth to name but a few, and they brought a wide and varied selection of exhibits.

The cut flower section saw a magnificent display of dahlias from local growers and the Turner family from Grangemouth. The winner of the Tom Robbie Trophy for most points in dahlias was Sheila McIntyre from Kippen. A wonderful show of roses resulted in Grant Farquharson winning the Sir George Wilson Rose Bowl. Maxwell Drummond won best exhibit for a lovely vase of three gladioli, and a beautiful vase of mixed annuals rewarded Janice McLaren with a voucher for best exhibit in that category.

Thornhill grower Norman McBean won best exhibit for a plate of potatoes. Graham Gourlay won the Society Trowel for most points in this section. The Gordon Trophy for a basket of plenty was won by John Phillips, and the winner of heaviest marrow class was Ronnie MacDonald.

David Houston won the Battison Cup for most points in the pot plant section – with some brilliant specimens from his collection. This year the Quinloch Decanter for Best Exhibit in Horticulture went to Drew Watson for his fantastic fuchsia hanging basket, which also won best exhibit in the pot plant section.

Outside, our association with other clubs and groups allowed visitors to meet representatives from Colourful Killearn, the RSPB, Lomond Bees, Hub G63 and Froglife, while inside, Strathendrick Embroiderers' Guild branch members showed off their work and allowed young and old to try stitching.

The crafts and floral art sections were well supported. The Millennium Quaich for most points in the craft section was awarded to Elizabeth Hay, with Marjorie Thomson displaying an embroidered picture to win Best Exhibit. The most amusing youth entry in this section went to Eve Loughrey.

A light-filled foyer displayed the photographs to their best, with Gwyneth Bell winning both the Jubilee Quaich for best exhibit and the most points in the section.

The Jubilee Salver for most points in the baking section was won by Jacky Young, with the baking Quaich for best exhibit in section going to Cathy North. The prize for the given recipe – sponge parkin – was won by Glenda Asquith and the McIntosh Cup in the youth



classes was won by Erin Parsons, Zoe Loughrey and Eve Loughrey, who all had the same number of points. Gladys Farquharson had a clean sweep in the preserves section winning both the best exhibit for chilli jam and the most points (McFarlanes, Balfroun voucher) in this section. A bottle of elderflower cordial won Kathleen Wright the Wine and Cordial Cup.

In Art, the Sandra Burt Quaich was won by Ann Beatty, with Janet McLachlan receiving a voucher for most points.

The children from Killearn Primary and Nursery had a colourful selection of paintings on display which were much admired – particularly the brilliant thistles.

Winners of the garden competitions were: Mr Sim (Spring Garden); Mrs D. Gourlay (Summer Garden); Mr & Mrs Jackson (Hidden Garden).

A massive thank you to everyone who helped set up (and clear up) this year. It takes many hours and a lot of energy over two days to have everything ready for the exhibitors to show off their entries. Particular thanks go to our new helpers this year who made such a difference.

More grateful thanks go to all our tearoom helpers, new and old, who baked, served and washed hundreds of dishes. We hope everyone who came for tea enjoyed it. The money raised in the tea room makes a very significant contribution towards the costs of putting on the Show.

For a full roundup of results and more photos of the day, visit www.killearn.org.uk/kchs and our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/killearnhorti).

Hip Hip Hooray

Is it my imagination, or have the berries been particularly bright and prolific this year? Red splashes appeared on the rowan in our garden long before any leaves started to turn. If the birds behave intelligently and don't binge, there should be enough berries to see them through the winter. On the other hand, the brambles have been a bit hit or miss. I was dissuaded from carelessly using up last year's crop by the observation that quite a lot of this year's brambles have been small and sparse. If you know of a source of reliable fat berries, you should maybe keep quiet and hold that information to your bosom. Brambles are wonderful things. You need quite a lot to make jelly, but even a handful can transform an apple tart. And they're free!

Before the massacre of the bushes on Well Green, there used to be lots of brambles weaving their way through the leaves. One could watch them ripening, and at the right moment, take a small poly bag and pick a few, leaving plenty for others, as a good citizen should. A few days later, one could do the same thing, noticing that no one else had touched them in the interim. Some of the berries shrivelled for lack of interest. Then along came the demolition. Despite looking entirely defunct, the bushes are now rallying, which bodes well for the future look of Well Green. It may be some time, however, before the brambles return.

Incidentally, while on the subject of Well Green, isn't the arrangement of the benches a handsome new development? The tubs of flowers soften the lines and lend a bit of colour. Even in the snow, the scene is going to look really attractive. Well done whoever thought of that.

Other berries also abound this autumn. Cotoneaster I recognise, and there are other common plants with terrific berries that I don't know the names of and which may well kill you if consumed, for all I know. Then there's the Cobb wild rose hedge, which is a delight to behold in all seasons, although you do have to keep a respectful distance. This year the rose hips have been spectacular, a demonstration of autumnal fruitfulness all



by themselves. Just the sight of them transports some of us back to childhood, when we were given paper bags and encouraged to pick as many rose hips as we could, from the hedges round our village. Once the bags were filled, we took them back to school, where they were weighed. I do not remember if any money changed hands, but we were thanked and made to feel particularly useful.

By some mysterious process thereafter, the hips were taken away and converted into rose hip syrup, to be given back to us some time later by the shiny new National Health Service. The bottles of pink syrup sat on a shelf in our pantry beside the jars of malt and distinctively shaped bottles of National Health orange juice.

Autumn is wonderful, of course it is, full of scents and colours. There are also some berries that are particularly associated with winter rather than autumn, and with the magic of the festive season. I have still to see mistletoe growing wild, though it could well be there in the forest. But there is plenty of holly. Where would the Christmas card industry be without the redbreast and the holly? They are symbols of robust cheerfulness, encouraging us all to enjoy the pleasures of the season.

Merry Christmas when it comes.

JOYCE BEGG

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The Spirit of Christmas is Alive and Well

Christmas Post

Turnip the Beet is putting community at the heart of Christmas this year by hosting a Christmas Day Feast at their deli in Killlearn Mill Business Park for anyone at a loose end on 25 December.

All ages are welcome, and the invitation also extends to couples who may find themselves without the company of family on Christmas Day.

The idea is to reach all age groups and include all circumstances. Christmas can be a difficult time for some, and this particular troop of Santa's elves are hoping that their light-hearted and fun feast will create a really sociable, relaxed atmosphere as everyone sits down together around one big table with the food in the middle.

Doors will open at 1pm for the banquet to begin at 1.30pm. The feast will finish at 4pm.

Even transportation from any of the local villages has been covered because Turnip the Beet is willing to arrange this for you.

There will be no charge for the dinner, but do bring your own bottled festive cheer.

Would you like to help support this lovely, life-enhancing idea? Turnip the Beet are on the lookout for donations in the form of prizes for a raffle and any additions to the table layout, like napkins or decorations. Do you have an extra box of Christmas crackers to spare? Too many selection boxes? Bring them down to the Killlearn Mill Business Park and the 'elves' will gratefully find a use for them.

Offers by volunteers willing to help with transportation will also be gratefully accepted.

Space for the Christmas Day Feast is limited, so it is essential that you book beforehand. So, if you'd like to secure your place, or would like to volunteer or hand in donations, please contact enquiry@turnipthebeet.co.uk. NB

The familiar Christmas post boxes will be in place in the Co-op, Killlearn Pharmacy and the Kirk from Saturday, 30 November.

The final uplift will take place on Saturday, 14 December at 5pm from Co-op and Pharmacy, and on Sunday, 15 December from the Kirk.

Post will be delivered by our merry band of volunteers during the following week.

Deliveries will be made within the village's 30mph signs, including all of Lampson Rd and Drumbeg Loan, and, of course, the new houses at Buchanan Views.

Please remember to put the full name and address on the envelope (but no postcodes required). Some of you set our merry delivery folk some puzzlers last year!

Once again we will be donating the proceeds to Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS), so we very much hope that you will give generously.

Should anyone require further information, please phone Glenda (550142). Thank you.





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Finding Your Way

Strathendrick Branch of the Embroiderers' Guild meet in Killearn Kirk Halls, however we draw membership from a huge sweep of west and central Scotland. The River Leven runs south from Loch Lomond to the Clyde, and 'The Vale' – Vale of Leven Hospital in Alexandria – serves communities in the very centre of our catchment.

Some time ago, Strathendrick members were asked if we would be willing to collaborate with Professor Malcolm Lochhead (textile designer and embroiderer) in producing a piece of textile art for the Day Unit of the Oncology Department in the hospital.

After visiting the Department to meet some of the staff and having extensive discussions with Malcolm, we began working with rug canvas, numerous scraps of fabric and fine embroidery on digital printing.

The 100cm x 60cm embroidery is now displayed in the Oncology Day Unit entrance. As well as a bird's-eye view of the Vale of Leven, the panel shows 12 'postcards' illustrating local views, landmarks and memories.

The title 'Finding Your Way' was suggested by the Friends of the Oncology Department. It encompasses the map theme of the piece, but also the challenge of finding your way through the journey of a cancer diagnosis and treatment.

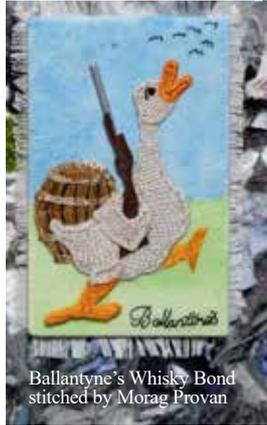
LYN DUNACHIE



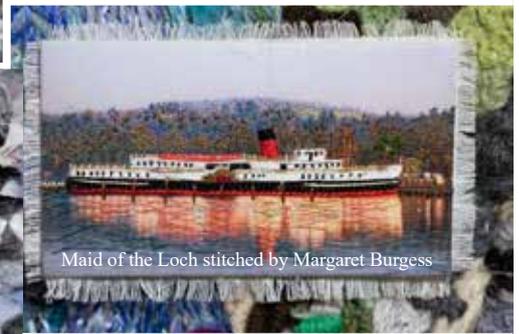
Alexander Smollett Fountain stitched by Christina McLachlan



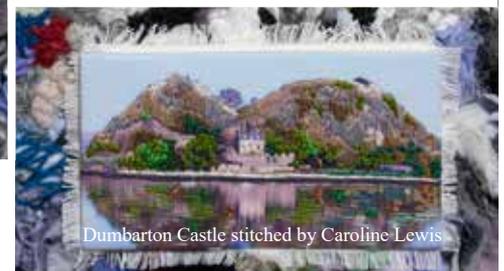
©Susan Gray



Ballantyne's Whisky Bond stitched by Morag Provan



Maid of the Loch stitched by Margaret Burgess



Dumbarton Castle stitched by Caroline Lewis

Postcard stitching images ©Desmond O'Hare

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Killearn Glen Dig



On the last Monday in August, a troop of volunteers began stripping away the undergrowth and removing the topsoil from two carefully marked out trenches in a clearing in Killearn Glen.

The team, led by professional archaeologists Dr Gavin MacGregor and Steve Black, began the excavation (or ‘evaluation’ to use the correct term) of what was thought to be an old building lying hidden in the woods. Three years ago when the Glen was surveyed as part of a previous community project, the mounds and ridges at the site seemed unnatural, and sandstone blocks, possibly part of ancient walls, were found poking through the surface.

The ‘Killearn Time Team’ of 10 volunteers each day carefully stripped back the overlying material layer by layer and set it aside to be replaced at the end of the dig. Before long, the remnants of some type of retaining wall in the northern trench and evidence of a room about three metres square in the southern trench began to appear.

After the initial heavy lifting, soil was carefully tooled away using trowels to avoid disturbing any evidence that might be uncovered. Spirits were high as the crew chatted happily with their new compadres. Wallowing in the mud and digging for treasure was fun, while the meticulous levelling, mapping and sketching of the remains at each stage demanded more patience!

Gradually, substantial stone-built walls began to emerge. Half a metre wide and fairly level but only at ground height, it appeared that stone may have been ‘robbed’ (taken for re-use elsewhere). Alternatively, the walls may have fallen down or been destroyed, as loose stones, ‘tumble’, lay inside the structure. But what was this building? How old was it? What was its purpose? The Place of Killearn was a manor house, built on Crow Hill (aka the Cowfield) in the late 17th century and demolished 150 years later. The speculation was that our building was somehow related. A woodland manager’s house? Some form of steading? Perhaps even a ‘laird’s house’ pre-dating The Place? Theories abounded as the archaeologists – amateurs and professionals – put forward their ideas.

Unusual looking fragments were examined and referred, but most proved to be quartz, unusual sandstone layering or erratics. Then, great excitement, a couple of days into the week-long project, one of the team found a sherd of pottery. Provisionally identified as 14th- or 15th-century Scottish red ware, it was a real find. Sadly, that was the only artefact found during the week.

As the team (24 volunteers in total) learned and practised evaluation techniques, the base of the walls was uncovered and the structures were examined, sketched, measured, mapped and photographed. Curious dog-walkers came to observe progress and expound their own ideas about the site. Over the week more than 100 people visited the dig and heard about what was, or was not, being discovered.

On the last day, all the fill – rocks, subsoil, topsoil, debris and organic matter – was replaced. This was to restore the site to as-near-as-possible its original condition and preserve the underlying sandstone structures from the ravages of frost, water, roots, vegetation, animals and humans.

So what do we now know? There is definitely a substantial building at that site in Killearn Glen. It could well be 17th or 18th century (or possibly earlier), but this is, as yet, unproven. Its precise purpose is still unknown.

We learned a great deal and became enthusiastic amateur archaeologists. Should we return in the future to try and find out more using the techniques we learned and the evidence gathered to date to attempt to establish exactly what the mysterious building was?



The Killearn Glen dig, led by Northlight Scotland, was part of the Killearn Heritage Trail project. Work continues on other key features of historical interest around the village, to collate material, design and produce interpretation boards, and to develop a website with further historical information.

CAN YOU HELP US FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR VILLAGE’S HISTORY?

We want to find out more about:

- 🕒 public houses in the village
- 🕒 origins of some of our road names
- 🕒 life in Killearn during World War I and II and more
- 🕒 growth of the village over the past 300 years – from a small farming hamlet to a thriving, burgeoning community

We’d love to hear from you if you have information we could use or know someone who might offer any clues or insight.

We’re also looking for individuals, families or groups to get together to help us gather information about our village.

This would involve just a few hours of your time and we will provide advice and support on how to search for useful material. We really hope you will get in touch and get involved.

Please contact us at heritage@kfcf.co.uk.

The Killearn Heritage Trail project is supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the *Killearn Courier* (KFCF Ltd.).



What has KCFC been doing in 2019?

Here's a brief look at this year's achievements of Killearn Community Futures Company (KCFC); some are reported more extensively elsewhere in the *Courier*.



The Village Hall continues to attract numerous community clubs, events, various exercise classes and the youth club. Partnership with Three Sisters Bake in hosting weddings and other events provides essential income to maintain the Hall and subsidise community use. This year, substantial investment has been put into making the Hall an even more attractive place and, with the exterior of the old hall and tower re-painted, a credit to the village.

Of particular note is the resurgence of Sustainable Killearn, launched with a well-attended Eco Fayre at the end of April, along with the formation of a new group developing a Killearn heritage trail.

The Paths Group continues to pursue an all-user off-road path linking the village to Boquhan and, ultimately, Balfroon, while the village environment is visibly improved by Colourful Killearn's constant expansion of planters, tubs and wildflower patches in public spaces.

The annual fireworks spectacular has, to some extent, become a victim of its own success, with issues surrounding management of visitor numbers, parking, traffic and some anti-social behaviour following the event. These are being addressed in conjunction with the police, Stirling Council and the Community Council to try to ensure viability in years to come. It would be a shame to lose such a popular event.

Working alongside the Community Council, we have helped bring new equipment to the playpark, and we are also continuing to develop the local resilience plan for the village.

My sincere thanks go to my fellow directors and ALL working group colleagues. Their commitment reflects a high standard of community volunteering and plays a major role in the current successful position of KCFC. Active groups are:

- ◆ All Killearn Archive
- ◆ Colourful Killearn
- ◆ Colourful Killearn Wildflower Group
- ◆ Community Sports Pavilion
- ◆ Fireworks
- ◆ Hoolie Dhu
- ◆ Killearn Heritage Trail
- ◆ *Killearn Courier*
- ◆ Killearn Village Hall Operating Committee & Development Group
- ◆ Paths Group
- ◆ Sustainable Killearn
- ◆ Woodlands Group

The current membership of 270 is still only a small proportion of residents. The more members we can muster, the heavier our clout and the more credible our representations on behalf of the community. The more we have, the more we can do! So, please, please come and join us – it's only £1 for annual membership.

MIKE GRAY (convenor@kcfc.co.uk)




Befriending volunteers required

We are looking for volunteers who can dedicate a few hours a week to provide the following:
Support people with dementia living in the community by providing informal support on a regular basis at a time that suits them.
To accompany and support people to attend regular groups and meetings.



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For more information please call the Befriending Co-ordinator on 01786 476797 or 07745711460.

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Nyttår i Norge

In 1995 we decided to take an extra cross-country skiing holiday at New Year as there had been little chance to take holidays during the summer. Our usual tour company had cancelled their trips, so we decided to go with a different company to Venabu Fjellhotell, where we had spent one night a few years before. Little did we know that 24 years later we would still be making an annual trip to the mountains of central Norway for New Year.

The event is probably best described as a scaled-up version of a traditional Norwegian family New Year. Apart from seeing the Tvette family, who own the hotel, we also meet up with long-standing friends from Norway, the Netherlands, the UK, Hungary as well as other countries amongst our fellow guests and members of staff.

Some traditions have gone – singing all the verses of *Auld Lang Syne*, the infamous fancy-dress ski race (worth an article in itself) and a conga involving going down the stairs, through the basement and back up again – but others remain or have been added.

New Year's Eve starts after the buffet lunch with a visit to the local mountain chapel for a concert, usually by local musicians. We then walk back up the hill to the hotel carrying lighted torches – not easy if it is windy! A warming cup of glogg (mulled wine with added nuts and raisins) greets the walkers on their return.

Then everyone gets ready for dinner, which is served that night rather than being the usual buffet. After the starter and the soup, everyone stops to listen to the King's New Year speech. Disconcertingly for the British, this is introduced by the King's anthem sung to the tune of



God Save the Queen. After 15 minutes of Norwegian, only some of which we manage to understand, the Norwegian National Anthem is sung.

We then go on to the main course of reindeer which will be from the Sami reindeer herded in the Arctic rather than the local wild herd in the Rondane mountains. Finally, there is a magnificent dessert buffet including cloudberry, chocolate marron rings, cakes, tarts and the traditional kransekake. This is a marzipan cake built into a tower by decreasing the size of the rings – it should be eaten from the bottom!

The meal is followed by dancing until midnight (for some people at least), when coloured torches are lit outside, a toast is drunk to the New Year and fireworks can be seen at the surrounding mountain huts and the neighbouring hotel.

Apart from New Year, there are other activities such as a quiz and slide shows. Obviously there is skiing and snow-shoeing, and there are usually sleigh rides and dog-sledging. Daylight is from about 8.30am to 4pm which is similar to Killlearn and the temperature can range from -26°C to around freezing with the chance of seeing both mother-of-pearl clouds and the Northern Lights.

GILL AND PETER SMITH

Killlearn Village Hall Update

We very much appreciate the community support at the Village Hall and the mix of groups and classes which use the spaces on a daily basis.

It's always inspiring to see all the displays of fruits, vegetables and flowers in the hall during the Horti Show – we're very proud to be part of what continues to be a special community weekend.

On a regular week during term time, there is something for everyone as we welcome the Monday clubbers, playing bridge and badminton; yoga classes with Adelaide, Craig and Sarah; Pilates with Willie; Lynda Turner's dancing class; Yasmin's Dancercise; David and Gemma's Tae Kwon Do; Sukyee's Tai Chai for Health; Susanne Lin's Taiji; Killlearn and Buchanan Castle Bridge Clubs, the Youth Club and, on a monthly basis, Kim's Sewing Group, Stirling Carers, Townbreak, and the list continues.

We're also seeing more groups of friends booking to use the games room, play badminton or chill out in the Garden Room – watch something on the big TV screen, bring in some drinks...

And so that we can keep the hall looking clean and tidy, a big thanks to our willing volunteers who will be picking up the paint brushes and brightening up the walls during the winter season.

And if we get some milder winter days, why not come and try out our new bench and chairs? We're very grateful to our friends for the donation.

We're always here to talk to you about options for classes, activities, parties – please contact us via email killearnvillagehall@gmail.com.

We look forward to seeing you at the hall soon.

FIONA RENNIE



What Our Cub Did Next

This summer I was accepted for an International Citizen Service's (ICS) placement in Prasat Sambour, Cambodia. I volunteered with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) on a community livelihoods development programme for three months. We worked in a cross-cultural team of UK and Khmer volunteers to implement entrepreneurship training and generate access to local employment services for youth.

That this was a responsible volunteering programme was something that I was keen to ensure before I went. So much of what we are exposed to (including on social media) is short-term 'voluntourism', where British youths often pay vast sums of money to volunteer abroad, with the best of intentions. These 'experiences' often prioritise the wishes of the volunteer above the needs of the community and can do more harm than good. For example, in Cambodia there is a massive orphanage voluntourism industry. A staggering 80 per cent of children in these institutions have at least one relative who could look after them if given proper support, and the proliferation of orphanages (which are proven to cause emotional damage to developing children) is mainly due to the influx of foreign voluntourists.

ICS and VSO are organisations which ticked all the proverbial boxes. There was a lengthy application and assessment process, we were continuously trained, and we collaborated with local partners to set sustainable and focused goals. I was in the second out of nine three-month cycles in Sambour. Therefore a lot of our work remained introductory, completing consultations with stakeholders.

We stayed with a local family and a Khmer counterpart, so we really felt integrated into the community. The relationship I built with my host family and Nary, my counterpart, was brilliant. Nary is now studying at the Asian University for Women in Bangladesh, and my host mother and I keep in regular contact over Facebook messenger. This is mainly based on emojis and photos as my Khmer and her English are fairly limited.



Kirsty is pictured second from left



The one thing that stuck with me throughout my time was how severely the area I was in, and Cambodia in general, was already feeling the impact of the climate emergency. Outbreaks of dengue fever, a viral blood infection that can be lethal, have increased rapidly with global warming, as the mosquito which carries the virus thrives the hotter it gets. Cambodia is in the middle of the worst dengue outbreak in recent history. During my time there, three of my team members and four host family members contracted the disease.

Extreme weather also badly affects rice crops, on which the majority of rural Cambodians depend for their livelihoods. This is especially cruel as Cambodia has proportionally contributed so much less in terms of emissions than other countries such as the UK, yet it is most vulnerable to the consequences.

I would not hesitate to recommend an ICS placement to any young person. Personally, I contributed to the development of the community (however incrementally), and developed my own skills and global outlook along the way.

KIRSTY MCARTHUR

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Colourful Killearn: Year of the Begonia

Sometimes we guess right and sometimes we guess wrong – that’s one of the attractions (and frustrations) of gardening. Working with local conditions of soil and site, while trying to predict in advance the weather over the ensuing six months, in order to choose the perfect plant to give that spectacular display can be somewhat challenging. This year, begonias were it, and the results in the tubs around the village speak for themselves.

With just a little coaxing from our band of volunteers during the dry spring and early summer, the plants in our 44 barrels literally exploded into growth and colour. Brightest of all, the begonias flowered almost immediately after planting in May and their exuberance continued to late September.

However, these same conditions made it a parlous year for starting new wildflowers. Seed sown on the two ends of the ‘green island’ opposite the Co-op only yielded a few straggly pioneer cornflowers. I’m hoping the coming winter will break the dormancy induced by the cool, dry spring and give a racing start to growth next year. Watch those spaces – I certainly will be!

As we head towards the festive season, Colourful Killearn will be putting up the village Christmas tree outside the Kirk on Saturday, 7 December at 10am – please come and give our volunteers moral (or practical) support. Sincere gratitude is due to Edenmill Christmas



Trees, who are kindly sponsoring the tree this year.

For more information on our activities or to see how you could be involved, contact Mike Gray (550962; mike@kfcf.co.uk).

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Global Warming and Climate Change

The annual State of the Climate Report* issued by the Met Office in June 2018 is quite alarming. It indicates that the UK's 10 hottest years on record have occurred since 2002, and none of the UK's 10 coldest years have occurred since 1963. Further, the world has warmed by 1°C since pre-industrial times, meaning hot years are the new normal.

July 2019 saw a record temperature of 38.7°C (101.6°F) in Cambridge. My weather centre in Killearn recorded 30.1°C (86.2°F). July 2019 was the hottest month across the planet since records were kept in 1864. These record temperatures have been accompanied by flash flooding, droughts in some parts of the world, and devastating typhoons that have resulted in a heavy loss of life. Why is this happening?

The temperature of our planet is controlled by what energy the sun provides (solar radiation) and how much is lost back into space by reflection off clouds and bright surfaces or by re-mission at longer wavelengths by the Earth and its atmosphere (terrestrial radiation).

Greenhouse gases upset this balance by artificially creating a blanket effect on the atmosphere and warming the earth to levels that can cause climatic changes to weather patterns, a phenomenon we call climate change.

There is incontrovertible evidence that concentrations of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere have been rising since the 18th-century industrial revolution (see below).

As the atmosphere warms up there are numerous consequences to our climate system. Glaciers in the Arctic and Antarctic regions are melting, resulting in changes to sea levels; rainfall is becoming more intense in summertime storms; permafrost is melting; sea ice in the Arctic is retreating; and snow, heat waves and droughts are becoming more common.

Ninety-nine percent of climate scientists have been telling us for some time that pumping carbon into the atmosphere is triggering environmental changes that will be catastrophic for many parts of the world, and that the poorest people will be most affected.

Global warming, resulting in changes to our climate, is one of the few scientific theories which asks us to examine the whole basis of modern society. It queries individual choices of lifestyle and asks questions about how humanity is treating the planet.

So what can be done to prevent temperature increases, rising sea levels and significant harmful changes to our climate?

-  Use energy more efficiently, with cheap and clean energy production.
-  All nations must seriously revisit their treaty targets to enable a more rapid reduction of carbon emissions.
-  Help third-world countries to develop as rapidly as possible, but without further production of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases.
-  Find solutions to deforestation.

On a personal level we can:

-  Read the reports from scientists who work in this field.
-  Listen to young people who are most likely to be affected.
-  Think hard about airport expansion, the building of new airports and whether you really need to fly or if you can use less intensive public transport, such as trains or coaches.
-  Persuade our politicians to work together to ensure that climate change is taken seriously and measures to mitigate it are not left to future generations; this means halving greenhouse emissions within 10 years and reaching net zero in 30 years.

The United Nations Panel on Climate Change hold their next summit in Glasgow in 2020 and 30,000 delegates are expected to attend an event that '...is designed to produce an international response to the climate emergency.'

Let us hope we have global agreement on a worldwide response.

TOM RENFREW

Main greenhouse gases and their ability to warm the atmosphere

Greenhouse Gas	Pre-industrial Concentrations	1994 Concentrations	Human Source
Carbon dioxide	278ppmv	358ppmv (30% increase)	fossil fuel combustion; land use changes; cement production
Methane	700ppbv	1721ppbv (240% increase)	fossil fuels; rice paddies; waste dumps; livestock
Nitrous oxide	275ppbv	311ppbv (15% increase)	fertiliser; industrial processes; fossil fuel combustion

ppmv = part per million by volume; ppbv = part per billion by volume

Source: Mark Maslin, *Global Warming: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 16.

*All sources and documents for this article have been supplied by the author.

The Weather Channel

The warm, dry spring and early summer weather gave way to a rather wet and cool August and September. The very heavy rainfall on 8 and 9 September are indicative of the changing nature of our weather patterns, with September being the wettest month so far this year.

However, at the time of writing, we've had what could be the start of what is known as an Indian Summer. Although the origins of this term are unclear, it is thought to have been used by Native Americans ('Indians') and is based on warm and balmy conditions in autumn, the prime hunting season for the First Nations.

After the late summer disappointments, let us hope that an Indian Summer did materialise.

This poem (right) gets quite close to the type of weather we have experienced this year.

I'm dreaming of an Indian summer
It was a very dry spring
And previously a very wet summer
Now what will it deliver?
After a record-breaking, warm winter.
'Yes, I'm talking about the weather.'
I'm dreaming of an Indian summer
It's three yrs' since I lit a barbecue fire
And the coals I bought
Will surely, watch me expire!

MARK HEATHCOTE
(www.poemhunter.com)

TOM RENFREW

Summary – January to September 2019 for Killearn

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Highest Temp	11.5	15.8	11.3	19.9	25.8	27.3	30.1	27.1	20.9
Lowest Temp	-7.8	-7.4	-5.3	-1.9	0.2	4.8	7.2	7.7	4.2
Mean Temp	3.4	6.2	3.1	7.5	9.8	13	16	14.7	12
Days Below Freezing	16	11	13	3	0	0	0	0	0
Highest Wind Gust	30	28	28	23	33	29	20	19	18
Monthly Rain	46	65	90.8	88.2	51.8	24	33.9	89.6	94.4
Most Rain in 24 hrs	6.2	21.4	13.4	19	13	7	8.6	29.2	28.5
Days without Rain	19	18	10	11	13	11	12	9	10
Cumulative Rainfall	46	111	201.8	290	341.8	365.8	399.7	489.3	583.7

Temperature in °C, rainfall in mm, and wind speed in miles per hour

Charity Does Begin at Home

One day in 2012 while showing a London friend around Skye, I was challenged to write a book about my childhood on the island. I had been aware for some time that the island's culture and traditions were in grave danger of being destroyed by mass tourism. Last year over 660,000 visitors descended on an island with only 10,000 permanent residents, and obviously this volume of visitors is just not sustainable.



Recently CNN, the American news channel, warned of overcrowding in Venice, Barcelona... and Skye. So with this in mind, I decided to write about growing up in Skye in the 1950s. In *A Trotternish Childhood*, I share my memories of a way of life that no longer exists.

Shortly after the book was published in 2014, a friend and neighbour died of cancer and I realised the book could become a fundraising tool. The charity chosen was Marie

Curie Cancer Care and the sum raised was £840.

I continued to fundraise, but this time for the Brain Tumour Charity, achieving a total of £1,781. The switch to the Brain Tumour Charity came about when a young family friend developed a lethal brain tumour. Aged just 34, Jemma was the mother of two young children (aged three and six weeks). She died 13 months after being diagnosed.

Brain tumours kill more children and adults under 40 than any other cancer, and every day 30 people in the UK are diagnosed with one. However, just three per cent of the £648 million invested in Cancer Research UK in 2017/18 was spent on this most devastating of cancers.

The Brain Tumour Charity is UK-based and aims to defeat brain cancer by funding research, reducing diagnosis times, and providing support to patients and families.

I recently published a sequel to my first book, called *Child of the Croft*. Priced at £7.50, all profits will be donated to the Brain Tumour Charity.

I can be contacted at kiddoruby@icloud.com.

MAIRI MACDONALD

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During the last few months the Abbeyfield House has undergone some refurbishment carried out by Abbeyfield Scotland Limited. The lounge has benefited from new seating and redecoration, making this a bright and cheerful room for residents to watch television together or merely to sit and enjoy the wonderful view.

The Friends of Abbeyfield are delighted to welcome a new member to the Committee, Charles Fox, who will undoubtedly be an asset to us.

In July there was an outing to Loch Venachar for lunch. Despite the inclement weather forecast, the day turned out to be sunny and warm. The lunch was much enjoyed and afterwards the party sat outside on the balcony to enjoy the view and scenery over the water.

In August the residents enjoyed an outing to Ben View Garden Centre when a delicious lunch was enjoyed by all.

A further outing for lunch at the Forth Valley College Training School took place in September, and a musical evening was organised in October, by Barbara, the housekeeper.

As the autumn begins and Christmas approaches ever more quickly, the residents can look forward to a visit to the Fintry pantomime and also to the annual Christmas lunch organised by the Friends.

LINDA ASTLEY-JONES

I haven't discussed bidding for a few issues, so here's a challenge for you sitting South holding the cards as shown. It comes from an old Crockfords match and was included in the 1978 Charity Challenge Cup. At game all, West opened 1♠ followed by two passes from North and East. What would you bid as South? See page 46 for a discussion of the possibilities, and what actually happened in the original match.

<u>South</u>	
	A J 6 3
	—
	A K J 5
	Q J 7 5 4

If you enjoy the bridge articles and would like to play some competitive bridge and enjoy some more hands, Killlearn Bridge Club meets on Tuesday evenings. We are again considering running a series of lessons. If you would like to join us for either, please contact Roger Sparkes (440448), Doug Ashworth (550074) or Eileen Lindsay (770686), or contact us via our website (www.bridgewebs.com/killlearn).



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KCC Updates on Major Developments in Killlearn

Former Killlearn Hotel

Matt Gingles and his developer team presented their draft proposals which differ in two major areas from that which was given planning approval. Firstly, it is intended that there should be 16 flats and not 14, varying in size from about 900 to 1,100 square feet. Secondly, because of structural difficulties, it is proposed to demolish the existing façade and to largely recreate a frontage as close as practicable to the existing one. In doing so, the replacement building would be set back a further 6ft from the road, allowing a small grassed area for privacy to the flats. The access to the rear car park will also be wider and parking would be split over two areas. It is envisaged work could not start on site until spring 2020 at the earliest, with a construction period of around 18 months. Attendees at the meeting were substantially in support of the project. A planning application will be progressed and application for a building warrant submitted.

Finnich Glen

The developer has submitted a planning application for a car park for 120 cars and 5 buses, a restaurant and visitors' centre. This application can be viewed via the Stirling Council planning portal.

Former Hospital Site

For this project to progress, the land contamination created from its former use as a hospital must be removed. The major concern expressed by the community was the method of containing the contamination. It was

felt that the proposal to bury the asbestos beneath layers of compacted clay was not foolproof. Expert guidance on this aspect, which is the main issue, is required. Proposals are being advanced to develop the site with 79 houses of various sizes with ancillary commercial units on site. The major developer involved at present is CALA Homes. Members of the community have expressed a wish to include a bunkhouse, community workshop and some form of health-care facility. In addition, a linkage to the village, perhaps using the route of the old drover's path which exits to the rear of Abbeyfield, could be developed with a cycle path incorporated. KCFC Paths Group are hopeful of tying into this suggestion, although funding has not yet been discussed.

Lampson Road

Scottish Rural Housing Association (SRHA) have appointed consultants to develop proposals to ascertain the viability of the site for them. In other words, they need to have a certain number of units on site. The sale of the site to them is dependent on this. SRHA agreed to meet with representatives of the community and the Community Council to provide an update and progress report, and this went ahead on 6 November. This issue will be discussed at the Community Council meeting on 20 November in the Primary School.

Bank Building

No further proposals put forward from the owners.

JIM PTOLOMEY, KILLEARN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Keeping the Home Fires Burning

Our first winter in Killlearn in 1965 was a bitterly cold one. Our first house was in Branziert Road and we were very proud of it. We loved its design, its setting and its panoramic views of Dumgoyne and the Blane valley. Snow began to fall in November of that year. Our coal bunker was empty. We planned to have family to stay for Christmas and I couldn't imagine all of us huddled round a single-bar electric fire in order to keep warm.

However, one day I saw a Forsyth's lorry delivering sacks of the precious black stuff. When I went out to his lorry, the driver said that all the coal was for customers who had ordered and that it would probably be after Christmas before the next delivery. He kindly gave me a phone number for my order.

It was when I was taking the dog for a walk some days later and passed the house next door that I got into conversation with a very cheery Irish man who helped our neighbours with gardening and odd jobs. These neighbours were away on an extended holiday, so he wasn't averse to stopping for a chat. I think I must have developed an obsession with my fuel problem, because I found myself telling him all about it.

To my amazement he said, 'Oh, but you'll need coal for Hogmanay. Never you mind, I think I know where I can get you some.' I asked how and when he thought he could get it at such short notice. 'That,' he replied, tapping the side of his nose, 'Is for me to know. Just leave the bunker open.'

It was early morning a couple of days later that I heard a rumbling noise at the side of the house. When I drew back the curtains, I beheld my new friend pushing a large wheelbarrow out of our driveway. He proceeded down the pavement to our neighbour's house where he stopped at their coal bunker and filled the barrow with massive lumps of coal. He then set off back to our drive and the rumbling was repeated. I switched off the light and closed the curtains. I really couldn't face watching the crime being committed.

We had some lovely, bright warm fires that Christmas, and I'm glad to say long before the neighbours returned, we had managed to replace the borrowed goods!

CB

Helping Smallholder Farmers in Malawi

The Killearn Malawi Group (SC043555) held their Annual Gathering on 19 September in Killearn Kirk Hall and heard guest speakers describe how investment and marketing are helping smallholder farmers in Malawi to improve their lives.

John Riches, who works with Just Trading Scotland to import rice from Malawi talked about their work with local farmers co-operatives. Russell Crawford, spoke about his work with Malawi Fruits, which helps farmers to grow and market a cash crop, paprika.

The Annual Gathering is an opportunity to hear about the work which the KMG Committee has been doing over the previous year. Refreshments were served, including Malawi gin, and there was a Fair Trade Stall, provided by Gavin's Mill shop in Milngavie.

Chairperson Ken Allen talked about the floods which devastated southern Malawi earlier in 2019, and how money has been sent to buy goats for families. He also described the main project, helping a community build a science/computing block in a secondary school in the south of Malawi. The building is now complete and the next task is to equip it.

In early 2019, Killearn welcomed visitors from Malawi, Rev Levi and Mrs Ruth Nyondo, and Kondwani



Completed school block in Nkhonde, Malawi
© Kondwani Chidziwisano

Chidziwisano. Just before the interval, a Skype link was opened with Malawi, so that the meeting was able to talk directly to Kondwani about the school building.

Sue Beck, the Treasurer, presented the accounts for the year, which showed that most money went to the school project. The main fundraising event was the famous annual jumble sale in February. The meeting agreed that the same committee should continue for another year, and the gathering concluded with lively chat, coffee and cake.

The next event is a Ladies Gin Tasting evening in the Village Hall on Friday, 22 November. Tickets, by donation, are available from committee members.



Our Christmas elves are falling behind in the workshop and need your help to complete their list of jobs for Santa!! Join us this December as Three Sisters Bake, Killearn is transformed into an Elf Craft Workshop. Help the Elves finish off their Christmas cards, decorate Mrs Claus's baking, and create festive decorations!

TICKETS

£15.95 per head includes Afternoon Tea, Christmas crafts and baking.

DATES AND TIMES

DATES Sat 30th November; Sunday 1st December; Sat 7th; Sun 8th; Sat 14th; Sun 15th; Sat 21st; Sun 22nd;
TIMESLOTS (10am (Brunch); 12.30pm; 3pm)



"The kids and I enjoyed the Christmas Crafternoon Tea at Three Sisters Bake - highly recommend for next year."

- GLASGOW MUMMY - BLOGGER -



www.threesistersbake.co.uk/xmas/elves-crafternoon-tea/ Or scan here ----->



Green Prospects

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle is the message to reduce waste and protect the planet's valuable resources.

Although I hope many of you have moved to reusable bag alternatives, I am very aware of how often we still end up with plastic-film products like bags, air-pocket packaging or plastic table coverings. These items cannot be recycled at the moment, and there are only so many times they can be re-used, no matter how careful we are. So, I decided to concentrate on how these plastic items can be upcycled to an entirely new life.

Using some torn table coverings, leaky carrier bags and a wire coat hanger, I set about preparing for Christmas. If you haven't made bag wreaths in your past, now's your chance.

Making your wreath

Bend your coat hanger into a loop – using a large bucket or plant pot will help.

Cut your plastic wreath colour(s) into strips of about 17cm x 4cm.

Use whatever colour combinations you want.

Tie these around the coat hanger, mixing the colours as you go along. Keep doing this until the whole wire is tightly covered to give a bushy effect.



Decorating your wreath

Decorate your wreath with whatever your fancy, eg baubles or gathered fir cones. Want to try something slightly more adventurous? Try making recycled pompoms and poinsettias.

The pompoms are made by shredding a couple of white bags into 1cm strips and then wrapping them around your hand. When you have enough for a fat pompom, slip it off your hand and tie it in the middle. I used the bag handles twisted into 'rope' to tie the bundle. The ends, which are loops, are then snipped and opened out to form a pompom in the usual way.

The remainder of the bag-handle 'rope' will allow you to tie it to the coat hanger.

The poinsettia is made from a red plastic bag. Iron the two sides together for strength under greaseproof paper and using a warm iron. Cut the bag into five large and five small petal shapes. The flower centre's 'stamen' are made by cutting half-way down a rectangular yellow bag, which has been folded in half along its length. The yellow centre is gathered together at the bottom and bound with some reused green garden wire. The five smaller petals are gathered around the outside of the yellow centre and the bottom also wrapped with the same wire. The five larger petals are treated the same way.

Use the rest of the wire to secure the poinsettia to the coat hanger and secure your pompoms into your wreath using the extra plastic 'rope'.

There are lots of ideas for recycled decorations on the internet, so why not have a go at creating a 'greener' Christmas? And don't forget to keep your Christmas cards and wrapping paper – there are lots of ideas of how to upcycle them.

HEATHER WRIGHT



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Festive Mincemeat

Ingredients

200ml dry cider or clear apple juice
225g soft dark brown sugar
1kg apples
225g currants
225g raisins
55g glacé cherries, chopped
55g blanched almonds, chopped
Grated rind and juice of ½ lemon
1 level teaspoon mixed spice
½ level teaspoon ground cinnamon
Pinch of ground cloves
2 tablespoons brandy or rum, if desired



Method

Place the cider or apple juice in a large saucepan with the sugar and heat gently until the sugar has dissolved.

Peel, core and roughly chop the apples and add to the pan, then stir in all the remaining ingredients except the brandy or rum.

Bring the mixture slowly to the boil, stirring all the time, then partially cover with a lid or foil and simmer gently, stirring from time to time, for 30 minutes or until the mixture has become a soft pulp.

Turn off the heat, cover the pan and leave the mincemeat to get completely cold. Once cold, stir in the brandy or rum, if desired, then pack into sterilised jars, pressing the mincemeat down to remove air bubbles as you fill the jars.

Cover as for jam and store in a cool, dry place until needed. This makes about four jars. JY

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Killearn Primary School News

This term all the classes have been working hard and developing skills in different subjects in the curriculum.



P1 have been learning to sound out letters of the alphabet, counting to 10 and learning how farmers harvest their crops. P1/2 have been learning about primary and secondary colours and mixing them to create new colours. P2/3 have been examining Roald Dahl's book, *BFG* and have been making dream catchers.

P3/4 have been inventing their own potion recipes after reading *Georges Marvellous Medicine*. P4 have been creating superhero selfies because of their class novel *Kid Normal* teaching them that they don't need to have a power to be super! P5 have been studying rights and responsibilities, and have a new class novel called *Thumble Tumble and the Ollpheist*. P6 have been discovering how to understand and write braille. Braille can be found on packaging and more, and is how blind people read.

P7 have completed Level 1 in Bikeability and are all part of their club called Rotapeeps. This is where we raise money for a charity or something that's going on in the world which needs physical or mental help.

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Christmas Reflections

**‘What do you want for Christmas, Mum?’
‘Peace and quiet,’ came the response.
Every year. same question, same response.
‘But what do you *actually* want?’ I would persist.**

As a primary school child and maybe into secondary school (ok then, all of secondary school), I just couldn’t understand this response. By the end of summer, and certainly by the time Halloween had passed, Christmas – save for the odd Scotland international football match – and the letter to Santa, was the only show in town.

Turning five in 1990, and, therefore, 15 in 2000, I view the 1990s as my prime era for Christmas excitement. This would take many forms, and there were no end of questions: ‘how many weeks?’ would become ‘how many days?’ and then ‘how many hours?’ until Christmas? How does Santa know where we live? How does Santa come down the chimney if we don’t actually have a chimney (those ‘modern-day’ metallic contraptions weren’t Santa friendly)? ‘Santa is magic’ were three words my mum and dad used frequently.

It turns out Santa wasn’t magic enough to keep up-to-date with my Christmas Eve gift-changing ‘whims’, though. ‘Santa has already packed his sleigh and started his journey.’ Nice one, parents. Little did I know, Santa was already in Australia unpacking his sleigh in Sydney while I was deciding between the Ajax away jersey or the Borussia Dortmund goalkeeper strip.

Despite all this stress, Santa always delivered and it’s been an enjoyable task pulling together some of my favourite Christmas present memories.

THE AJAX AWAY STRIP

As children, my two brothers and I would get a football strip every Christmas. I could have chosen many of these as favourites but my green Ajax away strip from Christmas 1995 takes the crown. Growing up, loyalty wasn’t a top priority for me when it came to football. In 1995, Ajax were the best, so I had to have their strip. In addition to being the best, their green away strip was a thing of beauty. I believe my dad and Santa had some tough negotiations over this one, but eventually they sourced it in an east end of Glasgow sports shop.

MANTA FORCE

Manta Force seems to have been the present equivalent of the ‘one-hit wonder’ in the music charts. But what a hit! I’m still not entirely sure what Manta Force was, but I know there was a ‘goodie’ ship, a ‘baddie’ ship and the ‘base’, and they were all very impressive.

Gifts 1990s Style



THE GO-KART

A pedal go-kart is well worth its place in my list of favourite Christmas gifts. Unfortunately, it was also the envy of the rest of the street and the seat got broken when one of the older children decided to take my red and black kart for a few laps.



THE SNOOKER TABLE

This was definitely one of the most memorable, and well used, Christmas gifts in the Dunlop household. I can't remember what the answer was to the inevitable 'how did Santa fit a snooker table down the chimney?' question, but I do know the Big Man fitted a plaque to the edge of the table with the message: 'To Robin, Gordon and Martin. Merry Christmas'. Magic.

CAR DASHBOARD SIMULATOR

It may sound like a strange concept (and I'm sure the manufacturer had a more marketing friendly name) but my title explains exactly what this gift was: a steering wheel, gear stick, indicators, speedometer and digital screen all compact enough to sit on your lap. Marvellous. Unfortunately, my car failed its MOT and I recall being allowed to choose a new gift. What did I go for? A tent. I suppose there's no logic to the mind of an 8-year-old.



THE 'ROAD SYSTEM'

You'll probably have noticed that cars are a bit of a theme here. My brothers and I referred to this present as the 'road system', but it was essentially a town – probably of the Cumbernauld variety, complete with roads, buildings, trees and lamp-posts – laid out across the living room floor that we could drive our toy cars around. Again, hours of fun guaranteed.



THE WRESTLING RING

In the early 1990s, WWF (World Wrestling Federation) was a big thing for me. Although our house often resembled a real-life wrestling ring, this toy version also kept me entertained. Particular highlights were the speaker system and referee's 'one-two-three' count-out bell.

THE TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS PANTO

If an evening of innuendo-fuelled laughs and slapstick comedy is your thing, you're likely a fan of the Christmas pantomime. Developing from the 16th-century Italian street theatre world, panto made its debut here during the Victorian era. Nowadays, in addition to sending children into fits of hysteria, the pantomimes in larger towns and cities give Z-list celebrities the opportunity to 'relaunch' their career. They must be doing something right, as you can enjoy panto well into the New Year.

MARTIN DUNLOP

FINTRY CHRISTMAS PANTO

Mother Goose

Thurs 28–Sat 30 November

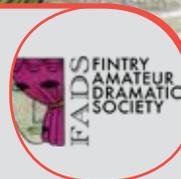
Thurs 5–Sat 7 December 7.30pm

Saturday matinees, 2pm

Menzies Hall, Fintry

Tickets on sale via fintrydrama.org.uk also from Fintry Sports Club, Balfron Library and Killearn Pharmacy. Adults: £8; under-16s: £5; Family Ticket (2 adults & 2 children): £20.

Last year we sold out ahead of opening, so be sure to get your tickets.





The images shown are of typical Mactaggart & Mickel Showhomes. The specification depicted may vary to other house styles at the above development. Some fixtures and fittings may not be included in the sale price. Prices and details correct at time of going to print. *Part Exchange, please see website for full details. Offer is available on selected properties, subject to terms and conditions and exclusions apply. Please ask your Sales Consultant for full details.

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Killearn Health Centre News

Additional Services – We now have two new services available at the Health Centre, a mental health nurse and an advanced physiotherapy practitioner. For both of these there is no need to see a GP first, simply ask at reception for an appointment.

Mental Health Nurse – Jane Yule has joined us as our practice mental health nurse. If you have any issues with low mood, stress or anxiety, please book an appointment with Jane.

Advanced Physiotherapy Practitioner – Jenn Marr has joined us as our practice-based advanced physiotherapy practitioner. Jenn will consult on any issues with neck, back or general joint pain. Again, please ask for a direct appointment with Jenn.

Shingles Vaccination – Any patient who is 70 on 1 September 2019 is entitled to the shingles vaccination this year. If you are aged 71 to 79 on 1 September 2019 and have not yet been vaccinated in previous years, then you are still entitled to the vaccination. Please book an appointment at reception.

Christmas Holidays – We will be closed on Wednesday, 25 and Thursday, 26 December 2019 and again on Wednesday, 1 January and Thursday, 2 January 2020. Please make sure you order prescriptions to cover this period. Prescriptions can be ordered 24/7 at www.killearnhealthcentre.com. If you require assistance during this time, please call 111.

Prescriptions – Your local pharmacy may be able to order repeat prescriptions on your behalf, meaning that your dispensed prescription items will be available for collection at the pharmacy. Please ask your pharmacy for more information.

Poetry Corner

'A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!'. So says Thomas Brown; I say, so is an allotment.

Ode to Allotments

I love allotments a lot,
That serendipity plot
These casual rows of leeks and kale,
The canes, the watering cans, the pail.
Yes, I love allotments a lot.

I do like allotments a lot,
That careless yet cared for plot,
The well-dug bed... the recycled shed.
Sure, I like allotments a lot.

What's not to like about allotments?
Not a lot,
That city oasis... that garden plot,
That Heath Robinson place
Full of peace and grace.
We cannot, not, allot that spot
To such endeavour
To those who are clever and creative
and...

Love their allotments A LOT!

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Christmas Opening Hours

- 24th Dec 9-4pm (coffee shop last orders 3pm)
- 25th/26th Closed
- 27th - 30th 10-5pm (coffee shop last orders 4pm)
- 31st Dec 9-4pm (coffee shop last orders 3pm)
- 1st Jan Closed
- 2nd Jan 10-5pm (coffee shop last orders 4pm)

16 Balfron Road, Killearn, G63 9NJ. Tel 01360550830

The summer months were unusual in that the Forth and Endrick area saw a sudden and unexpected increase in housebreakings and thefts. Although by no means the worst affected area, Killearn was not untouched by this spike in crime. A property in Drumbeig Loan was broken into, although those responsible left empty handed, as was an unfinished property at Barclay Road, where a large number of power tools were stolen.

Further afield, housebreakings occurred at Strathblane Bowling Club, Balfron Golf Clubhouse and a coffee shop at Balmaha. A purse was also stolen from a house at the Drymen end of Gartness Road, and sheds were broken into in the Balfron Station area.

Enquiries into these crimes have identified that since June at least three separate criminal groups have been travelling into rural Stirling during the overnight period in order to commit crime. The housebreakings at Balmaha and Strathblane Bowling Club have been detected, as has an incident where a theft occurred at the Kirkhouse Inn, Strathblane, late at night on 27 August. The theft of a motor vehicle from Duntreath Estate has also been detected and the vehicle recovered.

As I write this (late September), we are following positive lines of enquiry into several other thefts and expect to detect many of these in due course. The delay in resolving these incidents often lies in the forensics process, which take can several months to complete.

For the moment, it appears the suspects are aware of our interest in them and they have moved on as there have been no similar crimes in Forth and Endrick since 27 August.

As we move towards Christmas, I would encourage you to take every precaution to protect your property. Keep valuable items such as jewellery and gifts out of sight. Make sure house and car keys cannot be seen – or accessed through a letterbox or an open window.

Look out for your neighbours! Very often housebreakers are quickly arrested because a neighbour has contacted police feeling a bit uneasy about something they've seen. If you do contact the police and it's a false alarm, it's not a problem. I would also stress that if you see a crime being committed, contact us on 999. It's quicker than the 101 number.

When Christmas and winter arrive, have an enjoyable time. Stay safe and pay heed to any weather or travel warnings we post on social media. Good sites to follow are [@StirlingPol](#), [@polscotcontrol](#) and [@trafficscotland](#) on Twitter. Updates are also posted on Facebook under 'Forth Valley Police Division'. A full complement of staff are on duty 24 hours a day at Balfron Police Office throughout the Christmas period. We look forward to seeing you when we're out and about.

DAVID McNALLY
BALFRON POLICE OFFICE

Hewitt & Aker

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Foodie Gifts & Greeting Cards



6 Balfron Road, Killearn, G63 9NJ Tel: 01360 550666

Glengoyne Distillery – Sustainability in Action

Many people know Glengoyne for the award-winning whisky it produces or for welcoming visitors from all over the world to the distillery, but few know how committed we are to environmental sustainability and reducing our carbon footprint.

Earlier this year Glengoyne was awarded a Master medal in the Green Initiatives category at the Spirits Business Distillery Masters 2019, taking the highest possible accolade in the environmentally focused category.

The distillery was highlighted by the Distillery Masters 2019 as ‘an example for other distilleries to follow.’ The judges praised the distillery’s partnership with the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and its £170,000 investment in establishing a wetlands facility, which enables Glengoyne Distillery to ensure its waste disposal is clean and natural.

We have 12 individual wetland cells containing around 14,000 plants of 20 varieties. Plant species are continually colonising, and following an ecological survey, we discovered that a further 35 species have colonised since 2011. Not only are our wetlands excellent for dealing with our spent lees in an environmentally friendly way, but they also offer support to a range of bird species. During our ecological survey, we recorded 12 species of birds, such as grey heron, moorhen, sedge warbler, house martin, reed bunting, and both pied and grey wagtails.

We are proud to continue our successful relationship with the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and support their



campaign to save the endangered Greenland white-fronted goose. Working closely with the Trust and researchers, Glengoyne will provide collateral to support the initiative and assist in carefully undertaking planned research to help understand the rapid population decline of white-fronted geese. Glengoyne is known as the ‘glen of the wild geese’, so it couldn’t be more fitting. There is also a small local flock of Greenland geese close to us in Loch Lomond.

At Glengoyne, our green initiatives are a fundamental part of how we operate. Not only do we produce undisputedly world-class Highland single-malt whisky, but every part of our production process is developed in line with environmental best practice. We believe that Glengoyne is one of the most beautiful distilleries in Scotland, and we’re working hard to keep it that way. Our Master medal win is a glowing testament to the brilliant work which is carried out every day by our whole distillery team.

OPEN BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR FOR TOURS, TASTINGS AND WHISKY SHOP



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UNHURRIED SINCE
— 1833 —



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From the Archive – A Brief History of the Blane Valley Railway

As we travel in our cars or grit our teeth on the bus to Glasgow, it's difficult to realise how poor transport to Killearn was until the coming of the railway in 1867. Although the Turnpike Acts resulted in some improvement to the roads, public transport consisted of one coach to Glasgow at 7am. Otherwise you had to walk.

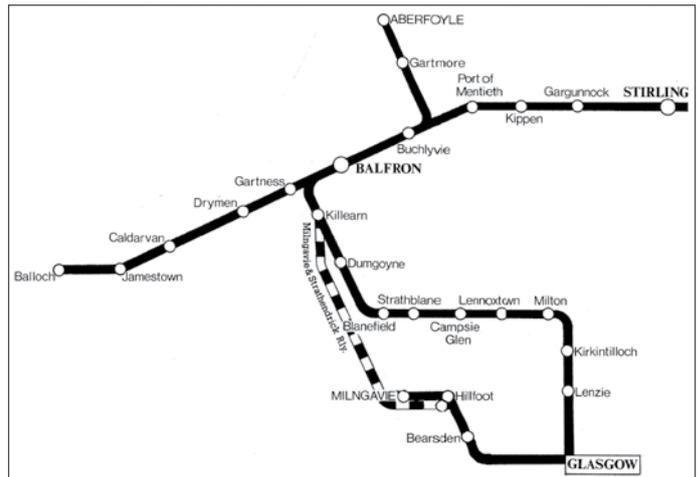
The first railway in the area was the Forth & Clyde Junction Railway (F&CJR) between Balloch and Stirling which had stations at Drymen (actually Croftamie), Gartness and Balfron Station. It opened on 26 May 1856. However, the distance from the villages to the stations meant the line was mainly used for goods traffic. In 1863, a coach started running which linked the villages with the new railway terminus at Milngavie.

Shortly afterwards, the Blane Valley Railway Company was authorised to build an eight and a half mile extension from Lennoxton through Campsie Glen and Strathblane to 'Killearn' (the present Beech Tree Inn at Dumgoyne). This was opened for passengers on 1 July 1867 and was scheduled to take about an hour and a quarter. A coach was operated from Balfron via Killearn to take travellers to the station. A post office was also opened at Dumgoyne, which acted the main sorting office for the area until a few years ago.

It was not until 15 years later, on 2 October 1882, that the second part of the line opened. This comprised a three-mile stretch to join the F&CJR at Gartness Junction and a further five and a half mile branch going north



Killearn Railway Station



from Buchlyvie to Aberfoyle. The Balfron and Buchlyvie stations were shared by the lines. A new Killearn station was built at Blane Smithy and the old station was renamed Dumgoyne.

In 1883, the Duke of Montrose proposed a line via Milngavie, Strathblane and the east side of Loch Lomond to Fort William and in 1890, a direct route from Milngavie to Killearn and Port of Menteith. Both proposals failed partly due to opposition from other railway companies and Sir Archibald Edmonstone. The latter would have cut out Strathblane and the private halt at Duntreath, which was later used by Edward VII when he visited the area.

In 1910, there was a second attempt to put a line directly from Milngavie to Killearn, but this was abandoned due to the advent of World War I.

After the war, the roads were improved and buses became a quicker way of getting to Glasgow. Motor cars also became increasingly common.

The last through passenger train on the F&CJR was on 1 October 1934, and by 1949 the section between Drymen and Gartness was closed, due to the condition of the Endrick viaduct. The Blane Valley passenger trains survived until 1 October 1951. Both lines were completely closed in October 1959.

Much of the Blane Valley line was replaced by the Loch Lomond to Central Scotland water pipeline opened in 1971, and since October 1980 has also formed part of the West Highland Way.

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Fibre Broadband Update

There is a small amount of good news and some not so good news. So to start with the good news...

Those who now have a full-fibre connection (FTTP, i.e. Fibre-to-the-Premises) have been very satisfied with the speeds achieved, especially the up-speed of 10 Mbps or more. That said, they have also reported that the installation, whilst free, caused some disturbance to their properties due to the laying of new ducts. The cost of the new service was reported as reasonable given the greatly improved performance.

The bad news is that people waiting for their own upgrade will see that nothing much has changed in Killearn. Additional infrastructure work along Glasgow Road should have enabled the fibre cabinet in Drumbeg Loan to go live, but this still hasn't happened. This is disappointing as it was expected to be live in February. I hope that by the time you read this, it will be live. A monthly report on the progress of broadband improvement is provided

to Killearn Community Council at their meetings and is available from the KBG area of the KCC website (www.killearncc.org.uk).

The September report gave details for all postcodes in the village that were yet to be upgraded, and outlined what was known about the plans for them. Digital Scotland WhereAndWhen provides specific information for your own premises.

In the interim, the mobile 4G signal has provided a good service for several residents, though you might need an outside aerial. This is a solution that could also be used when you are travelling elsewhere and terminated at short notice if another, better, alternative becomes available. The Better Broadband Subsidy scheme continues for individual premises and this may help with the cost.

DOUG ASHWORTH
CHAIR

KILLEARN BROADBAND GROUP

Wines for Christmas

Thinking about what to drink with Christmas dinner seems slightly more uncertain than in previous years. Will we still be able to stock our shelves with the wines of Europe, or will we be staring at empty spaces?

The best option might be to focus on the joyful alternatives for the Christmas table from around the world that will work beautifully with the turkey.

To start, we can happily look to the incredible quality of sparkling wines now produced from our own vineyards. Our cool climate comes into its own, with wines showing truly elegant acidity that is the perfect aperitif while also being able to cut through the oiliness of a smoked salmon starter.

With the turkey, the best option would be one of the classic Burgundian varieties of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, both delicate enough not to overpower the light-flavoured meat of the bird. New Zealand offers wonderful examples of these, with Chile as a good alternative.

To accompany Christmas pudding, Australian Muscat wines are a match made in heaven, with a rich caramel and raisined flavour, and a sweetness that can rival that of even the most decadent dessert.

ELAINE TAYLOR



Dean Lockhart MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament
For Mid-Scotland and Fife

The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Please feel free to contact me if you think I may be able to help you :

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Room M2.12,
The Scottish Parliament,
Edinburgh, EH99 1SP
Tel: 0131 348 5995

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The club has been busy over the summer months with a variety of events supporting Drymen and Gartmore galas. The weather put rather a dampener on the former, but a glorious day meant a large turnout for the latter

On a wetter day we had a guided tour from Scottish Motor Services in Glasgow, with grateful thanks for their hospitality and an excellent buffet lunch. This event was preceded by our annual summer challenge run – the Paradox Cup. As well as trying to answer some treasure hunt clues, in the case of some of our members, the main objective was to avoid getting lost!

The Car-BQ was a great success again. It featured articulated-mower manoeuvring as a prelude to the main auto test course with our own cars, followed by a splendid barbecue to round off the day.



Top: Gartmore Gala Day
Above: Morgans old and new
Photos ©Doug Ashworth

We had a scenic tour round Perthshire arriving at Comrie (the Shaky Toun) for lunch. The route directions were aided by an informative guide to historical landmarks such as the Earthquake House outside Comrie, and other points of interest along the route.

Our organiser had chosen a route that included many of the smoothest sections of roads in the area, which was most appreciated by those with older cars and less sophisticated suspension, and the brief spell of sunny weather allowed many cars to have the roof down.

The destination of our last summer outing, the October lunch run, is somewhat of a mystery tour at the time of writing, as the organiser has yet to reveal the route.

Our winter programme starts in November, with a mixed agenda of indoor activities planned over the winter months including speakers covering opposite ends of the F1 spectrum – from Jaguar in the 1950s to Renault in the 2000s – and topics such as Big Healeys and turbocharging in between.

A Christmas Dinner and Quiz Night are organised for December around which we have a go-kart event and a visit to Patons Accident Repair Centre to see their latest techniques.

If you have an interesting car, or just an interest in motoring activities, please get in touch – we'd be pleased to see you at any of our events. For more details about membership and our future programme, please contact our secretary, Robin Johnston (SCCC.Info001@gmail.com).

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Flooding Resilience Project



The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) are leading a flooding resilience project funded by the National Resilience Centre with the aim of building and increasing resilience in at-risk communities across Scotland. TCV is a national charity which aims to empower communities and individuals to reconnect with and improve their local environment for mutual benefit.

TCV has already worked on mutual resilience themes with various partners, including the Scottish Flood Forum and Clackmannanshire and Stirling councils. The Community Flooding Volunteer Project supported and trained individuals to help inform the councils' flood risk management teams on what is occurring at ground level before a potential flood event.

The Flooding Resilience Project has identified flood 'hotspots' and problem areas, which are then monitored by local volunteers. Early action at these hotspots has helped clear watercourses of debris and urban litter, thus reducing flood risk locally.

TCV's approach has helped to shift perceptions within local authorities about what volunteers can achieve, while bringing a sense of community cohesion and purpose in the newly established resilience group. We are presently working in Fintry in this regard. We have already involved two primary schools in the project along with their local community group.

The project will be expanded throughout the Central Belt and include areas such as Killlearn.

Anyone is welcome to join the project. If you are interested and would like more information, please contact Claire (07970 860943).

CLAIRE BAILLY, TVC SENIOR PROJECT OFFICER

Balfron Eyecare

The opticians in Buchanan Street, Balfron, has re-opened as Balfron Eyecare, operated and owned by optometrist Susan McGarry. Susan, who lives in Killlearn, has over 16 years of experience, including a diploma in therapeutic prescribing. This enables a wide range of ocular medial conditions to be treated locally in Balfron. Susan appreciates the warm welcome she has received and aims to provide as wide a range of services as possible while maintaining great value for money and excellent customer service.

Balfron Eyecare was officially opened in September by local MP, Stephen Kerr.

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A Transitional Season for Killearn Football Club

The season came to a close in August with Killearn FC finishing in a respectable third place in the league and having reached a final and two semi-finals in cup competitions. It is an improvement on last year in what has been a transitional year for the club both on and off the field.

We saw the official opening of the changing pavilion, recruited a number of new young players and ran a successful community 5s tournament. We also filled some key positions in our committee to continue the legacy of those who so sadly left us in the last year.

Off the field, our aim has been to see Killearn FC as a key part of our local community and it was brilliant to see the support the club has had over the season. More of our players are participating in the Killearn 10k, and it's been great to see new, as well as the well-kent, faces supporting the team at fixtures. The increased revenue gained from sponsorship and fundraising also means that the club's foundations are strong and gives us a great platform to build on.

This unity could be seen at our annual golf outing to Tillicoultry Golf Club, with over 20 club members, young and old, competing for



the inaugural Hughie Russell Trophy. Colin McGowan came out victorious, narrowly beating runners-up Jamie McDonagh and Chris Jewell by one shot. Chris took some satisfaction, however, in winning the scratch prize on the day. A very enjoyable time was had, and our thanks go to the wonderful staff at Tillicoultry.

Finally, we would like to thank our main sponsors, The Old Mill Inn and Benjamin Bernard's, for their support and financial contributions this year.

Looking forward to 2020.

COLIN BANKS



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Fitness is Fun!

We're always being told that our health and well-being depend largely on a balanced diet and sufficient exercise. Some love keeping fit, others find it more challenging and many have trouble fitting regular exercise into their busy lives – the knack is finding out what works for you. In the summer edition of the *Courier*, we highlighted the growing number of yoga and Pilates classes; here we're looking at gyms and fitness classes in the Killearn area.

We are fortunate to have a wide variety of amenities on offer within easy reach of Killearn and although the range of classes at different outlets may often look similar: circuit training, kettle bells, high intensity workouts, 'Body pump', spin, etc, other factors come into play, such as ease of access, sociability, facilities, cost and convenience. Here is a selection of what is regularly available.

Aizle Active (www.aizleactive.com; 07766 355378) is a popular gym and training centre at Ballat Crossroads, run by Kerr McMillan. It offers a fully equipped gym (with personal training, if desired) and classes ranging from spin, conditioning, circuits and women's self-defence to Gracie Jiu-Jitsu, among others. Membership starts at £22 per month or you can pay-as-you-go. Gym member, Jane Hunter, enjoys the Aizle because 'it's friendly, classes are sociable and varied, and it's open early in the morning'.

Studio 63 (communityfitnessdrymen@outlook.com; 07961 722757) run by Michelle Ironside, is also building a sizeable and loyal following. Located at Killearn Mill, members can join in classes, such as circuits, Metafit, HIIT, or bootcamp, and bring their children. Carol Crawford goes twice a week to Katie Cameron's spin class and loves it: 'she's a real motivator, really encouraging, and it's very sociable,' says Carol.

Loch Lomond Leisure Club (www.buchananarms.co.uk/leisure) at the Buchanan Arms Hotel in Drymen, has a 14-metre pool, sauna, squash, fitness room and gym. Membership starts at around £37.50 a month.

Community venues offer great opportunities at competitive rates. **Fintry Sports and Recreation Club** has a gym and sauna (as well as bowling, squash and rugby). (Find the Club on Facebook.)

Closer to home, **Balfron Campus** is a fantastic facility (www.balfron.schoolbookings.co.uk) with a 25-metre pool (open to the public at certain times), sports halls and gym. Classes are run by individual instructors (rather than Bellrock, the centre operators). Katrina Steel (07912 660242) has been running three circuits and aerobics classes a week for almost 14 years with a hugely committed and devoted following. 'They are fun and sociable and you can work at your own level without feeling pressured,' reports one regular. Kore Kickboxing, Zumba, Dancercise and Pilates are also on offer – see noticeboards at the school for details. A Zumba group is also run by Jane Button (07968 968944) in Strathblane.



Photos clockwise from top: Mums on the Run group; Studio 63, Aizle Active

Allander Leisure Centre in Bearsden (www.edlc.co.uk/centres-venues/allander-leisure-centre) has a 25-metre swimming pool, sauna, sports hall, a large gym, and a huge range of exercise classes (pay-as-you-go, or membership from around £30 a month).

Nuffield Health in Milngavie (www.nuffieldhealth.com/gyms/milngavie) has luxurious facilities with a 25-metre pool, sauna and steam rooms, well-equipped gym, indoor and outdoor tennis courts and a wide range of classes and treatments. Iain and Frances Bowie have been attending the club for more than 20 years, using the gym and pool, enjoying yoga and Pilates – it's now an important part of their social life.

Sports Direct in Milngavie (www.sportsdirectfitness.com/clubs/milngavie) and **Core Fitness** (search on Facebook) in Bearsden are commercial gyms offering some fairly serious fitness regimes.

Most fitness instructors offer personal training services but some also run group classes. In Killearn, Shona Nicolson (07725 332893) delivers 'Mums On The Run', an accessible daytime class for new mothers, graduating from walking and games to jogging and intervals. Vivienne Anne Dow (info@vivitfit.com; 07583946729) runs a regular bootcamp in Killearn Park: three high intensity, interval/circuit training sessions a week.

So there really is something for everyone: it's just a matter of finding the activity you enjoy and that fits your lifestyle in order for it to become habit-forming.

FITNESS IS FUN – HAPPY EXERCISING!

In the next edition of the *Courier*, we'll look at personal training: who do you recommend? Please email information to Nick Hawkins (nick.hawkins01@btinternet.com).

Curling Sweep Up



President Gail Pain with the Ladies Opening Bonspiel winners

The Strathendrick Curling Club 2019/20 season started in September. The main club commenced their season with the annual President v Vice-President bonspiel. The President's team came out on top in a close competition, 12 ends to 10. The winning individual team comprised President Walter Macgowan, Stan Moore, Luisella Mosley and skip Mary Macdonald, returning to curling after a year's absence due to injury. Walter and Ros kindly hosted an excellent supper after the game.

This year we will be fielding a seven-team single-round league up to December and a six-team single-round league from January to March. All matches will take place on Tuesday afternoons at Stirling.

Some of the Ladies Section (and one keen man from the main club) started with a very helpful and constructive practice and coaching session with former Olympic medallist Michael Goodfellow. The Ladies first proper fixture was their Opening Bonspiel with 14 players, including three guests from West Stirlingshire Ladies. The winning team with 5 ends was Sally Macfarlane, Muriel Holroyd, Jean Verrall and Liz MacGregor.

The Ladies are playing a four-team triple round robin up to the middle of January and a four-team double round robin from January to March. All matches take place on Thursday mornings at Stirling.

We had a successful barbecue in early August at John and Anne O'Neill's home. Despite the atrocious weather, everyone enjoyed our hosts' wonderful hospitality.

Our annual Texas Scramble was called off due to lack of players. The absentees must have had advance knowledge of the weather because it would have been called off anyway due to the August storm!

We would like to recruit new members to keep the competitions exciting. The club is very friendly and sociable, and ideally suited for those who are retired or working part-time. It's good exercise and an excellent remedy for seasonal depression.

If you would like to have a go at curling, contact Diana Jackson (550314) or Gill Smith (550726), or visit our website (www.strathendrickcurling.org.uk).

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Rugby Round-Up



Scrum half
Ruairi Doyle
passes ball in a
40-21 win
over Irvine

It is all systems go at Fintry this season. As the national team surprises, disappoints and delights at the Rugby World Cup in Japan, your local club is a hive of activity at all levels.

The Minis are playing matches, going to festivals or training every Sunday – with teams at every age group from P1 – P7.

The Balfron-Endrick Midis are again punching above their weight in the Barbarian Schools' Conference.

The S2s, U15s, U16s and U18s are all doing well. The U16s have won through to the last 16 of the National Schools' Cup competition!

The 1st XV have had a tough start to their league campaign in Tennent's West Region League Division 1, with a series of away games to kick-off with – but are now climbing the table. The older and younger players turning out for the 2nd XV are enjoying a great season.

Next on the social calendar is a RACE NIGHT at Fintry Sports Club on Saturday, 7 December, which will be a tremendous evening of good craic, laughter, refreshment, the odd flutter and no little excitement!

For further details and information, please visit www.pitchero.com/clubs/strathendrickrfc/.

Answers to the Christmas Quiz, page 45

1. One Horse Open Sleigh
2. Calf
3. Whoville
4. Myhrr
5. Sunday
6. A-Leaping
7. The Beatles
8. Sending Christmas Cards
9. The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe.
10. John Lewis
11. Norway
12. William the Conquerer in 1066



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Weekly class in Strathblane Village Club on Thursdays, 11.15-12.15. Floor mat and curiosity essential.

Contact Jane Meek on 07759 182236

janemfr@tiscali.co.uk

Killlearn 10k Heads-up

On your marks, get set, register! The Killlearn 10k 2020 will be run on Saturday, 6 June, and registration for places will open at 8pm on Thursday, 5 December.

We cater for a wide variety of speeds on race day, but on registration day it's best to be fast. The race has sold out for the last seven years and each year places fill up more quickly. So this year, we're trying something new – only 250 of the 300 places will be made available in December. The remaining 50 will be held back for a second sale in the spring.

The idea behind this change is to make sure as many Killlearn folk as possible get the opportunity to run. The reputation of the 10k has grown nationally in recent years, but we're still first and foremost a community event and we want our registration process to reflect that. When the second sale comes around, we'll ensure the village hears about the date first via posters, social media, etc.

Entries for next year will cost £20 a person, which includes a stylish and highly desirable Killlearn 10k T-shirt and finisher's medal. This slightly higher fee will allow us to meet our ever-growing costs and also improve the race day experience. We think we still compare very well with other races when it comes to value for money.

Now is the perfect time to start thinking about taking part, especially if you're currently a non-runner. One of our main aims is to help people get fitter and more active, and we love newbies!

Running is free, you can do it anywhere and it burns more calories than any other form of mainstream exercise. Google 'NHS running tips for beginners' to find out more.

If you don't feel up to a 10k, why not try the Killlearn Mile? It's run in the morning before the 10k and is open to everyone. Run, jog, walk, run with the kids, push the wean round in a buggy. Register on the morning of race day at Killlearn Primary School. More details to follow.

You don't have to be a runner to put 6 December in your diary. Without our fantastic, much-praised Killlearn 10k marshals, there would be no Killlearn 10k, so we'd very much like you all to 'save the date' and join us again next year.

If you haven't helped before but would like to, you'll find contact details on our website (killlearn10k.com).

Spectators are most welcome, too – the more the merrier! It's always a fun event with a friendly family atmosphere.

This year's race was the last as a committee member for one of our true stalwarts. Alison Cairns gave her time and considerable abilities to the race for many years, securing the sponsorship that has been so vital to our success. Thank you so much, Alison. We're missing you!

To find out more about the Killlearn 10k, go to our website or find us on Facebook.

We hope to see you next June.

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Killlearn Tennis Club News

If you're busy wringing your jacket out after bringing the shopping in from the car, or covering under a blanket with the heating turned up full blast, perhaps now is a good time to picture yourself soaking up the summer sun in glorious SW19, Pimm's in hand, watching Andy Murray make a triumphant return to Wimbledon. Sound far-fetched? Not so much actually, if you're a member of Killlearn Tennis Club.

As long as members have opted into free British Tennis Membership (BTM), they are eligible to take part in the club's annual draw for tickets to the world's greatest tennis championships, which take place next year from June 29 to July 12 at the All England Club in south-west London.

Our club generally gets half a dozen or so sets of tickets, and not just for ground admission. Seats are available on the show courts, too, with the chance to see the biggest of big names in action.

One member recalls watching Serena Williams, less than impressed at being on Court Two, take out her frustration on an unfortunate opponent. Another time, a junior member was strolling round the ground with his dad when a departing patron came up and handed them their Centre Court tickets. They scurried in... just in time to see Our Andy play (and win) in the quarter finals.

Going to Wimbledon is, by all accounts, a rare and special experience, from the Hill to the Pimm's to the



strawberries and cream. And since Killlearn Tennis Club's membership, while healthy, does not run into the thousands, your odds of getting tickets if you opt in are rather good. Opt-in closes on 14 February for club BTM members, so there's plenty of time to join. Members can expect more details via email in due course on how to opt in.

And of course, if you do join æus, you get to play tennis as well as watch. We have all-weather courts and floodlights, and winter tennis is fun. Visit killlearntennisclub.org.uk, or find us on Facebook, for membership information. **DAVID MCKAY**

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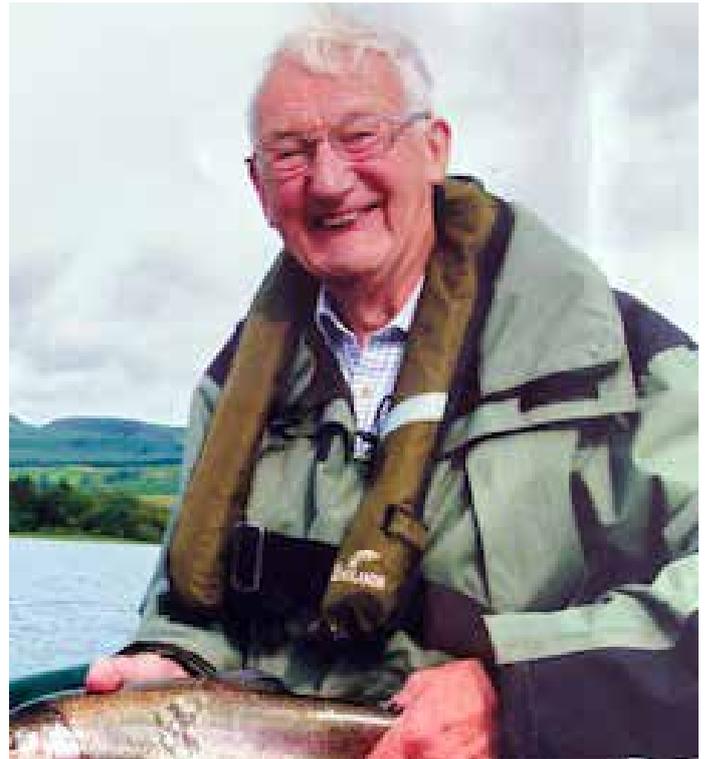
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Robert (Robin) Christopher Robinson 1930 – 2019

Robin Robinson was the eldest of three sons born to Thomas and Elizabeth Robinson, in Glasgow. The family moved to Milngavie during his early years and he was educated at Glasgow Academy and then, following family tradition, at Sedbergh School. He then did his National Service, serving with the Highland Light Infantry, spending much of the two years in Nigeria, and after this continued his commitment to the army with the Territorial Army, eventually becoming their CO. On completion of his National Service, he read chemistry at Glasgow University and following his graduation he entered the family business of Robinson Dunn, timber merchants, where he focused on the chemical treatment side of the work. When ultimately the business was sold, Robin and his brother, Sandy, retained the chemical treatment part of the work and Robin continued to visit sawmills all over the country.

Robin, through family friendships, had known Alison for most of his life, but it was not until they were in their 30s that the pair married and settled in Killearn in a distinctively 'modern' house in Drumbeg Loan. It was a happy partnership which produced a daughter, Jane, and two sons, Tom and Peter.

Robin and Alison had wide-ranging interests, and were both active and loyal supporters of many organisations and events in the village and gave generously of their time to several charities. They were both elders of Killearn Kirk for many years and Robin also served for some time as Session Clerk. His faith was firm, as were his opinions which, when moved to do so, he would have no hesitation in pronouncing. He sang for a number of years in the church choir and also with the Strathendrick Singers, was a lover of classical music and enjoyed attending concerts and the opera. He was also a great lover of the outdoors and the Scottish landscape. An avid hill walker, Robin was an enthusiastic, although not always successful, fisherman and an able skier, even skiing with Alison until both were well into their 80s.



The death of Alison in 2017 left him bereft, but he courageously faced the future without her, practising cooking for one and on several occasions entertaining friends single-handedly as he endeavoured to maintain former standards. As his health failed in his latter months, he still managed to retain his dignity and positivity, and would greet his visitors with a wonderful smile.

Robin presented to the world the appearance of a gentleman, traditionally correct to his core – in his style, dress, speech and his views, which would often prompt him volubly to deplore much that he experienced around him. But this was the surface only. The twinkling eyes would give a clue to the wicked sense of humour that was ready to burst out, and his self-deprecating manner spoke of his ability not to take himself too seriously.

He was a devoted husband, father and grandfather, hugely proud of his family and of their achievements, whilst remaining characteristically modest if these were mentioned. He was widely known and will be greatly missed in Killearn and beyond, by his many friends, but most of all by Jane, Tom and Peter and their families. His passing marks the end of an era. BP

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Colin Scott Whyte 1959 – 2019

News of the sudden death of Colin Whyte, outside his garden, just two days before his 60th birthday, shocked all who had known him. Despite the valiant efforts of the emergency services, doctors from Killearn Health Centre, neighbours and passers-by, it proved impossible to resuscitate him.

Colin, the second son of Ian and Betty Whyte, was born in Bishopbriggs and grew up in Lenzie. After completing his schooling at Kelvinside Academy, he joined James Barr as a trainee surveyor and gained his professional qualifications with the company. He gathered further experience with several companies and then set up his own business. Later he moved to First Company and then to Scotrail, where he was senior estate manager.

He and Helen met in their school days and married in 1985, beginning their life together in Hyndland before moving to Station Road, Killearn, where they established a happy family home with their two children, Hamish and Emma.

Colin was a man of many active outdoor interests and an inveterate sportsman. He was a keen rugby player, playing for Kelvinside Accies and for GHK's 1st XV, and was also an accomplished Sevens player, described as contributing more than most to the team. He also enjoyed sailing, windsurfing, skiing, walking, especially with his dogs, and gardening. His family was his whole life and his greatest pleasure was to be outdoors with them; their visits to Tiree were always high spots in the year.

The addition to the family of grandson Lochlan was a further source of great joy.

A quiet man, Colin was kind and thoughtful, as well as determined and he could be somewhat stubborn. He was quick to volunteer his services and proved himself a valued team member in all circumstances. He enjoyed social occasions and was

renowned as possessing a wicked sense of humour with which he could wind up his friends, but also create much laughter in the company. His twinkling eyes and ready smile were always evident in his greeting and reflected his happy personality.

He would have been embarrassed by the attention surrounding him at the end of his life, but grateful for the outpouring of support and love shown to those dearest to him. His passing, coming so early in an active life, is a huge loss to his family and to all who had known him.



BP



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Brian Gilfillan Wylie 1947 – 2019



Brian Wylie, the second son of John and Lil Wylie, spent most of his early life in Inverness-shire. He was educated first at the Crown school and then at the Royal Academy of Inverness. He continued his studies at Aberdeen University reading geography and geology, and followed this with a postgraduate qualification in human resources. He and Cheryl had established a close friendship during their school days and through their student years this blossomed into a lasting love.

They married in 1971 and Brian began to move up the career ladder, changing companies and locations, necessitating frequent house moves – at one stage they had five houses in five years. A move to Dalgety Bay gave them a longer period of residence and it was here their daughters, Claire and Lauren, were born and spent their early years. Brian was a member of the Dunfermline Junior Chamber of Commerce and under his presidency his chamber was the Central Scotland winner of a business investment project.

In time, a move westwards seemed indicated and in 1994 the family arrived in Killearn and settled into the newly built Chestnut Avenue, with Brian working for Levi's. He was dedicated and hard working and also a caring and humane man.

When Levi's collapsed and Brian had to oversee the break-up of the company, he was hard hit and his health suffered. Serious heart problems meant he was advised to reduce his workload considerably. From that point on, he worked part-time as he moved towards retirement.

After much medical intervention and just when it seemed his heart condition was more stable, in 2013 he was hit with a diagnosis of Motor Neurone Disease. It was an appalling blow to all the family.

Brian faced the inevitable decline with his characteristic fortitude and bravery. His philosophy was that there are two ways to face life's challenges: one is to withdraw into a shell and give in; the other is to face life, and go out and live it.

This is what he did, surrounded by the loving care of Cheryl, his daughters and his grandchildren, Harry, Robyn, Megan and Alex. His regret was that the illness robbed him of the chance to be the actively involved grandfather he wished to be. But his whole family was, and remained to the end, the centre of his life and of his focus.

He retained his intellectual mind, remaining as well-informed as ever on world affairs and sport, especially football which, for him, was a life-long passion

He loved travel and music, was a keen gardener and a DIY enthusiast. He was stoical in the progression of his illness and immensely protective of his family, unwilling to burden them with his dependency.

His stubborn determination displayed throughout his life was perhaps what enabled him to retain his very positive outlook until he was released from his suffering.

BP

Margaret Herd Bell 1932 – 2019



Margaret was born in Wallsend, Tyneside, the only child of Tom and Jessie Grandison. She had her education here, attending the grammar school and continuing at secretarial college. In her childhood she loved her ballet lessons and retained throughout her life a love of dance and music.

Her first job was as a secretary with a marine engineering company and later she moved into the technical library. Here, she caught the eye of Eddy Bell who, perhaps attracted at first by her flaming red hair, set out to win her affections. The romance flourished and they were married some two years later and set up home in Tynemouth on the Northumbrian coast, where their two sons, David and Chris, were born.

In the late '60s, the company for which Eddy worked was thought likely to close and Eddy was offered a position with John Brown Engineering at Clydebank. With a certain amount of reluctance to leave their beloved Northumberland, the family moved north and made their new home in Killearn. Here they found a welcome and settled into village life.

When their sons grew older, Margaret took a job in the Balfron pharmacy, which brought her into contact with a wide circle of people. She also worked with the Women's Royal Voluntary Service and received

Margaret Herd Bell (continued)

a medal for her contribution. She was a regular attender at the church and a member of the Guild.

Margaret was a kind and generous woman, who always put others first. She was witty, and also something of a perfectionist, and this could be seen in her own dress sense and her taste in interior décor. She and her home always looked attractive; she was indefatigable when shopping, prepared to go from store to store to ensure she had made the best possible choice (even though it could be quite a trial for the rest of the shopping party).

This was typical of Margaret, one of her ways of ensuring she had done the very best possible for her family. She was an excellent homemaker and was renowned for her cooking, particularly her baking, and jams, jellies and chutneys. She could maintain her reputation for producing memorable meals even when on family camping holidays and cooking on a portable gas ring in wet conditions!

Despite suffering a number of health issues, she faced life's difficulties with fortitude. She lost her mother quite early in life, and the death of their younger son at the age of 17 was a grievous blow to the family. Her latter years were hard due to her failing health, but she faced her problems with dignity and continuing stoicism. She had the love of her family, and recently had the joy of holding her great-grandson, Ted. Her family, whilst mourning her passing, will remember her as the perfect homemaker and a loving wife, mother and grandmother. BP

David Alexander Rodger 1939 – 2019

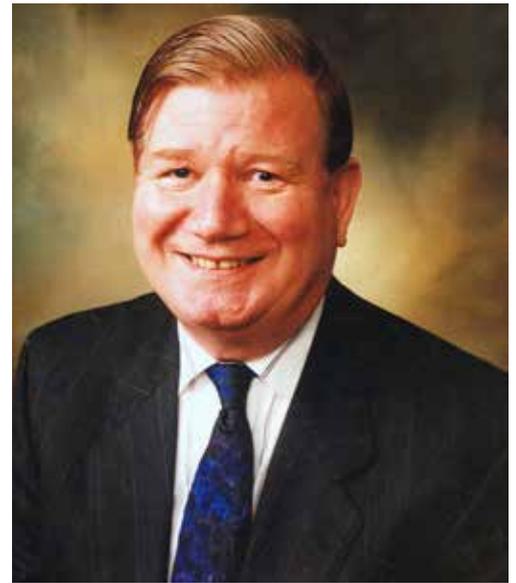
David Rodger was the eldest of three children born to Alexander and Marion Rodger of Milngavie. He was educated first at the local primary school and then at Glasgow Academy. In his parents' eyes destined for university, David had other ideas and left school aged 17 to follow his ambition to go to sea.

He joined the Anchor Line as a cadet and successfully moved swiftly through all the required stages of training, gaining his Master's ticket at the age of 25. Working at this time as Chief Officer with P&O, and recognising he might have to wait some years for promotion, he began studying for a degree in politics and economics, assisted by P&O. He completed his degree in 1971 and immediately returned to Glasgow to marry Pat, whom he had been dating for some time. He was then offered a post on a cargo voyage, Pat being allowed to accompany him, and the pair set out on married life by enjoying a voyage which circumnavigated the world.

On their return, David began to climb the managerial ladder in shipping while Pat became accustomed to frequent household moves as his career progressed. Inevitably, the demands of David's job occasioned numerous absences from home, but it also enabled them both to enjoy much travel and the experience of living for several years in Hong Kong, where David was the MD of Denholm's Ship Management HK.

In the course of his career, David was set some major challenges, whilst gaining a vast experience of the business. He was highly regarded within the shipping world for his capable handling of the problems encountered, his professionalism, patience and commitment to his staff.

He gave back much to shipping. He was a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers, in which he was very active. As a representative of Denholm's, he was a board member and a staunch supporter of the Hong



Kong Sea School, finally serving as chairman.

After living in various parts of the UK, he and Pat moved finally to Killearn in 1989 and, although David was still working away from home and travelling a good deal, Pat declared this was where they would put down their roots.

He formally retired at the age of 65, but continued for some years to take on consultative work. Once he was more permanently established at home in Killearn, he volunteered for a time with the Waverley Trust and, for two years before the opening of the Riverside Transport Museum, he wrote up the history of all the ships included in the collection and later became a guide at the museum. In 2004 he was awarded the MBE for Services to Shipping.

In Killearn, David was a member of Rotary, of which he was treasurer and then president and was also a member of Probus. He became involved with the redevelopment of the Village Hall and was Chair of the Management Committee after its opening.

He was a man whose life was devoted to his chosen career, and the many tributes paid from former colleagues all over the world speak of his inspirational leadership and describe him as a true marine professional.

He will be greatly missed by the world of shipping, but most particularly by Pat, his brother and sister, and their families. BP

PRIZE CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

Set by PeeWit

Our prize for the Prize Crossword is a Family Ticket to the Theatre Royal or the King's Theatre, Glasgow, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days. Our prize for the Children's Prize Codeword is a £10 voucher from the Co-op. Entrants must be 12 years old or under. The *Courier* would like to thank both the Ambassador Theatre Group and Co-operative Food for their generosity in providing the prizes for our competitions.

ACROSS

- 3 Last of you in shreds retreating around cane (5)
- 4, 1, 27 A pair of birds perhaps vetoed Owl Trust (3,6,5)
- 7 Largely men Smiley found in confusion (9)
- 8 The French saga contains new dish (7)
- 11 A silly person but a clever winger (4,5)
- 14, 16, 5 These farmworkers limit damaging hikes (5,5,1-7)
- 15 Trouble predicted in teabag grounds (5)
- 16 See 14
- 18 See 20
- 24, 26 Repartee about source of a fruit (4, 4)
- 25, 28 Four flyers on the phone (7,5)
- 26 See 24
- 27 See 4
- 28 See 25

DOWN

- 1 See 4
- 2 Vehicle with empty oilseal inside sings (6)
- 5 See 14
- 6 See 20
- 9 Dignified when able to view prospective partner on the phone!(6)
- 10 Countryman has bug with a name (6)
- 12 Salesman dries things mended (7)
- 13 I hear its freezing in this 10 prison (7)
- 17 Adorn the ship's floor (4)
- 19 Riotous party could be bloody when first garter is taken down (4)
- 20, 18, 6 How many peers aloft? (3,5,1-7)
- 21 Cloth made from a cool tie (7)
- 22 Sounds as if this fruit could help a refreshing drink (7)
- 23 Expression of relief when heretic begins to leave a seat in church (3)

Solution to the last crossword:

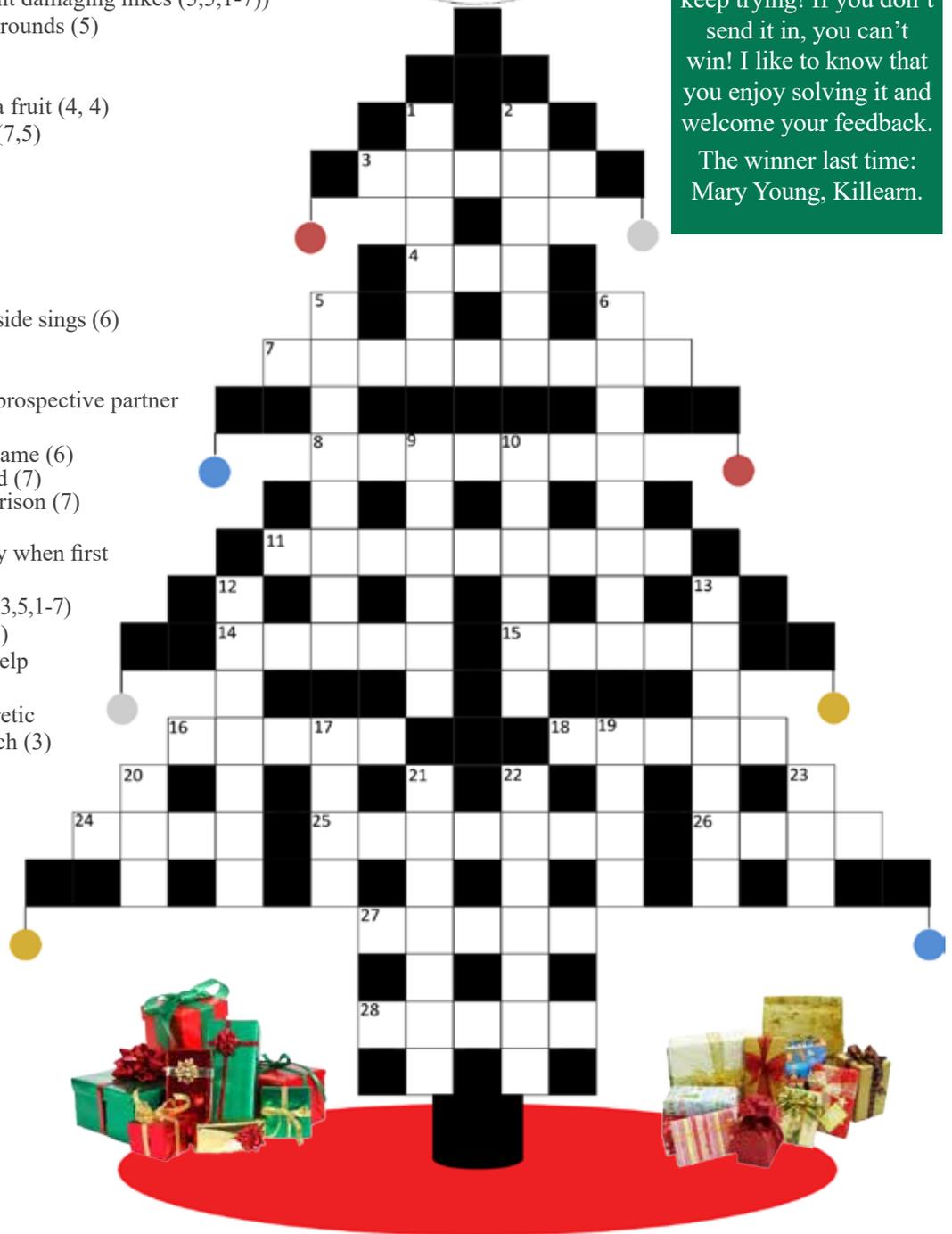
ACROSS: 7 stance, 8 grow, 9 poor, 10 finiculi, 11 reveals, 12 spurn, 14 icing, 17 boycott, 21 newspeak, 22 wire, 23 Goya, 24 earner.

DOWN: 1 strobe, 2 untrue, 3 menfolk, 4 manna, 5 eggcup, 6 roller, 13 looksee, 15 chew on, 16 Nassau, 18 coward, 19 turkey, 20 tempt.

The word was **summer**.



Christmas greetings from PeeWit to all my regular solvers. My commiserations if you haven't won the prize – keep trying! If you don't send it in, you can't win! I like to know that you enjoy solving it and welcome your feedback. The winner last time: Mary Young, Killern.



How to Enter

Solve the crossword and place your solution in the postbox outside the Village Hall or in the box in the Co-op together with your name, address and a contact phone number. Alternatively, if you don't want to cut it out of your *Courier*, count the number of times the letter 's' appears in the grid and email to competition@kfc.co.uk with your name, address and a contact phone number.

Christmas Wordsearch

H S H A P Y C S Y S B P
 Y P H C H L R N E T E R
 G I L E S L A O K O L T
 M N A O P O C I R C L S
 R E I A D H K T U K S D
 E R S D M U E A T I Z W
 Y T L Y D U R R H N Z Y
 Z E I K L U S O D G S C
 Z I O I C R P C O S H O
 C A R D S K E E L O H Z
 S V N Q C B E D V F S G
 R Q X T H V P B N X C O

Find the following 10 words in the grid, cross them out and a hidden message from us to you will be revealed.

**Bells, Cards, Crackers, Decorations, Holly, Pudding,
 Rudolph, Shepherds, Stocking, Turkey**

The usual rules apply, words can be vertical, horizontal, diagonal and be forward or reversed.

Christmas Quiz

1. By what title was the song *Jingle Bells* originally released?
2. What name is given to a baby reindeer?
3. What is the name of the fictional town in 'How the Grinch Stole Christmas'?
4. Which of the gifts presented to Jesus by the Magi was commonly used as an anointing oil?
5. On what day of the week does Advent commence?
6. In the 12 Days of Christmas song, what are the Lords doing?
7. Which legendary British pop group hold the record for achieving the most Christmas number 1 songs?
8. Sir Henry Cole is credited with introducing the world to which popular Christmas tradition in 1843?
9. In which C.S. Lewis novel was it 'always winter but never Christmas'?
10. Which department store released a Xmas TV advertisement in 2015 featuring a young girl looking at the moon through a telescope?
11. Which country donates the Trafalgar Square Christmas tree to Great Britain every year?
12. Who was crowned King of England on Christmas Day and in what year?

Answers on page 37

Children's Spot the Difference sponsored by the Co-op

Our prize for the Children's Spot the Difference is a £10 voucher from the Co-op. Entrants must be age 12 or under. The *Courier* would like to thank Co-operative Food for generously providing the prize for our children's competition.



Find 10 differences in the picture on the right and ring them to win a £10 voucher. Write your name, address and age below, cut out the pictures and place in the box in the Co-op or the postbox outside the Village Hall. If you don't want to cut the pictures out then you can write down the difference, together with your name and contact details on a sheet of paper and post or email your descriptions to the *Courier* (details below the crossword).

Name Age.....
 Address Phone No.
 Congratulations to the winners of the £10 prize in our last competition: Lewis Woodrow, age 10.

Bridge by Zorro

Solution to the problem on page 19

The full hands were:

Dealer: West Game All

		♠ 7 4 2 ♥ A Q 8 5 ♦ 8 2 ♣ K 8 6 3 North		
♠ K Q 10 9 5 ♥ K J 4 ♦ 7 6 ♣ A 10 2 West			♠ 8 ♥ 10 9 7 6 3 2 ♦ Q 10 9 4 3 ♣ 9 East	
		♠ A J 6 3 ♥ - ♦ A K J 5 ♣ Q J 7 5 4 South		

With 16 high card points, a bid by South certainly looks attractive. However, the void in Hearts makes 1NT unrealistic and means that the hand does not have the classic shape for Double. If Double is rejected, the only other possibilities are No Bid (for penalties), 2♣ or 3♣. A protective suit overcall normally does not show very much, so 2♣ seems inadequate.

In the event, one player chose to Pass and collected 300 points when West was held to four tricks, but at the other table South chose to bid 3♣. North tried 3♥ and passed South's next bid of 3NT. With the cards lying well, nine tricks rolled in and that was 600 points.

As you can see, sitting on the fence produced a respectable score, but exploring if some help could come from the North hand resulted in the best score. Is this a case of partnership style and attitude?

(With acknowledgement to Alan Hiron for his selection of hand and his notes.)

Z

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COMMENCING
SEPTEMBER

Picking up... a Penguin?

It's early September and I'm struggling to come up with something interesting or relevant to write about for the *Courier*. As the deadline approaches, what I really need is divine inspiration, perhaps even something just to fall out of the sky...

And that's exactly what happens. On 11 September, the latest addition to the 'garden list' is discovered lying on roadside verge at the end of the driveway. Unfortunately not alive. When picked up and examined in the hand, it is still in excellent condition, however, having only recently succumbed.

A guillemot – a bird of the sea and cliffs. The last bird I ever expected to land on my doorstep. Whatever had been powering this individual's normally whirring wing beats had terminally stalled. Lost and dead, it was still immensely beautiful to gaze upon. Its velvety insulating feathers heated my hands, while a long dagger bill pointed to a piscivorous past.

So what had happened here? After all, these birds belong in busy, noisy breeding colonies on coastal cliffs during summer before moving far out to sea for the rest of the year. Often found with their cousins, razorbills and puffins (all three species are members of the auk family), they are characterised by webbed feet placed far back on elongated bodies. This means that at sea they are masterful divers, while on land they are ungainly and awkward, waddling like penguins to which, incidentally, they are not related.

But every now and then, weather conditions at sea



are extreme enough to cause a 'wreck' of seabirds along our coasts and sometimes even far inland. In fact this phenomenon most commonly involves auks, with, in some cases, hundreds of birds being recorded dead or dying on the tideline. It's not as simple as strong winds blowing birds ashore. They are also driven by starvation, seeking more sheltered areas where they can fish for food, something impossible to manage in the midst of an Atlantic storm. I have known guillemots to turn up on Loch Lomond after extreme weather – indeed last year there was a news story about a suspected penguin frequenting Loch Lomondside roads that turned out to be a storm-driven guillemot.

Perhaps mine had also been wandering along the road before being hit by a car – although there were no obvious signs of trauma. Or perhaps it had just wilted from exhaustion. Whatever its tragic story, it was a privilege to have such a close-up view of this amazing creature and a potential first for Killearn. MARTIN CULSHAW



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Callander	Gartmore	Locheearnhead	
Deanston	Killearn	Strathblane	

We may be able to build in other communities in the future – please let us know if you want to live in a village that is not listed above. Information on local housing need and demand helps us plan for the future.

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Anyone wishing to contribute to the *Courier* spring edition is reminded that it will be distributed on 16 March 2020.

Advertisements and artwork should be sent to us by Friday, 24 January. Contact:
Gwen Stewart (01360 550856).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by Friday, 24 January. Please send them to:

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